

THE ZED

NO. 780

SUMMER 1955

SAPS 32



A STILL HOUSE PUBLICATION



OPERATION VOLDESAN
STILLHOUSE PUBLICATIONS...

KAREN

DID

IT!

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Cover by H. van Meegeren

In your grubby little fist, at this moment, is the Zeitschrift Für Vollständigen Unsinn. You peasants and urban proletariat, also whoever does the cover, may call it The Zed. In spite of the obviously professional quality of its contents and format, this publication is an amateur one, and is published for the Spectator Amateur Press Society. This Zed, No. 780, is destined for the 32nd Mailing of that organization. This is Operation Voldesfan No. 18, a Still House Publication. General & editorial offices located at 1906 Grove Street, Berkeley 4, California.

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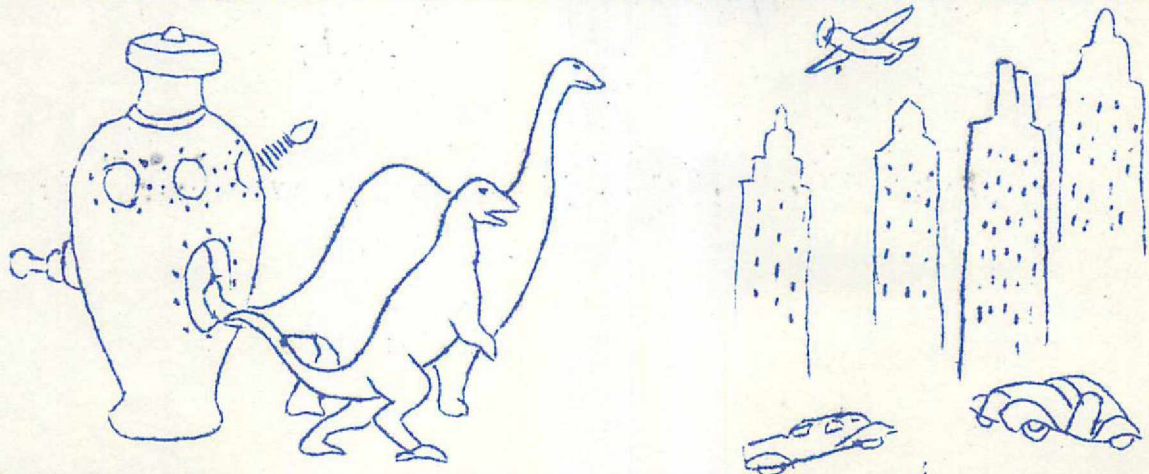
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Staff Artist and Tame Pro: Poul Anderson. This is sheer nepotism, obviously.

Head Nuisance: Astrid Anderson. Not nepotism, qualification!

dd



"Things sure have gone downhill in 100,000,000 years, eh Doc?"

Free Style Twippledop

AND OTHER EDITORIAL OOZINGS

Just recently I have discovered two new fantasy writers. One of them, strictly speaking, is not a fantasy author at all; he doesn't write about ghosts or magic; but his setting is quite the most fantastic I have ever come across in any sort of writing. This is Mervyn Peake, author of Titus Groan and Gormenghast. Titus, Seventy-seventh earl of Gormenghast, is the central character; if a pair of books with so many essential subplot complications can be said to have one central character. No character or situation is impossible, but taken together they are highly implausible to say the least. For this reason I call the books fantasy.



"Don't bother, Spike. Nobody ever hit the Saint."

Taken on their own terms, however, they are the most fascinating I have ever read. One of them, in fact, is the only book that ever gave Reg Bretnor nightmares, he says.

I borrowed them from Reg when he told me about them, and came back for more. He didn't have any more by Peake, but he had a couple of short stories by John Shattuck, who writes with the same sort of feeling. (This is the really important thing about Peake---his style. I can't describe or explain it but it's the most fascinating thing in the world.) Shattuck writes genuine fantasy, but very little. His stories are hidden in the most obscure little magazines imaginable. It seems that he knew the editors and gave them the stories to help their magazines, and does not try to sell them.

I learned this from a friend of Reg's, Arb Kingsley, who knows Shattuck. Arb says Shattuck is a retiring sort, but I may get a chance to meet him. Pant pant.

Arb, after one happy fizz party, has taken to fandom. He will appear here regularly, and all fids to me!

You ought to hear his filk songs, too.

KAREN ANDERSON PRESENTS

Birth of a Notion

A tragedy of Hollywood in
one act, written by Rob-
ert Bloch, with additional
dialogue by Moe Fink, Man-
ny Klotz, and William Sha-
kespeare.

THE CAST

GEORGE CHUM, A Producer - - - - - Marvin Larson
RAY SADBERRY, A Stf Writer - - - - - Bob Buechley
MELVIN SPELVIN, A Brother-in-law - - Dale Rostomily

Directed by Karen Anderson

Produced for the Elves', Gnomes', and Little Men's
Science Fiction, Chowder and Marching Society.

June 3, 1955

GOSTAK, I HARDLY KNEW YE

A Filk Song by
Karen Anderson
and
P. A. Kingsley

(Tune: Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye)

As I walked out beneath the sky, haroo, haroo,
As I walked out beneath the sky, haroo, haroo,
As I walked out beneath the sky,
I tell you it's true as I hope to die,
A desolate Gostak I did spy.

Distimming of the Doshes.

Isaid, "Sir, why do you look so sad," haroo, haroo,
I said, "Sir, why do you look so sad," haroo, haroo,
I said, "Sir why do you look so sad,"
He said, "My trouble will drive me mad (PLUG)
I'm losing all that I ever had,

Distimming of the Doshes.

"When one's distimmed, it is no more, haroo, haroo,
When one's distimmed it is no more, haroo, haroo,
When one's distimmed, it is no more,
I've always less than I had before,
Sure it's a problem that troubles me sore,

Distimming of the Doshes.

"And now my Doshes are very few, haroo, haroo,
And now my Doshes are very few, haroo, haroo,
And now my Doshes are very few,
I think that I'll try distimming you,
I never learned anything else to do

Distimming of the Doshes."

I said, "You can't distim on me," haroo, haroo,
I said, "You can't distim on me," haroo, haroo,
I said, "You can't distim on me,
For I'm a Gostak too, you see,

Try humans: they're just our cup of tea,

Distimming of the Doshes."

By P. A. Kingsley

CAPTAIN NOBODY

"Sir . . . I am nothing to you but Captain Nemo."

---Verne, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, Chapter X

"Cyclops, you ask my name. . . My name is Nemo."

---Odyssey, Book IX

nemo. -inis (for nehemo, from ne and hemo=homo) no man, no one, nobody.

---Cassell's Latin Dictionary

The two seafarers who called themselves Nobody are among the best-known adventurers of all times; yet neither loved adventure for its own sake. Odysseus, we remember, wanted only to go home and collect his GI benefits--that is, tell the home folks what a hero he had been. (You think I'm kidding? Look at the line he fed to Nausicaa.) But what of the other Nemo?

Odysseus used the name of Nobody on only one occasion, his encounter with the Cyclops, and even then could not resist the temptation to brag his real identity as quickly as possible. But the other bearer of this nom de guerre revealed his true

name only once, within hours of his death.

It seems that ~~a comparatively~~ few people realize that The Mysterious Island, one of Verne's less popular stories, is actually a sequel to 20,000 Leagues, and that here Captain Nobody's secrets are disclosed. (Certainly this was not realized by the screenwriters who killed him off at the end of the picture.)

He was Dakkar, the Rajah of Bundelkund. He was educated in Europe, and on his return to India at the age of thirty he was full of the desire to rule a free and independent people. At the time of the Sepoy Rebellion he saw his chance to throw off

the suzerainty of the British Empire. He devoted all his wealth and ability to that cause; he fought in the front lines; determined on victory or death. But neither was his lot. He lost, instead, his fortune and his kingdom. His wife and sons were killed and a price was on his head. He fled with a few of his followers.

On a deserted island in the Pacific, he constructed the Nautilus--for the sea was his only refuge. The various parts of his vessel he ordered from widely separated factories, and when it was built, he destroyed all traces of his presence on the island. He roved the seas, salvaging millions in gold and jewels from sunken ships and collecting pearls of enormous value from the ocean floor. These he donated anonymously to those who fought for the freedom of their countries. Apparently he took some of these patriots in the crew of the Nautilus, for Professor Aronnax mentions seeing Irishmen, Frenchmen, Slavs, and Greeks aboard.

Although Nemo often said that he wished to have nothing to do with the world, "I am as much dead as those of your friends who are sleeping six feet under the earth," he said to Professor Aronnax: this was not the case. At another time, when he had rescued a fisherman from a shark and given him a bag of pearls, he said to the Professor, "That Indian, sir, is an inhabitant of an oppressed country; and I am still, and shall be to my last breath, one of

my last breath, one of them."

On still another occasion, when Aronnax had made some remark showing that he saw Captain Nemo as another treasure-seeker, the exile flew into a rage.

"Do you think, then, sir, that those treasures are lost because I gather them? Is it for myself, according to your idea, that I take the trouble to collect these riches? Who told you that I did not make good use of them? Do you believe me ignorant that there are suffering beings and oppressed races on this earth, miserable creatures to console, victims to avenge? Do you not understand?"

When Aronnax and his companions protested Nemo's treatment of them, he said, "I am not what you would call a civilized man; I have done with society entirely, for reasons which I alone have the right of appreciating. I do not therefore obey its laws, and I desire you never to allude to them before me again!" But his support of downtrodden peoples shows that it was not society in itself that he so hated; it was the hypocritical society of the time which condoned slavery and made excuses for misery. To mankind he was loyal.

In the sea he found his own freedom; and here he dreamed of freedom for others. "The sea does not belong to despots. Upon its surface men can still exercise unjust laws, fight, and be carried away with terrestrial horrors. But at thirty feet below its level,

their reign ceases, and their power disappears. . . There is the only independence," And again: "I can imagine the foundation of nautical towns, clusters of submarine houses, which, like the Nautilus, would ascend ~~every~~ morning ~~into~~ breathe at the surface of the water, free towns, independent cities. Yet who knows whether some despot--"

He broke off there. Even ~~here~~, apparently, he feared their power might extend:

and here it does extend today ---for the once unique Nautilus is now the outmoded ancestor of submarine navies of all the world.

Once, when Professor Aronnax theorized that the coral islands of the Pacific might someday grow ~~into~~ ~~new~~ continent, the man who called himself Nobody answered him in terms that sum up his life ~~and protest~~ ~~against~~ ~~the~~ ~~earth~~ ~~and~~ ~~its~~ ~~injustice~~ ~~and~~ ~~cruelty~~: "The earth does not want new continents, but new men."

THE QUOTE WUNKERY

. . . Whereas, so these primitive philosophers must have argued, when a man lets his own name pass his lips, he is parting with a living piece of himself, and if he persists in so reckless a course he must certainly end by dissipating his energy and shattering his constitution. Many a broken down debauchee, many a feeble frame wasted by disease, may have been pointed out by these simple moralists to their awe-struck disciples as a fearful example of the profligate who indulges immoderately in the seductive habit of mentioning his own name.

---Sir James Frazer,
The Golden Bough

You're trying to fool me by telling me the truth.
(Overheard)

Come on---they're moving Hell and I've got an option on the first ten loads.

(H. Miller)

The wages of gin is breath.
(Just for a change, I said it)



OOOOGIRLESS

REPORT

The Twelfth World Science Fiction Convention was held 3-6 September 1954 at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco. It struggled frantically to get away, but was held too firmly. Much was accomplished, indeed so much that is not merely noteworthy and unprecedented but positively epoch-making, that it is **rather** a shame nobody remembers exactly what it was. It is now time for a review, for a post-mortem, for a rational assessment, for a logical reconstruction, for another slice of cheese pie. The Following data are presented for consideration.

FINANCIAL REPORT

(1) Income

Registrations	
947 people	\$ 947.00
1 midget	0.50
Special events cards	342.00
Banquet tickets	169.00
Auction	0.52
Advertisements	0.65
Hush money from Dr. Brumback	2,000.01
Counterfeited	18,000.00
Chase National Bank	325,289.14
TOTAL	\$356,748.82

(2) Expenditures

Propaganda	\$ 921.32
Printing bills, postage, etc.	926.18
Cost of special events cards	342.00
Turk Murphy (special rate without harem)	500.02
Banquet	0.75
Cheese pie	25.69
Damages paid to hotel	0.51
(damages claimed, \$217,463.11)	
To Gary Nels for turboencabulator	9,098.17
To Ben Stark for poker	102,201.00
To Poul Anderson for beer	111,260.00
To Les Cole for riotous living and aspirin	0.14
Call girls	120,420.52
Misc. embezzlements	9,052.18
Hush money to Dr. Brumback	2,000.01

Tips 0.31 (Canadian)
TOTAL \$355,718.59

(3) Net profit
\$0.32

One objective of this meeting is to decide how the above profit should be spent.

REPORT ON EVENTS

A statistical breakdown of the convention is unnecessary, and would be unkind. However, a few noteworthy occurrences may be tabulated,

Poker games	9712
Gallons of beer consumed	958,243
Fifths of whisky consumed	5,975
Fifths of Old Crow consumed	8
Virgins attending convention	42
Virgins leaving convention	3
Words spoken by John W. Campbell, Jr. . .	9,579,734

* The 1 was penny-ante.

FORMAL PROGRAM

Ah, who attends the formal program?



How to Write a Filk Song

by P. A. Kingsley

The filk song, though as yet it has received little attention, is a potentially valuable art form. It is related somewhat tenuously to the not-poem, in that it does not take itself very seriously; but it is more closely connected---in a left-hand way---to the folk song. It is a distorted folk song.

The origin of the term "filk song" is probably better-known to most of you than it is to me; but for the benefit of johnnies-come-lately, I will repeat it. It was a typographical error in, or in correspondence about (this is not clear), Lee Jacobs' "The Influence of Science Fiction on Modern American Folk Music." The term was tossed around in SAPS for a while, then dropped but gleefully caught by Karen Anderson.

The blame/credit (choose one) for the first filk song is a little dubious. Like the man who tried to sit on two stools, it falls in the middle, between Poul Anderson who wrote a filk song called Barbarous Allen and Karen Anderson who egged him on and published it in Zed #774.

In line with the Do-it-yourself movement, I propose to outline a simple method for writing your own filk songs. The materials you will need are:

One writing instrument. The simplest is the lead pencil but if you are proficient you may use a fountainpen or a ball point pen. If you use a fountain pen, a bottle of ink will be necessary. A typewriter, tho desirable, is not necessary.

Paper. This must conform to your writing instrument. Do not use soft, absorbent paper with a fountain pen, or oily paper with a ball point pen. Waxed paper is not recommended with any witing instrument.

Optional equipment includes a brain and an understanding of the techniques of versification, but a rhyming dictionary, we believe, is an acceptable substitute.

In writing a filk song, one begins with a folk song. We will take "The Wee Cooper o' Fife," which has a nonsense chorus, for our example. Any folk song will do.

The first verse of the original runs as follows:

There was a wee cooper wha' lived i' Fife,
Nickety-nackety-noo-noo-noo,
And he had gotten a gentle wife,
Hey Willy Wallacky,
Hey John Dougal Allane quo rushety roo-roo-roo

Whatever your song, it is wise to write down the first verse for reference purposes, to check the meter and such.

Now choose the subject and title. Why not a science fiction writer? Let it be "The Wee Writer of Stef."

Next, the chorus should be thought of. The original can be retained, of course, but a science-fictional flavor would enhance the result. (If your song has no chorus you may skip this section.) Considering the attributes of our subject, we write:

- - - - -
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy, dx,
- - - - -
Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx

Insert a series of rhymed couplets into this frame, and your filk song will be written. However, consideration must be taken as to the couplets themselves. (If your song has quatrains, write quatrains.) First, state the subject:

There was a wee writer, and he wrote stef,
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy, dx,
To all other subjects he was deaf,
Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx.

There must be a problem of some sort, or there will be no song. Taking it from there, we can build up the following situation:

He wrote space-opry, and gadgets galore,
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy, dx,
Living on beer and but little more,

Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx.

Of course he improves and makes more money:

He wrote-human-interest rocketeers' woes,
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy, dx,
On two cents a word to steaks he rose,
Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx.

He wrote of extrapolated trends,
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy, dx,
With fancy science to aid his ends,
Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx.

So far, so good. Now comes the trouble:

Three cents a word---and he did wed,
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy dx,
With a little jam to sweeten his bread,
Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx.

A baby comes, and three cents shrinks
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy, dx,
To the price of beans and the milk it drinks,
Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx.

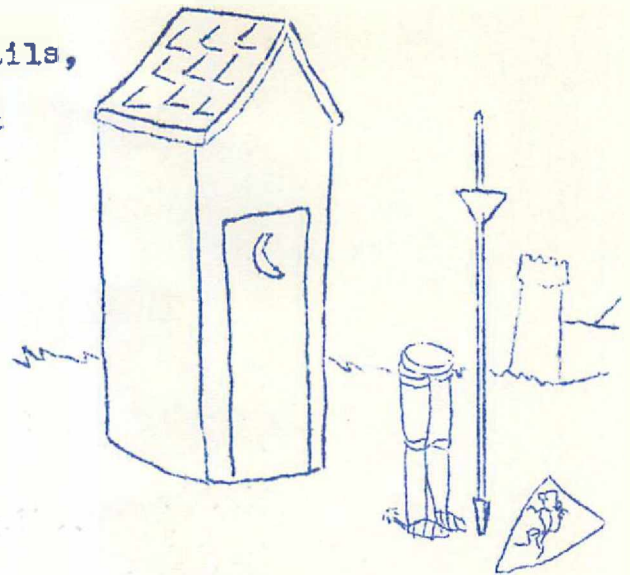
And now we are ready for the triumphant solution:

He took the subjects he'd written about,
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy, dx,
And wrote them again with the science left out,
Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx.

He sells to the Post, and Collier's too,
Skyhook and spacewarp, dy, dx,
And lives off steaks and imported brew,
Hey Hohmann B-orbit,
Wege zur Raumschiffahrt, e-to-the-x dy dx.

See? Anybody can write a filk song!

A gentleman farmer of Wales
 Tried to copy the sex life of snails,
 Overlooking the fact
 That his own physique lacked
 The hermaphroditism it entails.



Waltz faster, dear. This
 is a rumba.

The takers of Gallup polls
 Report on the habits of trolls:
 97%
 Are the men that were sent
 With mustard and catsup on rolls.

You will live to be terribly old
 If your banshee is hoarse with a cold;
 It would much hurt her pride
 If you tick and died,
 So she'll guard you from danger,
 I'm told.



A man might well lose his shirt playing strip poker.

A TALE OF CASTLE
SEVAGRAM

THE
Censorcelled



Karen, the Blue Princess, had barely arrived at Sevagram with the Baroness of San Francisco, Irene of Sloop, when the sentry informed her that a troop of Ghuists had been seen approaching the castle.

"Apparently your visit to Sevagram is to be other than boring," she commented to Irene, and told the steward to bring more wine. The two ladies then waited in the Great Hall to learn what the Ghuists intended by their visit.

John Davis himself was at their head. At the sight of her old enemy, the Blue Princess was instantly on her guard. After his daring theft of the holy Golden Beerbottle, recovered at such cost, she feared him as much as she hated him.

"This time, as you see, I am home," she said. "Have I inconvenienced you thereby?"

"Certainly not," he said. "I wished to see you. One of my underlings has run off with a valuable possession, and it is reported that she came here."

"She? Who is it, then?"

"One Melisant, mistakenly called 'the Gentle.' She has always refused to accept the Purple, and a few days ago stole my magic stylus and made off on my fastest grulzak. I must have the stylus, and intend to punish her properly. Once I have dipped her hands in hekto jelly, she'll be more sensible."

Karen's face darkened, for she knew well the history of the ensorcelled stylus. A spell had been cast upon it, so that it no longer needed the guidance of a skilled hand, but drew illustrations by itself. She had heard also that Davis had ordered it to be stolen from the studio of the great Rotsler, Magnificent and Unique.

"I know of no Melisant here," she answered.

"But you have just returned," he said. "Perhaps she came after you left. I must ask that we be permitted to search."

The princess sighed a little. "You begin to bore me," she murmured, and struck a gong.

"Your men will not come," said Davis with a grim smile.

"What?"

"I left a collection of Clayton Astoundings with the guard. By now they are helpless with laughter. And I know that Prince Poul is working on his ten-volume biography of King Olaf Saint and refused to be disturbed."

"Shall we begin the search?"

In confirmation of what he had said, Larrander the Barbarian, a new guardsman recently converted from Ghu, rushed in. "The guard can't come---can't even standup!

They're laughing themselves sick!" he shouted. "They were reading a mess of magazines, I didn't know what. I'd just gone into the guard-room when I heard the gong--"

He broke off, staring at the Ghuists.

"Princess, shall we begin the search?" repeated Davis softly.

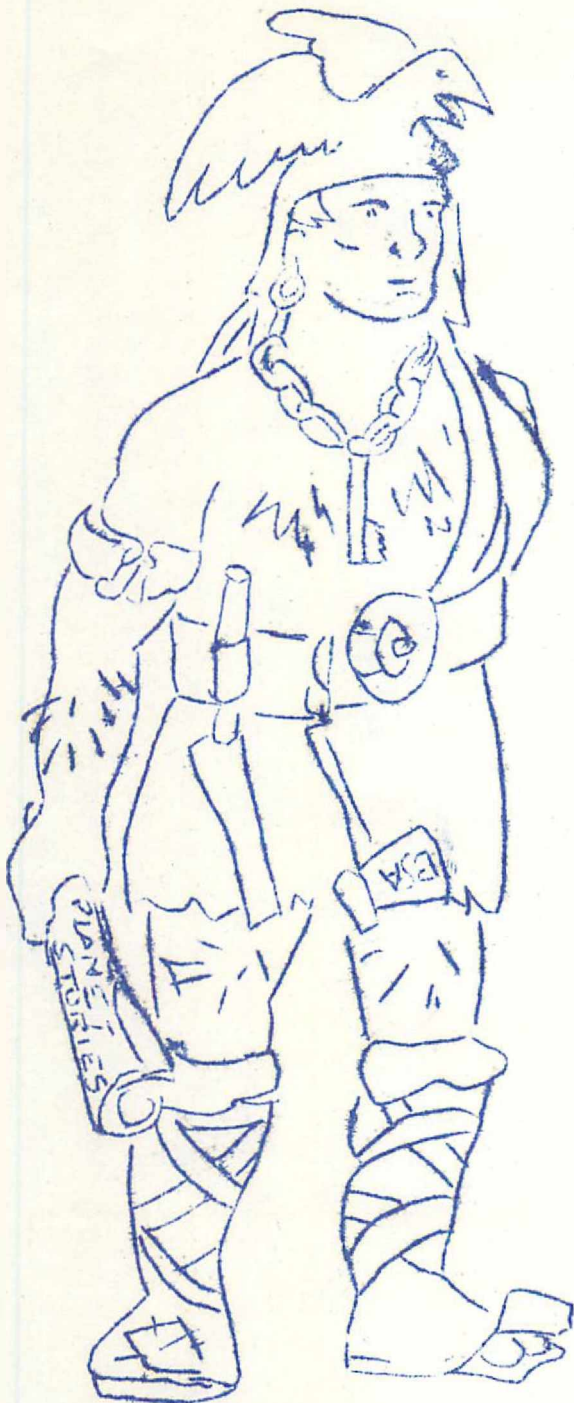
"Go ahead," she said bitterly.

II

As soon as the Ghuists were out of sight, Larrander whispered urgently, "Have they come for Melisant?"



LARRANDER



THE BARBARIAN

"Yes," answered the princess.

"She's here! I just took her to the Crifanac Room!"

"Pits of Ghu! They're going in that direction. We've got to get there first."

"How?"

"Secret passage. Luckily, this place is full of them."

Leaving Irene in the throne room they went through a panel and along a narrow corridor. Its walls glowed eerily with phosphorescence from the moss with which they were covered. Finally Karen paused and pressed a stone, and they saw the Crifanac Room.

A small, slender girl, with long blonde hair, sat reading a copy of ~~TRANTOR~~ --- and the tramp of ~~feet~~ echoed down the corridor! Hearing the footsteps, the girl looked up and saw the opening in the wall.

In two seconds, she was inside-- and safe! "That was close," said Larrander.

"Almost too close," said the ~~Blue~~ Princess. "We've got to get out of here or they'll hear us. Quietly!"

Stepping softly, they ~~approached~~ her. Karen did not fail to note how Melisant clung to Larrander's brawny arm. She led them through many branching passages, up corkscrew flights of stairs, and finally into a dusty loft, lit by windows flattened between floor and sloping roof.

"You'll be safe enough here," the Princess said. "I'll see that you get food if the Ghuists stay long, and you'll find various furnishing and conveniences in this or the other lofts. This is the only entrance."

"Thank you, Your Blueness," whispered the girl. "I'm very sorry to give you so much trouble."

"Never mind that," laughed Princess Karen. "The important thing is that this matter is giving John Davis trouble, and I owe him some. Besides, I've found that my guard captain is unreliable; he should have prevented the guards' immobilization. An officer is only as good as his conduct in emergencies."

"Larrander," she went on, "I understand you barbarians are legendary for your ability as guard-captains. Would you be my new seneschal?"

"Most gladly, Your Blueness ---it was with that hope that I asked to be assigned to the guard when I came to you as a convert from the Tyrant of Tucson."

"Good. Melisant, can you tell me the history of this stylus?"

"Yes, the tyrant often boasted of it. It was formerly, he said, the property of the great Rotsler, who had put an ensorcelling on it in a playful moment. Any stylus would do as well for him; it may be

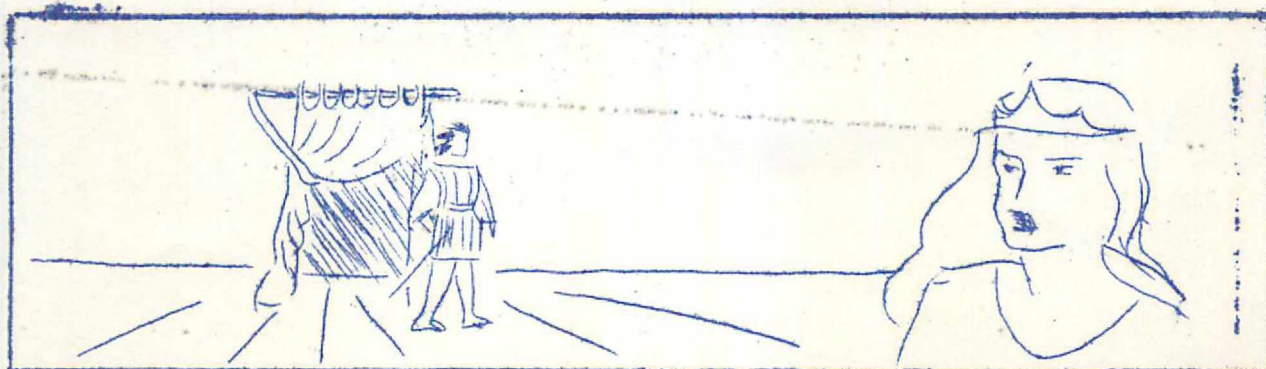
that he does not even miss it from his studio. The heir-apparent of the color I dare not name had it stolen for his own base use. I felt ~~that it~~ ^{this} should not be. I had long desired to come to Sevagram; I had heard of Larrander's conversion to your faith. Finally I had a chance to steal the stylus and get away. I wished it to be in your hands rather than those of the unholy tyrant."

She reached into a pocket and drew forth the stylus. In the golden-moted light of the loft, it glittered with prismatic colors; but when Karen took it, the ensorcelled stylus burst into a splendor of blue radiance.

"Is some destiny at work here?" wondered the Princess. "Larrander, you take it."

In his hands the stylus was less radiant, but equally sapphired. Returned to Melisant it was again prismatic--- but for a few moments only. Slowly, a change came over it: in a few minutes' time, it shone with a pale, but unwavering, Phthalic blue!

"This is passing strange," murmured the princess. "But keep the stylus with you for



now, I must deal with the Ghuists."

"But what does it mean, that this stylus has turned blue in my hands?" asked Melisant.

"It can only mean that, whether you realize it or not, you have accepted the Blue Faith."

Thus the Blue Princess; then she and her newly appointed Seneschal departed.

III

Karen and Larrander had just come out of the secret passage and closed the door when there came a footfall behind them. It was John Davis!

"So!" he sneered. "This was why you were not too upset when I started to search! You knew you had Melisant safely hidden!"

"You are mistaken, John Davis ---I did not then know that she had claimed sanctuary here. But I cannot revoke sanctuary, and so have now hidden her--- ~~where~~ you could not find her, even if you could open this door!"

"You will find her for me," returned John Davis with an evil smile.

"Never!"

"We shall see. Take them." At his words, two burly Ghuists stepped to each of them, and bound them to chair.

"No matter what you do to me, I will not lead you to Melisant ---I don't know the way, even if I wanted to!" snarled Larrander.



Irene of Sloop

The princess said quietly, "I will tell you nothing, whatever barbaric torments you devise."

"But what about your guest--- the Baroness of Sloop? Can you calmly watch what I will do to her?" Davis gestured to one of his minions, who went out. In a few minutes he returned with the lady of Schloss Sloop. She was bound to a chair ~~at a~~ distance from the others before she had a chance to protest.

"What is ~~this~~?" she cried.

"It is the Princess's ~~idea~~ notion of honor," said the Tyrant of Tucson, "to refuse me my fugitive slave. We will see now whether her hospitality includes permitting a guest to suffer that her principles may be upheld."

"You inconceivable beast!" cried Karen.

"Don't tell him anything," said Irene gallantly. "You mustn't give him Melisant."

Davis took a sheaf of papers from his pocket and began reading. Karen and Lar-rander were too far away to hear him, but could see how Irene flinched at the ~~very~~ start. Then she clenched her teeth and gripped the arms of the chair, evidently resolving not to show her pain.

Suddenly she could hear it in silence no longer, and in spite of her efforts at self control screamed aloud.

"What are you reading to Irene, you misbegotten dog?" cried Karen.

"A manuscript rejected by Dimensions," said Davis, and went on. Irene's screams redoubled.

"Stop! Stop!" shouted the princess. "Oh, Holy Phthalo---how depraved, how unspeakable, are these Ghuists! I will let you have Melisant!"

"I'm sorry, Karen," sobbed Irene. "I just couldn't take it."

"In such a conflict, we are

at a disadvantage," answered the Blue Princess. "Ghu alone can use such monstrous weapons. We cannot retaliate in kind."

At this moment Prince Poul entered the room, and saw his wife, her guest, and the Seneschal of Sevagram bound to chairs, gloated over by John Davis.

"What is this farce?" he growled. His glasses flashed like lightning, and his hair was like a thundercloud.

Davis laughed. "The filthy pro has finally noticed that something is happening! Know that my men are in undisputed control of the castle. We have come to get a slave who stole a precious possession, and came here for sanctuary. When we have taken the thief we will go."

Poul glared at the intruders. "I have something to say about that," he said. He then let fly a volley of adjectives, which clattered around the heads of the Ghuistic guards. Then, swinging an adverb in each hand, he advanced and mowed them down in windrows. The few who attempted to flee he struck on the run with noun absolutes, and finally he finished off those yet remaining alive by stabbing them with participles. John Davis alone escaped the slaughter.

"Where is that low-living offspring of a diseased he-goat and a misbegotten dog?" roared the prince.

"He got away when he ~~came~~ saw

you pile into his guardsmen," answered Irene.

"Let him go," said Karen. "I have plans for him."

Prince Poul cut them loose, and Larrander wanted to go to Melisant immediately, but Karen sent him to rouse the guards and have the Ghu-crud of bodies removed. At this moment the steward showed up.

"Ho, Bim!" called Karen. "I need a drink! Bring some for us all. I've been faunching for one ever since John Davis showed up."

And he did, and that fast.



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Author F. van Wyck Mason's introduction to CUTLASS EMPIRE, biography of Henry Morgan:

Any attempt to describe to modern minds the almost incredibly brutal, predatory, and amoral mid-sixteen hundreds, requires a deal of compromise and soft-pedaling. Not even a student well steeped in research can stomach happily the true extent of a seventeenth-century conqueror's savage oppression of his defeated enemies, the prevalence of gross tastes and customs, and the insensate intolerance of one religious faction for another. People, their customs, and their religious views, have changed for the better since 1649. Perish the so-called, "good old days!" Consideration of life in the 17th century, if it be accurately portrayed, is not for the queasy in his stomach, for the romantic idealist, nor for the religiously narrow-minded."

Backcover blurb for the paperback edition:

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CUTLASS EMPIRE, Cardinal edition, p. 131: "The important buccaneers were there, except John Davis, the Scourge of the Floridas."

Must have gotten his SAPS mailing that day.