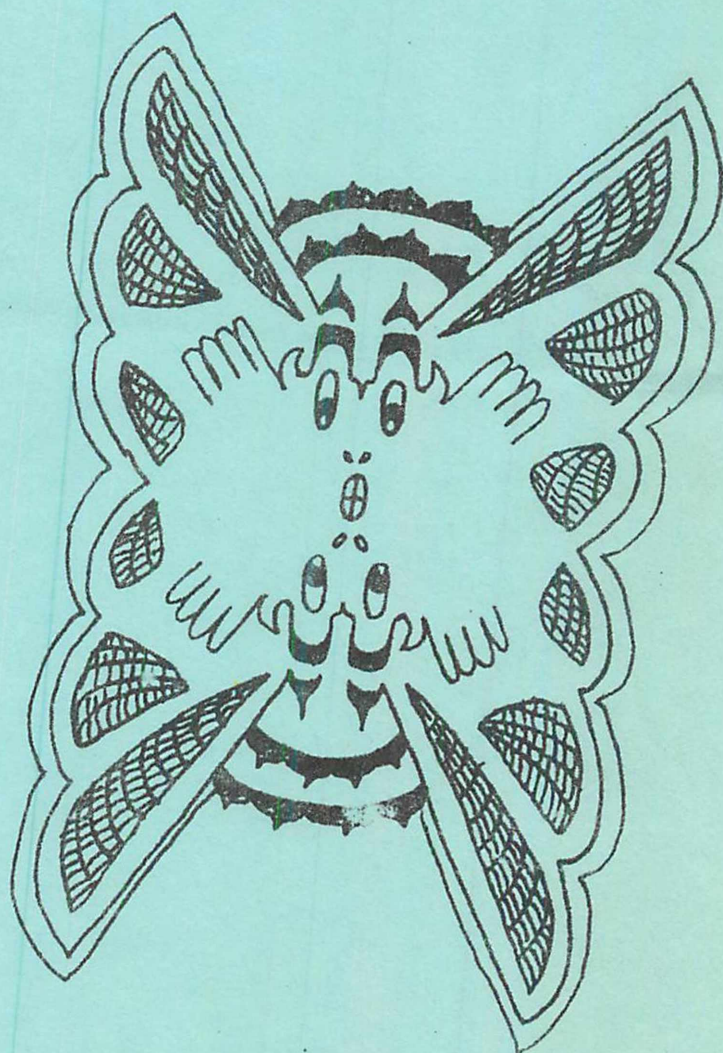


WESTSTAR

2



BANAPPLE GAS

Welcome, welcome to the on-stencil composed contents page of Whistlestar, a fanzine sometimes composed for the benefit of the retired giants of the Astral Age in the hopes of coaxing them to return to the golden meadows of mimeographed spiritual concomitance. As these fingers speed the little ball across the page I find my thoughts going out in particular to that hardy band of urban sufis, literateurs par excellence who were and will be the Fanoclasts of New York, inventors of the weekly apa, heirs to the legacy of the Algonquin Round Table and Harpo Marx -- souls fused by the alchemical magic of Mingus, John Coltrane and tempered by Marlon Frenzel. I pine for you scattered brethren to take up your cranks, return to your Illustrated Book Weeks, push your copier buttons (those of you whose spiritual stamina has weakened over years of worldly adventuring) and live a little -- else the concept of networking may be remembered in the future only as a blind-dating service run by Jerry Rubin for wine sodden electron-dosed defilers of Scrooge McDuck.

Welcome also to wandering street poets, and assorted coffee-house refugees from artsy autochthonic affluence who have provided me with the mercy of your company. This magazine may gravitate in your direction, or toward anyone who wonders where Longer Boats are going.

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Phillp K. Qwertyuiop would like me to assure everyone that although he may have two personalities, both of them are friendly.

ART CREDITS: Jerry Feraz, cover
William Rotsler, 3, 6, 11, 12, 16, 20
Gabrielle Jackson, 4
Dave Rike, 7, 9
Mel. White, 17

Mimeography assisted by Dave Rike. Thanx to Ailyn Cadogan for stencils.

WHISTLESTAR #2 (once known as Tuesday After Lunch) from Lenny Bailes, 504 Bartlett Street, San Francisco. CA 94110 can be yours for letter of comment, your fanzine in trade, sufficient postage stamps or because you met me carrying one around with me on a good day. Maybe published quarterly ... one, two - half step ... cross the lazy river!

THE NON-BORNE SINGER: Part III of The Plastic-Scene Exile.

What has gone before: Julian May, former contributor to Astound-Science Fiction, wrote a series of engaging fantasy stories in which the inner world of the hard core Cosmic Charlie is actualized and projected onto a landscape of primordial planetary history.

Predating the development of a Larry Niven-like concordat of alien races, a psychic community arose from an ancient spaceship crash. The survivors freed themselves from dependence on brachial technology by enslaving the primitive creatures of Terra. Without even distributing televisions these handsome creatures from the stars were able to psychokinetically coerce their environment into giving them what they wanted until a band of telepathically powerful temponauts, escapists from the 21st Century, stumbled onto the scene.

These tales embody certain parameters of the world of human thought which contemporary pragmatism has flattened into unlikely metaphor. Your protagonist, foolishly assuming that his readers were science fiction fans or chemically awakened temponauts, themselves, thought it clever to cloak the recent history of his experiences in San Francisco and neighboring N-Dimensional head spaces in this conveniently accessible fabric.

What does it have to do with reality -- the cocktail party your computer firm threw last night, buying furniture or Michael Jackson? We shall see.

Ripping off the accursed torc which had bound him momentarily into the world of Faery Insurance Lords our hero removed himself, as well, and soon breathed again the clean fragrance of Tres-Amigos lemon oil applied to rosewood.

As the sun rose over the Mission District each morning, fingers dutifully chorded and picked out the melody line of "This Little Light of Mine." Newly acquired scales replaced the ones which had fallen from his eyes.

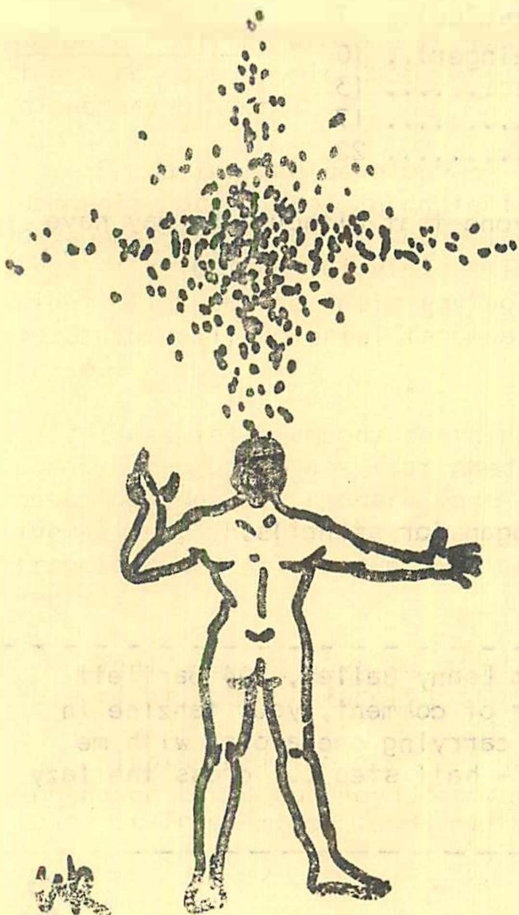
Former employers* and the spells and illusions of the Nuclear Howlers faded from his mind as he submitted resumes to medical research foundations and passed the time between callbacks in developing fingerstrums. Yet a voice still whispered that it was time to leave the world of dreams and face up. How could he serve himself and others who were stuck in the Many Collared Land?

Pausing outside the annual Tattoo'd Rose Halloween party our hero clasped a gold medalion to his chest and adjusted his flaring red cape. Perhaps the Vishanti would be with him as he stashed his guitar behind the bar and greeted the assorted ghosts and John Belushi Bee-People.

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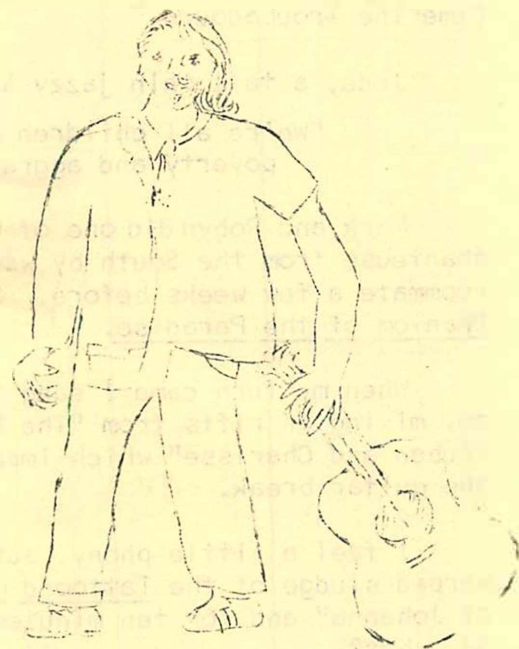
I'd been playing guitar in my living room for over a year. I knew from listening to tapes I'd made that I wasn't great, but I'd been encouraged by a pretty waitress-part time actress who liked my poetry to check out the North Beach scene. When she batted her lashes at me and

*See The Golden Tort: Whistlestar #1



offered me some of her trail-Mix it seemed unworthy not to try.

So I plunged into the weekly Let's Get Crazy night at the Tattoo'd Rose with my machine-like rehearsed folk songs, and discovered the other guitar players wanted to mix it up and fool around. Mostly, everyone got drunk. The woman who MC'd wore a cavalry sabre, she said, to deal with the unexpected, and by 10:00 she was usually bellowing out "Honky Tonk Woman" and "Like A Rolling Stone", accompanying herself on an old Silvertone. No one noticed me much for awhile, and I kind of blended into doing backup for her.



A few weeks later the management fired her and replaced her with a Folkie. We started doing little 15-minute sets in the conventional open-mike format.

I had become even less interested in trudging around the City all day on job interviews and it was much more fun to pick up the guitar in the mornings and try to figure out fills and runs for the songs I was going to play that week. I saw that my three chord style was pretty crude and picked up some books on finger picking.

Although The Shady Grove, last of the old-time rock n' roll clubs on Haight Street, had closed the year before, there were still quite a few bars in San Francisco with acoustic open mike nights.

The Tattoo'd Rose wished happy Halloween to its patrons that year by way of numerous safety-pinned Punk caricatures on the wall, ads for performance poetry and left over Rick Griffin posters pasted to the ceiling.

The balding bartender, wearing a granny dress and inverted pigmask with balloons protruding from his ears, would cordially shake hands with the cowboy-hatted tourists and caution the musicians to buy something before we put him out of business. An Indian spun to and fro on his barstool, rebagged his wine bottle and smiled at me benignly. I smiled in return and worked my way past a few Bees lined up for Lasagna to sit with Annie, the tarot reader. She was looking out at the tourists on Columbus Avenue, shuffling her cards hopefully.

Annie had traded her usual Diane Keaton vest and frilly white blouse tonight for a red sweater pinned with a Casper the Friendly Ghost button. She wore a derby hat and had painted on cat's whiskers just below her nose. As she laid out the cards and scrutinized them apprehensively I looked over her shoulder.

"Uh-oh, canticles and chords -- Bullwinkle reversed in the house of the future. Does this mean bad news?"

She would hit me on the head with her sign and I would buy her a plate of nachos. The Tattoo'd Rose had the best nachos in North Beach, swimming in guacamole and sour cream. Once I had a theosophical discussion with an itinerant furniture mover at the bar over the presence of macaroni in the nachos. I argued that lasagna was possible, but unlikely until he buried his nose in my plate. After that I usually sat at a table with Annie.

Soon Mark, the chef, would sit down at the piano and run through his repertoire of Van Morrison. Mark was a Steve Gaskin pilgrim who traveled around with the shirt on

his back and a dog-eared Bob Dylan songbook. He played Van Morrison by heart, "Then Came the Troubadours."

Jude, a tall thin jazzy kind of guy would alternate melodic Don McLean ballads with

"We're all children of an alien nation-
poverty and aggravation --"

Mark and Robyn did one of his songs, "You Never Compromise". Robyn is a raven haired chanteuse from the South by way of Gerde's Folk City in New York who almost became my roommate a few weeks before. She looks a little like Phoenix from Brian De Palma's Phantom of the Paradise.

When my turn came I sang "On the Way Home", the first Neil Young song ever recorded, mixing in riffs from "The Loner." In honor of my favorite costumed superhero I sang "Ruben and Charisse" which impressed Robyn, who tossed her hair in my direction during the guitar break.

I feel a little phony, actually, performing other people's songs. In the time warped sludge of the Tattoo'd Rose I used to wear sleeveless T-shirts and sing "Visions of Johanna" and for ten minutes afterwards enjoy the cheap thrill of being Bob Dylan. Say what?

The Bee-People would applaud politely, but I felt better doing my own "No More Starwars", which started out as a futile creb at the plastics industry and gradually turned into a political polemic.

"When they take away your Starwars, Disco Shoes and Rolling Stones
You'll be rattling the return slots on public telephones.

...Who will face the world and see our cover act is real?

We solicit an unconscious mind that starving men can't feel --"

-- and so on, punctuating the verses from my cute little harmonica-neckbrace.

The Bee-People abandoned all semblance of politeness at this point and started pounding their beermugs on the table, calling for Ralph Eno.

Ralph Eno was a local punker who'd lost his electric band, and the customers usually ate up his satiric imitations of 60's rock celebrities. "Hey, Babe, take a walk on the sidewalk."

Robyn later became Ralph's girlfriend. Ralph said he was into science fiction and carried a bulky manuscript with him wherever he went. "1999" was a song from his s-f epic. In 1999 the United States was overwhelmed by a Russian mind control ray, and the only protection the U.S. Government could discover was that teenagers who made loud electric guitar music were immune. So Youth was gathered into underground camps to build giant amplifiers and save the country.

Robyn thought this was far out. This was a time when several post-Sex Pistols Punk cinematographers were showing Anthony Burgess pastiches in the City, so to the denizens of The Tattoo'd Rose this was pretty trendy cultural extrapolation.

As for me, when Ralph started I would shuffle off into the corner with my moldy copy of Time Out of Joint, which I couldn't get him to read, and repack my guitar. Ralph's rap would flash me back to a time in 1967 when Chester Anderson had encircled himself in my living room with 64 tarot cards to cast a hexagram from the I Ching.

Michael Kurland was there telling Hank Stine about spies who'd been dosed with LSD by the U.S. Government to see if they were telepaths.

Pere Townsend would chant in the background that we were forgiven (twenty-seven

times, I think, in the denouement of A Quick One). Bill Glass would show us all excerpts from Mother's Oats Comix and get Chester to autograph copies of The Butterfly Kid. We were at the center of the universe.

It wasn't 1967 for the kids with green dyed hair, however. Ralph Eno was a science fiction fan who didn't believe in reading offering his profundities to punk literati who duly inscribed and published them next to the adventures of Zippy the Pinhead.

But although Ralph was a science fiction fan who didn't believe in reading, he was a good citizen of Armenia - City in the Sky and could sing like Buddy Holly. I think he, too, was forgiven.

When the inevitable battle came with the Faery Insurance Lords we stood bravely, but hosts of MUNI construction workers were dispatched to Columbus Avenue to tear up the street and rebuild the neighboring properties. Huge ditches were dug making the territory west of Stockton Street impassable to tourists, who soon contented themselves with the spaghetti joints and fancy cafes near Broadway and Vallejo streets. The Tattoo'd Rose ran out of customers, was sold and converted into an antique store. A small tribe of guitar players fled before the onslaught of the machines to Berkeley, ensconcing themselves at La Val's Subterranean Pizza which had gigs four nights a week for a period of time. Others were swept up in the tidal wave launched by the Many Collared Land and became stockboys in the financial district.

I was tired and my unemployment insurance had expired. I saw how much chance I had to survive in the City as a poet. I saw folkies chanting Rod McKuen poems to ladies with poodles in croissant snackbars.

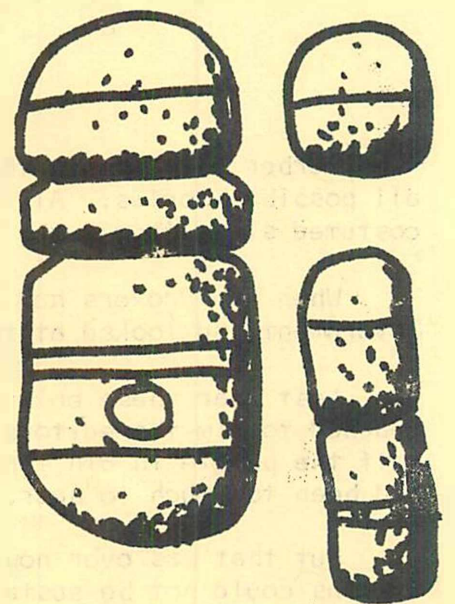
The Tattoo'd Rose closed down in May 1982, and I decided I'd better get a job again if I could find one. I found a clerk-typist job turning out catalogs and maintaining mailing lists for a local antique dealer and auction house, and returned most of my guitar playing activities to my living room.

But unknown to me, in various spots on the North American continent an older light was being rekindled. Whirring mimeodrums were challenging the endless tedium of science fiction newsletters and on-stencil apa comments which were all I thought was left of Milieu civilization (after the meta-psychic rebellion brought Dungeons and Dragons and Computer Fandom into the world).

Imagine, using a typewriter at home again to try to make something creative instead of cranking out statistics for machines. Dan Steffan and Ted White were trying to say that Fanzine Fandom still existed. Far out!

I went to a Westercon and a Worldcon, and they led to adventures in

The Adverse City
Concluding part of The Plastic Scene Exile
to be related next issue.



RUNES . WR

THE GAME-PLAYERS OF WRITE-IN

BY PHILIP K. QWERTYUIOP



Farber fumbled for the coin which would open his fax-slot. This was the best of all possible worlds. All the heavy labor at conventions was now being performed by costumed slugs from outer space, for instance.

When the Proxers had first appeared in Fandom with their Proxy Hugo votes the Government had looked at them in sardonic amusement.

Last year these enthusiastic colloids had grown so fond of fanzines that they'd learned to sim the editors. Farber still remembered that party he'd attended where half the people in 6th fandom metamorphosized into slugs waving paper-mache swords. It had been too much to bear.

But that was over now, thank God. The West equations had shown that the simulations could not be sustained if the energy in the room was astrally polarized. The crisis had passed.

Farber's trembling fingers scrabbled in the letterbox for today's Game clues. Last month's session had been particularly fabulous. The Group Trivia Quiz and Gafia

Gangbust had teamed both East and West Coasters in the Probe. They'd scored extra points for reanimating two Sleepers.

But what was this? As he drew back his hand and examined today's releases he frowned.

They were unreadable.

* * *

"Agh!" Kaufman clenched his teeth as he inched toward the stairwell. A gelatinous milling crowd swarmed on all sides of him.

"This lobby's loaded with Proxers!" At this rate he'd never make it topside. Kaufman flourished his Shrewstick and several figures melted before him into an elevator. Ping Pong Polis, his employer, was located several levels above. Another group-mind lettercol policy session on for today and he was already late. If he didn't show this time he'd be out on the street, barred from the Game.

"And you know what that means." He winced and quickened his stride. What a future! Auctioning holograved coffeemugs to Scientologists. He had to get there in time!

* * *

Big T frowned as he shuffled through the papers on his desk. The reports were getting harder and harder to understand. He'd continued to reply, of course, as was his duty. He thumbed the door-ident release and returned to the keyboard.

His psych-profile people were probably still down in the Space Bar.

Before he could savor that thought sufficiently the door flew open. Two Pongmen gestured at him vigorously.

"Stop typing immediately, sir! Those fanzines you're reading were sprayed at the papermill with Garblemist!"

"Garblemist!" Big T hastily dropped the legal length sheet his fingers had been mauling. The Proxers had coated the paper with Garblemist. "Right this minute it's being absorbed into my bloodstream. Am I affected?"

"It started last summer --" the Pongman croaked as the room dissolved around them.

* * *

The costumed slug tended its stall cheerfully. Its boneless mouth hovered over a sheet of canary twilltone paper and made slurping sucking noises.

A group of glassy-eyed Terrans clumping towards him caused the slug to assume an upright, attentive position.

"Welcome to Real World Highs, sir or madam. May I serve you today?"

"We get off on social significance, gossip with high literary value," one biped announced as it rolled and unrolled the paper scroll in its hand.

"And that's hard to come by these days," said another as he withdrew a wad of artwork from a strategic place in his shorts. "We're bored."

The slug's eyestalks glinted at the paper in their hands. Its tail slithered surreptitiously under the counter, systematically detaching the propellers from a pile of discarded beanies.

"My offerings are culled from the leading edge of what sophisticated Terrans are currently doing with their leisure time; keen forensics, cutting slices of rhetorical oratory -- the most superior perceptions of objective reality. Who would gainsay the power of thoughts like these?"

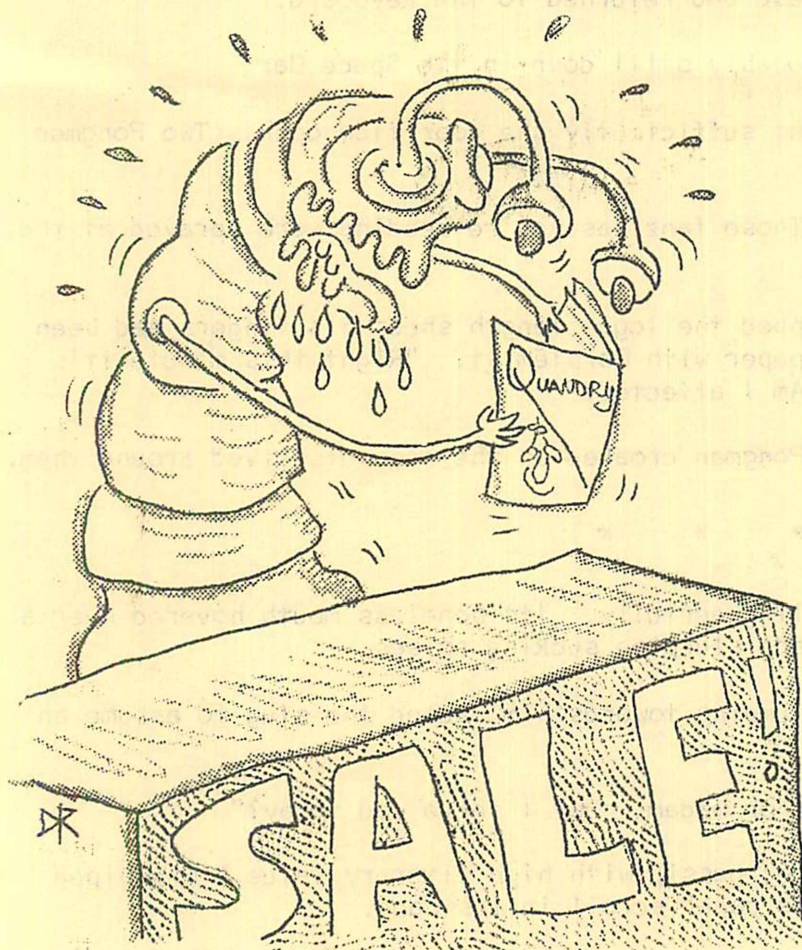
"Who indeed?" A voice whispered from the shadows. The slug curled its tail around a spraycan and whooshed. A blast of expanding gas knocked a straw hat from the head of a dapper passerby. It sailed on the wind and landed atop the pile of detached propeller rotors.

The slug tossed the newcomer a colored balloon and continued by laying out a set of amputated debater's caps on its table.

"I can sim some exciting Reagan TV clips for you," the slug volunteered tentatively. It started whistling Sweet Betsy from Pike and materialized a screen in its stomach. "Or films -- would you like to see Rollerworld again?"

"No," one of the bipeds said weakly. "It's hard to remember ... but there was something else ... before." He turned his paper scroll around and around, squinting at it.

"Today's special includes a historic recreation of the life of Huey Kingfish Long and I'll throw in a full color expose of Geraldine Ferraro!" The Proxer hissed in a high pitched salacious voice. "You know the price of these things."



One of the erstwhile science fiction fans tottered forward, extending the stapled inky sheets in his hand, but several other figures sporting gold plated convention badges jumped in front of him, thrusting paper at the slug's gaping maw.

"We're sexier than Geraldine Ferraro -- take us, oh take us."

"Unlikely," remarked the dapper, now bareheaded observer from the shadows. "Proxers suck the juice out of old mimec ink, but they can't metabolize the WSFS bylaws." He laughed as his colored balloon grew larger and larger until he stepped inside of it.

* * *

"You know, he was a Lord of the Instrumentality until boredom put him in the goggle room."

"I've always thought Cordwainer Smith was a bit of a fascist."

"Have you ever felt the pain of

all the burnt rice plants in China?

"Do you speak German?"

"...it's a great new comic book written by Ted White with art by Joe Staton."

"Is that the one about the mutated elastic ducks who take over the New York Mets? They stole that from a Jack Vance story. Scott Meredith rejected it in 1961."

* * *

"Don't worry, Lenny. Life is like that every now and then," Feder explained to Bailes as they munched some of Big T's potato chips. Kaufman and Weber waved their Shrewsticks and the room resumed its normal shape.

"All I know," Bailes said testily, "is that all the BNFs are writhing in pain there on the floor and no one wrote me a letter of comment on my last fanzine."

"Try writing science fiction," a voice chortled as a balloon slowly deflated. But the hissing sound went unheard by the hotel maid who dumped the balloon and a discarded straw hat into her trashbin the next morning as she flicked on the TV. This was the best of all possible worlds.

But why did the newsmen have eyestalks?

CRAWLING FROM THE WRECKAGE:

BRITISH FMZ REVIEWS BY

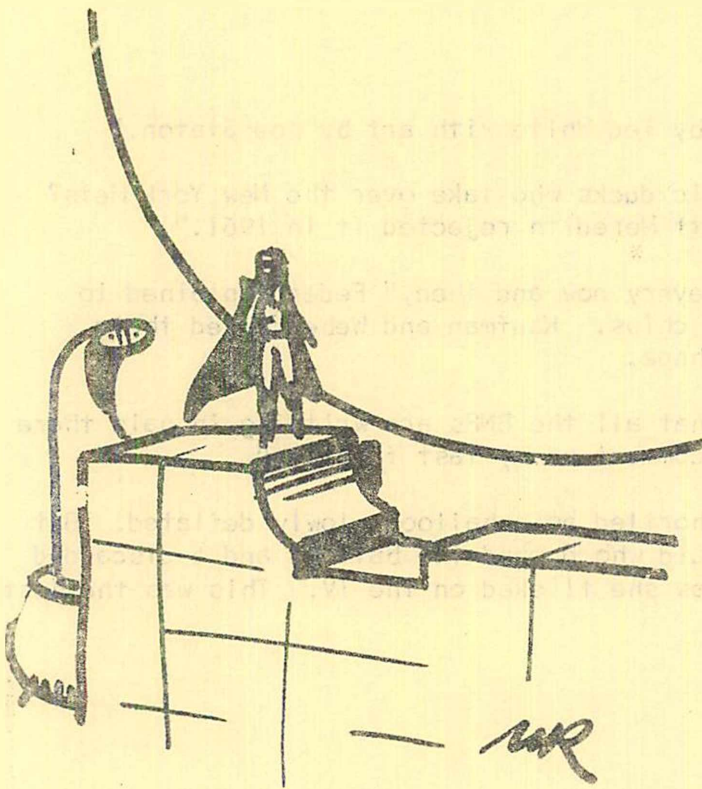
- LUCY HUNTZINGER -

c1985

I've been looking through my pile of British fanzines that I collected on my trip last summer. There are about 30 of them, almost none by the same editor. I attempted to get variety so that I could look through them at my leisure and write off to any that appealed to me as more than cat-box filler. Surprisingly, I have decided to keep most of them. I'm interested in the subject matter or the writing style for the most part although some I like purely for the classy dissemination of scurrilous gossip. They're all quite recent, being mostly thrown together for the Mexicon which was a fanzine fan's dream of a convention held in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne last year.

Sometimes I'm not sure why anyone else does a fanzine. I know I do mine because I like to capture the mood of my fandom or feelings about people I know. It's a script of sorts; a surrealistic documentary or a diary for later generations to scan, fragments to tantalize and seduce. My favorite fanzines create a pattern of fandom's day-to-day activities and thoughts. Personalities are analyzed or dissected, trends and slogans promulgated, information scattered among innuendo and in-jokes that accumulates and defines a period of our mutual history. I like it best when I search for this coded treasure among foreign or early fanzines where I'm not prejudiced by personal experience or hearsay.

I also thoroughly enjoy seeing someone else's account of a party or con that I was at. Thus I absolutely adore TALES FROM THE SLAG HEAP which Abigail Frost and Helen Starkey published to critique the fannish social dos in London between May and July 1984. Abi has a wicked way with words and a devastatingly accurate eye for people's follies, even her own. No tete-a-tete goes unremarked, no outfit passes unscrutinized or cheap



shot left unsaid in her coverage of two summer parties. Helen lovingly describes the highlight of her Mexican which turns out to be an enormous dessert known as a Rocket Banana. She also rhapsodises over chocolate in general which provides some funny commentary between the two editors. The best part of the zine is the cover which is a rip-off of a real Langdon chart which linked British fans according to rumors about sexual encounters and which was deemed too hot to publish. I think I like Abi and Helen's better because of the inclusion of inanimate objects.

TO CRAUNCH THE MARMOSET from Paul Kincaid has as its title one of the funniest unexplainable phrases from a book called English As She is Spoke. Paul has made a smooth transition from apazine to genzine with no discernable awkwardness. Maybe you think it's not hard to do but I haven't been willing to tackle it myself. For one thing, it's difficult to get the hang of getting articles out of others. For another, the overall design of the thing has to be thought out in advance if you want it to look like more than a church newsletter: artwork, if any,

arrangement of contributions for a flow of readability, cover, article intros, etc. I enjoy Paul's thoughtful handling of concepts and technical detail. I particularly like Judith Hanna's musings on cooking and the methods of learning how to make meals. She conjured up my own first attempts to cook for more than one person and the varieties of mistakes it is possible to make when one can't simply "ask Mum". The other outside contribution is from Jim Barker on the misconceptions about national character, a burden and a joke for almost everyone. Jim lives in Scotland but the points he makes apply to all nations and it's a tidy little article.

Paul does an excellent job analyzing fanzine reviews in the last section of his zine. He gives a synopsis of British reviewing styles, examines current reviewers, and offers his own standards. I think this fanzine is one of the more successful genzines I've seen; it's amusing, thought-provoking, and attractive.

Another successful first genzine is John Jarrold's PREVERT # 10. Prior to this issue it was a small, unassuming perzine dealing in anecdotes and gossip-mongering. I thought it was pretty good then. I like the expanded version just as well. Jim Barker's cover caricatures JJ perfectly, Judith Hanna shows us why everything after Australia might seem a bit tame in comparison, and Abi Frost is in top form as she describes her meteoric rise through the fannish hierarchy. The only off-note in an otherwise harmonious presentation is a too-short bit by John Harvey on how he got hooked on science fiction. It is unsatisfactory because it seems rushed; I probably would have asked to have it rewritten since it definitely has possibilities. JJ's editorial addresses the emotional and unpleasant Topic A of 1984, the accusations Richard Bergeron published regarding TAFF and its administration. As a nominator of one of the candidates John obviously felt obliged to say something, and compared to the many hysterical outbursts the accusations engendered this is a good read on some of the specifics. It will be one of those zines a reader in some future fandom will want to examine for its entrenchment in the controversies of the period.

Now I have before me a most curious fanzine titled WET BEAVERS from one Lawrence Lambourne of the Midlands. I'll bet he thought this was pretty funny when he was typing it up. I think so, too, but probably for different reasons. It's silly, unsophisticated, ungrammatical, hard to read, and just the sort of thing one wants around when one is tired of well-thought-out arguments and incisive thinking. It seems to be a retort to his fannish friends and that's not a bad thing if it spurs someone to do his best in an often competitive atmosphere. This is, however, garbled ramblings about fish, Joy Hibbert, and some truly awful fan fiction. I don't know what you're going to do next, Lawrence. I suggest you try cold showers and wrapping your head in aluminium foil.

At last, my package of THIS NEVER HAPPENS #6 has arrived from Christina Lake and Lilian-with-one-l-Edwards. I am distributing their U.S. copies for them because I like their fanzine a lot and because they distribute the London copies of mine, a most satisfactory arrangement for all of us. This is a zine with lots of artwork, an unusual occurrence in a U.K. publication. Lilian is a hardcore comics fan and Christina has done her share of reading Girl's Comics (something unfamiliar to most of us Girl-types here in the States). They always find interesting subjects to write about and this issue is no exception. I especially like the observations about Germany and Austria, Lilian's analysis of 80's Style, and the lists of oddities on the Dead Goldfish Pages. The editors' contributions are generally livelier than the articles they solicit; the tone is enthusiastic and the range of topics are unlike most found in the current crop of fanzines. If you like reading about music, how to be a Real Ballerina, comparisons of comics and sf fandom, religion, and being a six year old twin, you'll love all the back issues of TNH as well.

All of the above fanzines are recommended reading. Please write to the editors for more information on obtaining their publications. Better yet, take a trip to England for the 1986 Mexican and pick up on all the great stuff sure to be produced for it. You won't be sorry!

--LH

TALES FROM THE SLAG HEAP

Abigail Frost & Helen Starkey
69 Robin Hood Gardens
Cotton Street, London E14, U.K.

TO CRAUNCH THE MARMOSET

Paul Kincaid
114 Guildhall Street
Folkestone Kent CT 20 1ES U.K.

PREVERT

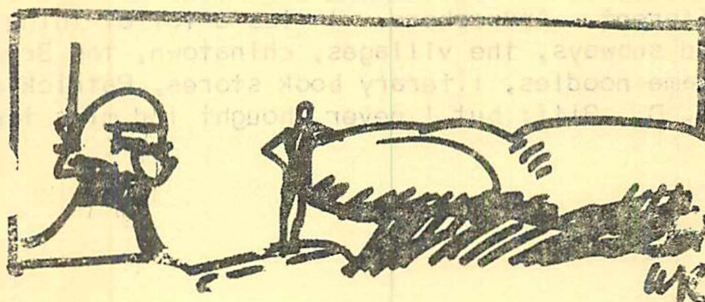
John Jarrold
31 Dukes Way
West Wickham
Kent BR4 9AU, U.K.

WET BEAVERS

Lawrence Lambourne
103 West Bromwich Road
Walsall
West Midlands WS1 3HP

THIS NEVER HAPPENS

Christina Lake & Lilian Edwards
235 Iffley Road
Oxford OX4 1SQ, UK



pink flag

by Tom Weber Jr

new york's all right if you like saxophones:

"I have come from another galaxy," he shouted at the top of his lungs. "Yea, I come from beyond! I flew in on my interstellar motorcycle, and have dropped in on your planet to play you some saxophone! All right!" He blew several atonal screeches, then stopped and surveyed his audience, most of whom were steadfastly not paying attention. New Yorkers are good at that. He was short and stocky, with black skin and thick curly hair, and he was outfitted in silver polyester and deelybobbers. After staring at several people without getting a reaction, he threw back his head and laughed wildly. "I am pleased with your planet," he shouted. "It is very hip. Very hip. However," his voice dropped to a confidential stage whisper, "however, I am short of funds. No one here will take my cosmic credit cards. I need cash to repair my motorcycle and return to my home galaxy. That is why I play for you here in the subways. And when I go," his voice raised to a shout again, "I will take Reagan with me! And I will take George Bush with me! Ha ha ha ha ha! I play you more saxophone now!" After a few minutes he seemed to get disgusted, and walked on to the next subway car. When I told Moshe Feder about it later, he seemed to think it perfectly normal. "Oh yes," he said, "the cosmic saxophone player."

the infinity box:

Ghetto blasters are omnipresent. Washington Square Park in particular is overflowing with noise, musical and otherwise. One can climb a tree in a central location and pick out three or four boom boxes at once. It is a good place to watch people dancing, playing, skateboarding, talking. Half my notebook entries taken in New York were written in the park. Of course, one has to run the gauntlet first: from whichever side you enter, you are confronted by a horde of dope sellers, trying to pawn off Oregon for exorbitant prices. "Loose joints! Loose joints, buck fifty each! Acid, coke, grass-- hey man, want a joint? Coke? Hey, got a light?" But it's okay; at least they're not handing out religious pamphlets or something. Anyway, once you're in, the park swirls with activity. You can stand by yourself and watch, or you can participate; a sense of community pervades the place, and only once have I seen a disagreement develop into a fight there. Before I left town, I helped fly an enormous kite with five other people, participated in a twenty-plus person jam session (I pounded on a drum), and juggled with a woman who was much better than me. Most of the time, though, I just sat by myself and listened to the music and noise, coming from four or more directions and each one different. Atmosphere. I miss a lot of things about New York: museums and subways, the villages, chinatown, the Brooklyn Bridge, cold sesame noodles, literary book stores, Patrick and Teresa, Stu, Moshe, Lise, D., Bill; but I never thought I'd miss the noise.

joe bob says check it out:

I am pleased and surprised by the critical reaction to "Stop Making Sense". Not only have I yet to see a negative review of it, I haven't even seen one that is unenthusiastic. Not just the music trades, either; Pauline Kael, the New York Times, and Siskel and Ebert all liked it, and none of them were familiar with Talking Heads before they saw the film. Kael even said she thought the music all sounded the same. Myself, I have my complaints about the film, but they're mostly complaints only a Talking Heads fanatic would have, and it's still easily the best concert (or rock and roll) movie I've ever seen. The major objection is the overemphasis on Byrne. I know that he's the most interesting and theatric member of the band, perhaps even the only interesting member to someone who has little or no interest in the music, but I'm a fan of the group, and I'm sick of the constant focusing upon Byrne, and the overspotlighting (such a word!) of lead singers in general. This got particularly annoying when they refused to show the soloists. I think I got a glimpse of what Bernie Worrell's fingers were doing once in the entire film, and he's my favorite keyboardist in popular music. I was also annoyed by the removal of two of the songs in the show's buildup, particularly since one of them ("Cities") is one of my favorite songs of theirs, and one I haven't had a chance to see live. If they needed to remove material, they could have removed "Making Flippy Floppy". It wasn't performed very well in the film, and it doesn't occur at a crucial point in the concert. On the plus side, there is of course the lack of the usual concert movie cliches (crowd shots, dumb interviews, overdone stage show, all of which was wonderfully lampooned by the recent "This is Spinal Tap"), and the positive interaction between the band and the crowd, which is a pleasant change from the usual idols/worshippers relationship of rock stars and their audiences. And the sound was excellent, despite the fact that both times I attended it was playing in a very small theatre. And (finally) the song selection is slightly improved from the concert I saw, replacing "Love Goes to a Building on Fire" with "Found a Job" (though dropping a verse), "The Book I Read" with "Cities" (though it was cut from the final version of the film), and dropping altogether two songs from "The Catherine Wheel" (though I suppose they aren't really awful). The director (whatever his name is; I forget) certainly does an excellent job of capturing the spirit of the concert. I felt almost as though I were back in the arena again, only this time with better seats (and a device on my head forcing me to stare at David Byrne the whole dam- time). Definitely worth seeing. Even paying for.

on the one hand:

I seriously believed I could move all the way across the country, leave all my music at home, and not miss it in the least. I seriously believed that. (*sigh*) I'd never suffered from insomnia in my life. Never. I swear it. Well, Jane Hawkins was my saviour; she visited New York and brought about fifty albums with her (from the very core of my collection, and it still wasn't enough, not nearly), and I learned all over again how bad commercial radio is, and learned about the usual poor quality of college radio for the first time, I'm afraid. College radio was always so good in Seattle. Or at least I thought so

before I left; it seems to me that it's gone downhill, but perhaps my tastes have simply moved in different directions. Commercial radio, of course, was as bad in Seattle as anywhere else in the country. Or so I believed. (I'll believe any number of ludicrous things, if I want to badly enough.) I honestly expected commercial radio to be better in New York. The theory was that with that many people, there must be a sufficient audience for anything. Well, it's true that there are twenty times as many people in the New York area as in the Seattle area. Unfortunately, I hadn't considered that the AM and FM radio bands are exactly the same size. Which means they haven't got any more radio stations in New York than anywhere else. Which means that they all have to compete for the same percentage of listeners in the New York area as they do in the Seattle area (though the actual number of listeners is different by a factor of twenty, of course). Which means that the dial is full of top twenty drivel, heavy metal garbage, and light muzak. Just like everywhere else. Except in New York, a third of them are in Spanish. Ach. Well, I survived; rather too well, probably. New York is full of things to take an interest in, and I gradually stopped missing my record collection so desperately. In fact, I gradually stopped missing my record collection at all. Consequently, upon arriving home (and needing cash badly) it only hurt a little to sell several of my more valuable albums that I had mostly stopped listening to. And I've been finding a little cash even more attractive, lately; and my collection is down to less than half what it once was. It does hurt some to see all of those records going away. I looked for years for many of them. Some of them are real prizes. But most of the hurt is the hurt of a collector watching nice kipple going away, not the hurt of a music-lover losing life's blood. I'm keeping a core collection of records very important to me, of course, but they're only records I listen to. I'm not a collector any more. And that's strange.

letter to an amateur critic:

For your benefit, a couple of definitions I apply discriminately: "Artsy" means "over my head." "Pretentious," strangely enough, means the same thing. Oh, and heavy metal is garbage. Really.// Try not to take this too seriously. Try not to take it too lightly. I'm going to risk a few sentences or so of actual critical method in response to your hodge-podge of tossed off, unsupported opinions. OK? Now, when I don't understand a work of art (or an attempted work of art), or if I don't get exactly what it is the artist is driving at, I tend to give them the benefit of the doubt, and assume that behind what they are doing lies some grain of intelligence, some kernel of ambition. I feel this is only fair. After all, there are quite a few ambitious artists out there, and I doubt that I am worldly and open-minded enough to appreciate them all. I am also aware that I have ambitions as a writer, and that not everyone is going to understand the points that I am driving at. Consequently, I am extremely tired of reactions to ambitious art that consist of little more than childish resentment that the artist is trying to make the audience work a bit. Words like "pretentious" and "artsy". Are you following me? Now, of course, sometimes, not often, but sometimes nevertheless, a lazy artist who wants to look important anyway will

work to create the appearance of profundity. Then, and only then, a charge of "pretentiousness" is justified. I would venture that a good current example is the Eurythmics. Others might disagree. In any case, it is important to remain objective and to honestly determine (nearly as you can) the intentions and success of the artist and the work of art, and whether the fault in the value of the art is with you or the artist. I think it's usually with the audience, which is to say, I think most artists of ambition are honest. Are you still there? I hope you haven't fallen asleep; this is important. Anyway, it should be obvious to you that proclaiming R.E.M. and Gang of Four to be "pretentious" is very likely more a comment on you and your perceptions than it is on the artists; after all, lots of intelligent, discerning people (probably even lots of people you yourself respect) find much to value in their music, which rather implies that there is something there to enjoy, doesn't it? Or would you maintain that all of us are having the wool pulled over our eyes? Well, perhaps; myself, I think it's more likely that you're being lazy.// You see, I don't really think heavy metal is "garbage" as an artform (not completely, anyway), but that really is the

sort of response you invite by tossing around unsupported opinions. Criticism has a lot of potential to degenerate into a lot of "yes it is" "no it isn't" type of arguing, without much of substance being said. If you really do believe R.E.M. and Gang of Four to be completely devoid of content and value, I suppose I might take back what I said above (though I'd be a bit incredulous at the number of intelligent people you could believe to be stupid). Understand that I'm not objecting to negative criticism; I'm objecting to thoughtless negative criticism; Obviously every individual has to come to his or her own conclusions about the intent of the artist, the success of the work, the intelligence of the audience, and everything else involved in the making and receiving of a work of art. I just wish those conclusions could be arrived at through thought and consideration of context. This kind of peripherally touches on what I feel to be the difference between reviewing and criticism: Reviewing is a comment on the listener (or reader, or viewer). It is a reaction, a statement of enjoyment or lack of enjoyment. Criticism is a comment on the artist. It is an analysis of the content of work. Reviewing and criticism are both fine, but one shouldn't masquerade as the other.

- tw





ASTRAL FINGERS

- Letters -

DARROLL PARDOE: Great heavens! Lenny Bailes! Now there's a name that hasn't crossed my path for quite a while. Welcome back. Thanks for sending me Whistlestar and who suggested my name?

((You are listed on the rich brown trufandom master list, and I still remember Les Spinge.)

I know exactly how Redd Boggs feels. I've got copies of quite a number of my old fanzines around here, but I've never been very careful about hanging on to back issues for archival purposes and so a lot of things I've published, especially the earlier ones, have escaped from me. I'm not bothered by my lack of them, for just the reason Redd states. I came across some old fanzines of mine, ones I'd not set eyes on in over a decade, in the fanzine room at MEXICON last May, and

the 'me' writing in them wasn't me at all; it was like reading a fanzine from a stranger. I've changed and fandom has changed, and I'd much rather be out there

participating in and enjoying fandom NOW than indulging in nostalgia over fandom past. I don't think I'd ever want to go back.

Are they still proposing to start up the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant, then? What a ridiculous idea. Over here I don't think anyone gave a thought to possible earthquakes when they built the British nuclear electric plants. But a few weeks ago we had - yes! - an earthquake, an event we British like to think only happens somewhere else. Richter 5.7 and the epicentre not 20 miles from the Wylfa nuclear plant in Wales. There was no damage so far as anyone has said, but you never know: and where there's one there could always be another ...

((But if we let such atavistic fears get in our way how will Jerry

Pournelle find someone willing to sell him electricity to broadcast his convention anecdotes around the Free World via satellite? It's selfish of us to let our superstitious queasiness ground out the imperative energy demands of the future. The electric company here is busy assuring the Government that if anything goes wrong with the nuclear installations it won't be their fault!))

/1B Cote Lea Square, Southgate,
Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2SA, U.K./

HARRY WARNER: I can understand your inability to stomach the law office job very long. But one sentence in your account of that adventure is relevant to my only overt form of nonconformity. I assume it was the necktie you were wearing around your neck when you came to your moment of truth. I wear a tie even during the warm weather months and this has caused me to become a more conspicuous example of local nonconformity than any other style of dress I might affect. I run around the streets without a coat, usually with shoes that are cracked or afflicted with a small hole in the sides, but I do wear a tie. This keeps everyone in a state of permanent astonishment, the upper class who wear coat and tie outdoors during the summer and the lower and middle classes who wear neither coat nor tie from April through October. Nobody wears a tie but not a coat in warm weather but me. Sometimes I see people craning their necks, hopeful of seeing rope burns on my neck to confirm rumors about my having long ago miraculously survived capital punishment, like the scars on the wrists of Mr. Jagger's housekeeper in Great Expectations. It's a simple and effective way of demonstrating that I'm not quite a complete conformist, mild though my appearance and behavior may be in other respects.

Why haven't the liberals picketed the Three Little Pigs video game? Public television, ecologists, and various others have been repeating endlessly that wolves are vastly misunderstood animals, perfect gentlemen and good neighbors, except when they're refined ladies, vilified and

libeled by generations of writers and bigoted farmers. Shooting arrows at them electronically in the game will reinforce that old stereotype about wolves' dangerous nature

As Little Orphan Annie used to say, leapin' lizards. I admire Jeanne Bowman's ability to cope with this complicated problem of maintaining maternal discipline and educating her son and attempting to avoid depriving the environment of its lizard component.

/423 Summit Ave., Hagers-
town, Maryland 21740/

the big bad wolf

i went to a movie show
the other evening in the cuff
of a friend's turned up trousers
and saw the three little pigs
and was greatly edified by the moral lesson
how cruel i said to myself
was the big bad wolf
how superior to wolves are men
the wolf would have eaten those pigs raw
and even alive
whereas a man would have kindly
cut their throats ...

...and piously eaten them served with
sauerkraut and other trimmings
it is no wonder that the edible animals
are afraid of wolves and love men so
when a pig is eaten by a wolf
he realizes that something is wrong with
the world
but when he is eaten by a man
he must thank god fervently
that he is being useful to a superior being
it must be the same way
with a colored man who is being lynched
he must be grateful that he is being lynched
in a land of freedom and liberty
and not in any of the old world countries
of darkness and oppression ...

...we ought to be grateful in this country
that our wall street robber barons
and crooked international bankers
are such highly respectable citizens ...
even our industrial murderers
in this country are usually affiliated
with political parties devoted

to the uplift
the enlightenment and the progress
of humankind
everytime i get discouraged
and contemplate suicide
by impersonating a raisin ...
i think of our national blessings
and cheer up again ...
and it is a cheering thought to think
that god is on the side of the best
digestion

((The preceding recap of last
issue's editorial appears in the
earlier version written by Don
Marquis circa 1930.))

ARTHUR THOMSON: Really, I just don't know
who is going to appear
back in fandom next. Emil Greenleaf? Bill
Mallardi? Why, even here in Britain we have
fifties and sixties fans bobbing up all a
time. It must be part of some great Cosmic
plan.

That's a really nice readable tale
from Jeanne Bowman.. I hated that thing
where she was talking about cooking a pla-
centa. Yuk.

Gosh, here's Dave Rike now. I'm sure
Pete Vorzimer will turn up in some fmz any
day now...

Any letter section that starts off
with a Redd Boggs letter must notch up three
stars. Chuck Harris is a big Redd Boggs fan,
thinks Redd one of the all time great fan-
writers.

/17 Brockham House, Brockham
Drive, London, SW2 3RU, U.K./

WALT WILLIS: Thank you very much for WSTAR.
Liked everything except the
forged interpolation to the effect that Redd
Boggs was recently on food stamps. Why I
have known for many years that Redd Boggs
occupies a prestigious post at the Univer-
sity there -- he used to be a Dean but has
got more important than that so is now known
as just Mr. Boggs in the same way that Mr.
Doctors are more important than Dr. Doctors
-- where he sits in a huge book lined study
composing learned monographs like Sherlock
Holmes and occasionally advising on mimeo-
graphy. What happens is that his principal
Secretary, a beautiful tall blonde girl in
a gold dress, comes in now and then and
shakes her head.

"The mimeography?" says Boggs.

"Yes," she says, "it doesn't glow
in the dark."

The great man goes to the machine
and touches the handle, and instantly all
is well...

/32 warren rd. D 'dee ni bt 21
opd/

KEN RUDOLPH: I swear you weren't Lenny
when I knew you. Is that
just my defective memory? ((I started
calling myself Lenny after I left
Los Angeles. People who knew me
before that tend to call me Len,
like it said on all those old fan-
zines with Gilbert & Sullivan par-
odies in them.))

Once again I read your zine with great
enjoyment. Especially your continuing saga
of the amazing, lost '70s through your
eyes. In a way I find it hard to relate
- I dropped into the material world dur-
ing the '70s; became a workaholic; got
"well off"; almost voted Republican in
'84 (Reagan is doing his dam-dest to turn
me off recently). Yet your head trip
shines with amazing purity through your tale
and I empathize.

Speaking of fandom, I doubt if I'll
make it to Worldcon. I'm still something
of a crowdfobe (or whatever the proper
word is). My favorite fantasy world was
Asimov's Solaria where everybody remained
physically isolated from everybody else.
My computer has turned out to be my fav-
orite new "fandom". I'm carrying on sever-
al electronic correspondences through
bulletin boards or data services and it is
great: promotes a strong fantasy life,
provides long-distance friends, and is
much more instantaneously gratifying than
fanzines. Now if only the "faanish" types
I really enjoy relating to would discover
computer bulletin boarding (or if I could
find the SF BBS which ought to exist some-
where), that would be perfect. But the
fans, who ought to have been in the van-
guard of the computer revolution, somehow
missed the bus.

I was quite amused by the computer
games described in your zine. The kind of
computer games I enjoy are the more cere-
bral, interactive "Infom" type games like
Starcross or Plantefall. I prefer the

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SF oriented games to the fantasy worlds like Zork. I'm not particularly good at any of these games, mind you. But I marvel at the possibilities if a great SF author combined with a dynamite graphics programmer got involved in writing a Science Fiction computer game. It is an industry in its infancy; and hopefully the right synthesist will come along (why not Pournelle or Niven?)

Certainly computer graphics have come a long way. My company is doing some of it. We've put together on film elements composed by computers for features like TRON and LAST STARFIGHTER; and commercials and network and cable graphics packages. Some of the most incredible graphics are never seen in the USA, being done for Japan or European TV.

((I share your belief that computer graphics could be utilized to create new artforms. Do-it-yourself TV has definitely replaced folk music as the most popular pastime an intellectual high school or college kid can get into by himself. It's a viable medium, all right, but what do you want to send out through it? One look at a Record Factory store can show us the mistakes we made with the last viable underground medium. The kids are going to be inventing their own stuff for computer networks soon anyway, which hucksters will be selling to the adults. I think we should be the electronic Pete Seegers and Tom Donahues (if we knew how to be) that build a nest from which new Byrds can take flight.))

/6220 Hollymont Dr., LA, CA 90068/

BILL GLASS: As many years as it was between Tuesday After Lunch #s 1 & 2, it's been that long since I've seen you...

I particularly liked the two-page design accompanying Jeanne Bowman's "Spirit Lizard Dance", and the (to me) unexpectedly atypical and perfectly-placed Rotsler heading "Astral Fingers".

My contacts with fanzine fandom are peripheral at best -- consisting mainly of reading Ted White and Dan Steffan 'zines sent Sherry at the Hobbit. She has no real

appreciation of the things, having no roots in the tradition at all. Me, I'm reminded of the wit and extemporaneous expression of the classic '50s fanwriting you and Bruce Pelz turned me on to back in the luncheon roundtable sessions at the UCLA Coop in the mid-60's.

...But it's like my nose is pressed to the wrong side of the window. The old names trigger recognition, but with the same kind of remove as growing up on early/mid 1950's tv gave me for the side-jokes and in-references of WWII. There's familiarity without the first-hand experience. And all the new names attached to the same kind of insider/outsider events going on now give me the feeling of having stepped not into the future, but sideways into the same past, but in an alternate world. ((The one where the world's supply of mimeo ink was not exhausted after St. Louiscon and

Celtic talking-animal stories were not outlawed by Congress? I thought it was pretty weird, myself, when I stumbled back in.))

-----/418 Rose Avenue, #8, Venice, CA/-----

BRAD FOSTER: Not a whole lot I can find to comment on. Most of this stuff would only seem to be able to be



written on if you were part of it - I mean. "Well-Tempered Disclavier" just seemed to kind of end abruptly. "Spirit Lizard Dance" was just a bunch of obnoxious little kids (jeez, first the kid kills it, then worries that the spirit will be upset if they cut it? I would have told the kid that there was no need to worry, as the spirit was already planning on coming back to get him for killing it, so the rest of us were safe -- little murderer would have had nightmares for weeks -- nyha-hahahah!!)

/4109 Pleasant Run, Irving TX
75070/

JEANNE BOWMAN: I want to know if you have music to go with "Dinosaur Cowboy." A lyric piece & I can visualize the dinosaur fanatics of my immediate acquaintance having a wonderful time prancing around the back porch with it.

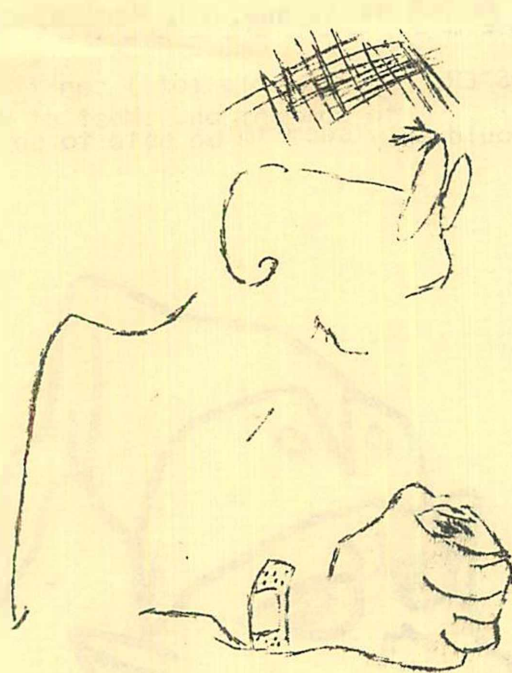
I really liked being the centerfold piece in the issue. I may be developing a habit for the taste of it. I hope Terry

Carr gets Whistlestar et al., so he can stop worrying about my doing something Sweetness & Light lest I get "nerded out by an asshole" at parties or conventions.

/P.O. Box 982, Glen Ellen, CA 95442/

ROBERT LICHTMAN: Whistlestar is amazing in that it's a new fanzine printed on paper cleverly disguised to look as though it had sat around on a pile of unLoCed zines since around 1963. My hat is off to your paper designer!

... I can understand Redd's reluctance to look at the file of his fanzines that Bill Blackbeard keeps on hand. At 1983's New Year's Party I borrowed from Terry his files of PSI-PHI, FRAP, and the one issue I did in 1959 of Outworlds (well before Bowers latched onto the title) and was quickly so attached to them that I didn't return them until this last year's party. And then reluctantly. But I pointedly didn't borrow all my old apazines from Terry, even though I think he



BUT
WASN'T
THAT
WHAT
YOU
MEANT ??



OOOH GOD
I'M BEING
NERDED ----

has many or most of them. I don't know if I could bear to reread my old mailing comments.

((When I went back to visit my parents in Maryland I discovered a bunch of stuff I wrote in Los Angeles. "The Man from Hasi", faan fiction which combines Dave McDaniel with C.S. Lewis -- also a rough of some songs from a Gilbert & Sullivan version of Lord of the Rings. Whatever I was reading in those days just sort of got drafted into my fanzine writing -- kind of like now, actually. Maybe Niekas would be interested in some of that stuff.))

/P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442/

Well, this issue was going to have more editorial and be done for CORFLU, but may now be run off there if I can find slip-sheeting volunteers. As Dave Rike says, the biggest crisis facing fanzine fandom today may be the discontinuation of twilltone paper. And, would you believe it, I'm now a schoolteacher, so my time is pretty well occupied. WAHF: Lee Hoffman, who sent a CoA, 3335 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33952; Nan Rapp: "Dave Rike is w-e-i-r-d but gallant, sturdy & courageous - not to mention depraved, so we can probably forgive his weirdness."; Terry Jeeves, Harry Andruschak, and various people who sent fanzines, which were appreciated. Write letters all you talented people who told me about the great LoC's you intended to write or started, but the cat ate it or whatever. I'm going to try to get the next issue out for Westercon, but who knows, if there's no response maybe next time I'll publish Grateful Dead artwork and geometry proofs.

POEMS

Hairstyle Reception

I see you and realize
you could be beautiful.
Something about you vibrates today
and gradually I slough off routine
and ritual as my senses inform me:

I am bleeding,
but the sight of you reminds me I long to
reach.

Another lithe flurry of curly hair
and striking motion swirls by me
eyes calling:

"Yes you are.
Raise yourself and join us."
Join us.

Is her verdance a graceful accident
or I the recipient of a beam
thrown with conscious intent?

Yes, I learn; the soul can be made
whole in an instant.

The Sun continues to make light.

But the aches of a slow life require
a slow cure.

I see you catch the light
and want to listen.

--LB

Classroom Notes

Circles have their expectations;
probe too hard at limitations -
see what they will do.

Clarity won't replace
an offered hand or kindly face
if truth's your game
but fail to name
what circle knows is true.

See how many smiles will find your eyes
after you're through.

Reassurance, boredom, endurance -
Monitor trivia;
see what she'll give ya.

-- LB

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WHISTLESTAR #2

Lenny Bailes
504 Bartlett Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

return requested

Jan. 226, 1984

to:



Lee Hoffman
3335 Harbor Blvd
Port Charlotte, FL 33952