

"A NEWSLETTER OF COMEDY AND CREATIVITY"

ISSUE #24

COST - \$1

SEPTEMBER, 1984-1

"VALUE THE SPIRIT, & NOT THE PASSING"

And as the sky turned crimson they felt a peace they'd never known before; it stirred and whispered all around them as if it were composed of human murmurings, from deep within the shade of the glens. This was a world of their creation, and they had done it with no help from their comrades, with no urgings from their loved ones. They had found Home.

"But how real can this place be?" Doriann, gray hair in tangles, stumbled forward, only to find she was still sitting there in the lush field, clutching a small fern nearby. Fayte smiled and did not question as much. Here was his root; here he had come to learn to grow. He accepted it willingly, and with no traces of conditioned hesitation. Doriann wanted to believe too; for her, it was not so easy. She had emerged from a wilderness where kindness was treated as a reward rather than an emotion freely given. In her world, human beings were valued a little less than the plastic and shiny artifacts they chose to worship. In her time, such a flourishing creation and culture was not known, and dreams of a better life were dismissed as heresy, childishness or foolhardiness. Fear ruled her logic, and dependence her ambitions. She had been taught to live for others, instead of with others; to need rather than want. She was only now beginning to see how blinded were her people, and how fortunate was she in this secret.

Fayte saw her world through her eyes and said nothing. He could imagine her pain in the deep recesses of ancestral memory, but had never known that way in his lifetime. His people were more fully realized in their quest for knowledge. They had learned the inklings of patience, at a time when their civilization was in sore need of it, and thus eventually realized, much to their amazement and delight, that they were all of One Mind, One Hope. That to them, it was more important to Be than to Have.

But he could not tell her this; even now to him the thoughts sounded trite and simplistic. He couldn't describe the feeling of contentment that lay beneath them. He could only revel in the comfort that this joy was his, and that Doriann too would learn in her time.

It was almost the moment of enlightening. But Fayte was silent even yet. It was not his people's way. Any feelings that may or may not have existed between he and Doriann were irrelevant to this revelation. The discovery had to come from her, not from any outside source.

And Doriann looked around and Saw and Understood. And she turned to Fayte, who was after all just another Being like herself, and spoke. "It is the same, and yet all unique. It is too difficult to lay to words, but words aren't needed. It is me, and good. I am. I am all right. It was there all along, and it is my strength, as it is me."

"You see," he said slyly, "it's not so terribly hard improvising to an alien world, is it? I mean, the fake set and the wind machine howling like that, the imagination...Almost sounded real, Doriann. Very good, you've passed your lesson today. Anything you'd like to say about it now?" He got up to dim the studio lights before their departure.

"Yes, Mr. Fayte," replied Doriann, stepping into the lush field in the backdrop and starting to walk towards the forest in the painted distance, "See you in the funny papers!" ew

SHRED BEFORE READING



FLIM-FLAMABLE

BER 1 - George Peppard (55)
 BER 2 - Groucho Marx (b. 1895); Bud Abbott (b. 1895)
 BER 4 - Buster Keaton (b. 1895)
 BER 5 - Chester Allen Arthur (b. 1830); Radio's first
 World Series (Yankees v. Giants, 1921)
 BER 6 - ARTHUR HLAVATY (41)
 BER 8 - Chicago Fire started (1871)
 BER 9 - John Lennon (b. 1940); Jacques Tati (b. 1908)
 BER 10 - MICHAELA DUNCAN (?); Harold Pinter (b. 1930);
DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO OCTOBER 1J
 BER 13 - CLARK DISSMEYER (20)
 BER 18 - brother JAY (21)
 BER 19 - "Uncle" Floyd Vivino (32)
 BER 20 - JAMIE ALDER (33)??
 BER 22 - ANNI ACKNER (30—gala party to come!)
 BER 25 - RON FLOWERS (27); Minnie Pearl (71)
 BER 26 - DEREK TAGUE (21)
 BER 28 - JILL DEARMAN (17); VALENTINO (31)
 BER 29 - J.R. "BOB" DOBBS (b. 1929); SET CLOCKS BACK
 BER 30 - "War of the Worlds" Radio Panic (1938)
 BER 31 - Halloween; Houdini 'dies' (1926)

Bad news, and an apology for misleading everybody, especially myself. Truth comes hard sometimes—for the nonce, insofar as personal correspondence and phone calls go, I'm still here at the "Same Old Place", 418 E. Third in Roselle (NJ 07203). The reason I am still residing here is, obviously, I haven't moved out yet. I don't feel like going into detail, but suffice it to say I was misled by my landlord-to-have-been and am now back to square one, somewhat subdued, somewhat despairing, but certainly wiser. I'm still searching for a new Home-base II, but this time I'm not going to announce anything (much as I do not believe it "jinxed" anything) until AFTER it happens.

INSIDE JOKE continues, however, and that brings us to next month (in a month or so), which will be—ta dum!—our THIRD ANNIVERSARY. It was in Oct. of 1980 that IJ was born, and to mark the beginning of our 4th year, I am now soliciting on a first-come-first-run basis an appropriate COVER for the next issue. The cover should have the "vitals" on it, i.e., the issue # (#25), the cost (\$1), the month (Oct. 1984-1), and of course the title (and if you feel like it, our subtitle "A Newsletter of Comedy and Creativity"). For the rest of the 8x11 page, anything goes. So if you have an inclination, best do it right away.

Also needed for future issues are mastheads, for when my stories are the front page, and other future covers (check with me first on the latter—in fact, if I get more than one taker for the above anniversary cover offer, I will probably ask the person in question to re-arrange the cover for December 84-1 or Feb. 84 or...).

Last ish seemed to go over well, even for folks who hadn't been with us long enough to know what the hell we were parodying, but thanks to the Ever-Popular (see lettercolumn) for the idea in the first place, and let's onward! This month bears lots of neat surprises too—hope it was worth the long wait—including poetry even I like this time 'round; submissions from two members of The Firesign Theatre ("America's ONLY Avant-Garde 'Comedy' Group!"); new staff writers Mike Gunderloy and Deborah Benedict Gedwillo—welcome!—and some boffo writing and art par usual, so sit back and...Oh, and, yoo hoo, STAFF WRITERS:

I have had to say goodbye to a few of you this month, regrettably, due to the breaking of the only promise I ask of staffers. If you are NOT going to have a column for me in a given issue, fine, but only if you LET ME KNOW BY THE DEADLINE YOU WON'T BE CONTRIBUTING. Not letting me know, AS I'VE TOLD ALL OF YOU BEFORE, is just plain not fair, and I'm afraid grounds for bye-bye. This does not mean I will never accept any of your stuff for IJ anymore; it simply means no more free lunch, you gotta now pay like everyone else. A full list of exactly how many staff writers we now have, minus deadwood, will be printed in IJ #25.

Oh, and speaking of payment, thanks to the following for their hefty donations to TJ's costs (ever-growing) this time: two anonymous donors I'd like to nonetheless acknowledge and thank as "Mr. Mike" and "Ms. M.V.", J.C. Brainbeau, Bob Dugwyler, Jimmy Harris, Randy Maxson and Robert Rabbit.* Personal thanks also to Dave and Phil, SWAZ natürlich, James, Doug Smith, Greg Blair, Dave Ginsburg, Roldo, Alan Rosenthal and Cathy Crockett, and all the others kind enough to grace me with their presence and phone calls these past two months.

In honor of my favourite season, autumn, being upon us in all its invigorating glory, I'd like this time to dedicate this issue of *IJ* to the living, for a change—first to Arthur Hlavaty, keep getting better and better soon!; and secondly to two of our very own staff writers, from whom I've just received not only columns but the following calligraphed announcement:

"Mr. BRIAN Q. PEARCE and Ms. D. ANNE ACKNER are pleased to announce their WEDDING on 22 JULY 1983 at the Home of Mutual Friends. The couple will reside in separate locations due to the pressures of their careers."

Heartfelt congratulations to Anni and Brian, and all the best!

Submission to IJ-department-Compensation: NO FREE IJ, just 'game' in a manner of speaking; Needed/Wanted: Stories (under 2000 words) & articles (same) & other nonsense (ditto); artwork (one page or under), spot illos, letters-to-editor, Papoanaganda (especially from our Co-ordinaries out there, come on!), STAFF COLUMNS ON TIME, money any time and your stuff for review (does that cover everything), the stuff for printing being sent out to arrive at the Palacial PO Box by the deadline of October 10 for our 3RD ANNIVERSARY ISSUE (remember, first come first run for covers!), which I pray with all my might will be shorter than this one (I'll try for 24 pages again). See you then!

ON A HOT SUMMER DAY LIKE THIS, ZEKE, YOUR MIND IS ONLY ON ONE THING!

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Fan Noose

A three-parter this time, as what follows is what I've gotten from last issue's release through September 12 (type date)...I don't know why I keep getting mail art notices [IJ IS NOT A MAIL ART ZINE, Julian and friends!], but NADA POST (P.O. Box 0221, College Grove Station, San Diego, CA 92115) is sponsoring two shows, one for "TOURIST POST CARDS" (deadline 10/24) and the other with the theme "BTG BROTHER IS WATCHING" (deadline 1/1/84), so if you know or care what mail art is, I trust the preceding has meant something to you...Paul Buhle writes to let us know, "Radical Humor Artshow reopens at Martin Luther King Jr. Center in Atlanta Sept. 30 for the Alliance for Cultural Democracy annual conference", so stop by if you're in the area. Speaking of rad-hum, I still haven't read through the "Imagining the Eighties" issue of CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE, even tho my Firesign article's in it, and as I have neither time nor room (nor inclination; that's not what this column is about—we do overviews here) for a full review of same, I'll just urge everyone again to send for it (\$3 to 505 West End Ave., #15C, New York, NY 10024)...Found out what A. Pavletich actually produces under the name DE NADA, which is selling tiny paper booklets, about the size of "f.b."s (remember them?), containing one short sentence per "page", but (I think) cut and stapled and numbered by hand. Decide for yourself if you want any—send a SASE for a list of 'em to 935½ N. Vendome St., Los Angeles, CA 90026...Alan DeCotes & The Phantoms, w/ The Phantomettes", whoever they are (I gather a cross between a rock group and activists, but I could be wrong), put out a "Phan Club" newsletter, apparently available for the askin' from P.O. Box 238, College Point, NY 11356...Denis McBee of NEITHER/NOR PRESS (Box 8043, Ann Arbor, MI 48107) writes "I'm very happy to say that BEATNIKS FROM SPACE #4 is at the printer and due out the end of Sept.", and also sends along a N/N-sponsored comicbook JUNK COMIX #1 by Mike Kazalek, well worth checking out, at \$1.50 from N/N...Millea Kenin's latest, EMPIRE #31 (a zine for the sf writer), is out, vastly informative, and available for only \$2 from MK's Unique Graphics, 1025 55th St., Oakland, CA 94608...Another highly prolific sf-fantasy-feminist-fan-writer, Jeanne Gomoll (I know, Millea and Jeanne, I keep mixing you up & I really shouldn't, do forgive!), has put out a bit of a personal glimpse entitled WHIMSEY, "available for the usual" (which in fandom can mean anything from a hello postcard to a buck) from 2018 Jenifer St., Madison, WI 53704...SubG Prof. Rock Homberg (Room 107, 1340 E. 3rd St., Dayton, OH 45402) is currently doing something I always wanted to do myself—serializing through the mails. His story's called SLACK ROBBERS FROM OUTER SPACE, is probably gotten for a SASE, and is a must for Subs and Ed Wood fans alike...Bruce Duncan has published SPARRY'S STREET ART, just like the title says, for \$1.25 from Berkeley Inn Hotel, Room 414, 2501 Haste St., Berkeley, CA 94704...The latest horrorzine to come my way is one reported on by Robert Hale elsewhere this issue—Ron Carlson's CHICAGO SHIVERS (\$6/yr to 4443 Grace St., Schiller Park, IL 60176)...Apparently radio stations do more than play music—KALX at UC Berkeley puts out a "program guide" paper called WATTS UP—address correspondence to KALX at 234 Bowditch St., Berkeley, CA 94704...Part 2 of the column I'll title "New Things From Old Friends", listing here semi-regulars and noteworthy: "Ian Teuty" aka Terrence McMahon sent me something with no discernible title but filled with much good parody, satire, mail art, news and other fun features—for more info write him at 33513 6th St., Union City, CA 94587...The Galaxy Gang, headed up by Clayton Park, are at it again with their latest (amazingly inexpensive) comic AWESOME #6 (not to be confused with Buck Moon's thing, plugged below) plus, as an added bonus, their latest GALAXY GAZETTE—do send 25¢ to 'em at 3700 Densmore Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98103...IJ staffer Roldo plays a big art part (and writing part too) in the latest (#2) CAREFULLY SEDATED from Cathy Crockett & Alan Rosenthal; a bit fannish but they published my letter so I get likes in after all—\$2 or trade to Cathy at 117 Wanless Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4N 1W1 CANADA...Bit o' sad news: David Ginsburg's plug column in GOLDMINE mag, FANDOMANIA!, is facing some drastic cuts, which may spell the end of IJ plugs—much to Dave's dismay. Ne'er fret Dave, you've done us super, and I hope music-oriented zines will continue to write you for free plugs at P.O. Box 322, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858...Dana Snow now has ready the 5th installment of his GOONZINE—a must for Goon Show fans—for \$3 from 7356 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036...REAL HEP!, the fine comic from SteelDragon Press, is going quarterly with this, their issue #3, available for \$2 from editor Will Shetterly, Box 7253, Powderhorn Station, Minneapolis, MN 55407...For all the others who've been waiting batedly as I have for the newest SIDNEY SUPPEY'S QUARTERLY & CONFUSED PET MONTHLY, editor (IJ staffer/ SWAZ member) Candi Strecker has just brought out Vol. IV, #3! Lots of neat stuff; Candi's address will be in IJ next month in the staff writer column—make a note of it!...Newest issue of THE STAR BLAZERS FANDOM REPORT (self-explanatory) is out courtesy of editor Mike Pinto (1622 Stevens Ave., Merrick, NY 11566); membership's \$5/yr...The newest THUDPUCKER features a neat fiction piece by editor Ron Ahrens (P.O. Box 61272, Fairbanks, AK 99706) about a pet beagle on—well, you won't catch me giving it away, but it's good! Also drawings by Randy Maxson...And WALLPAPER, the only other comedy/creativity newsletter I know of in NJ, celebrates its first anniversary with its Aug./Sept. issue, only 25¢ still, well spent, to Amy Sweeney, P.O. Box 3324, Trenton, NJ 08619...And at last, again, the monthlies! AGAINST THE WALL V.11#10 (Libertarian)—B111 George, P.O. Box 444, Westfield, NJ 07091 (\$2, Trade—oh, and sorry Bill, haven't gotten to that stack you gave me yet!); AWESOME #1 REPRINT (surreality)—Buck Moon, P.O. Box 40916, San Francisco, CA 94140 (this special issue is FREE!); COMIX WAVE(5-7)/COMIX WORLD(223-25) (lug comix wrapups)—Clay Geerdes, Box 7081, Berkeley, CA 94707 (\$11/2 yrs—my sub ran out, so I'd urge you to file Clay's name and address in your minds for the future should you want to subscribe); FACTSHEET FIVE #7 (plugs, reviews, etc.—Anni's a staffer on this too)—Mike Gunderloy 41 Lawrence St., Medford, MA 02155 (60¢ stamps or 80¢ cash—thanks once more for the super plugs, Mikey!); LONE STAR V.1#4 (humor)—Lauren Bar-

Inside IJ Staffers

INSIDE JOKE is pleased to welcome as its two newest staffers 1) a guy who's been around these pages for awhile now as a contributor of weird missives who also writes undercover for certain Discordian societies, apas and SubGenius clenches; and 2) the fifth female-type person to join our staff (excluding me), author of some of the strangest letters I've ever seen who hangs around folks like husband Tom Gedwillo, also a bit off if you ask me, but who are we pots to call kettles...in any case, it being IJ's policy to have new staffers 'introduce' themselves, here's what Deborah Benedict Gedwillo and Mike Gunderloy have to say—

DEBORAH BENEDICT
4718½ Calvert St.
Lincoln, NE 68506
1-27-51

Just The Facts, Ma'am...
Boring Statistics: Born January 27 1951 Pittsburgh, PA. Have two older sisters, both normal and married with kids and magnets on their Fridgesdaires and so on.

Favorite Game as a Child: Hide and Seek, but only if I wasn't "it".
Monopoly, but only if I had Boardwalk and Park Place.

Pet Peeves: Jim Peeve, Myrna Peeve...ah, no—ok ok ok...Unexplained Blackouts (power company ones, not personal ones), Hangovers, Nuclear Weapons, Winchells Donut commercials late at night when I'm in bed and starving and tapped out, 95% of most "normal" human beings, children who stare at me in public, people who don't flush the toilets in public restrooms, Ernest Angley, Oral Roberts and ALL those TV preachers and religion in general....(Actually, everything is a pet peeve to me unless I planned it.) (My solpicism is boundless)

Most Loathed Personages: George Gilder and Phyllis Schlafly (they be-Tong together), John Travolta and Sly Stallone, Lionel Ritchie Rich, and all hack writers. *who make a lot of money*

Most Hilarious Experience: Graduating from High School on acid.

Most Famous Person You've Ever Kissed: A tie between Jimi Hendrix and John Lennon, and I am not lying. John Lennon: At the Hollywood Bowl stage exit, I leaped up and grabbed him and planted one on his cheek. I was 14 years old. He was somewhat plastered. Jimi Hendrix: I spent the night with him at the Landmark Hotel in Hollywood in 1969; on acid. We talked and when I left I kissed him goodbye. He was sleeping, or crashed out, as we would have said in the old days.

Favorite Book Title that Does Not Exist: Ken and Barbie Eat it Raw.

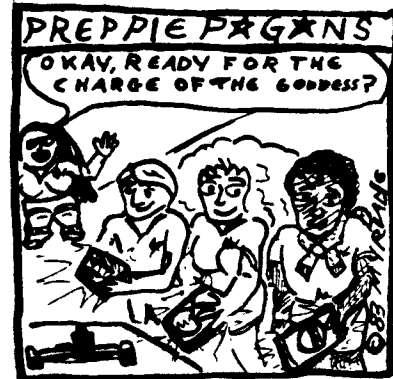
Or: Ain't No Such Thing As A Cowboy Vampire.

Favorite Drugs: Early Owsley acid, nitrous oxide, opium, all hypnotics and sleeping potions. (I'm a professional insomniac)

Dumbest Lie You've Ever Told (Doesn't matter if you got away with it or not): For 6 months I had everybody on my bus route from St. Catherine of Siena School to Woodland Hills in 1964 convinced I was from London, England and personally knew Mary Quant, Jean Shrimpton and Marianne Faithfull. (ED: There's more, but we'll run out of room...)

Bred and born in New Jersey but raised in California, I thus combine outré prenatal influences with a deranged early environment. Protected from my own abnormality by academia, I lived in blatant ignorance of the real world until my abortive college career introduced me to drugs, liquor, women, and dropping out. I worked at a variety of jobs (invader of privacy, liquor warehouseman, professional driver, Kelly Girl) to establish my future credentials as a writer before moving to Boston to mortify the flesh with periodic snowfall. Having once owned a pet bread mold, my fondest ambition is now to spend two years touring scenic Iowa in a beat-up chaireuse VM microbus.

MIKE GUUNDERLOY
41 Lawrence St.
Medford, MA 02155
9-2-59



nett Scharf, P.O. Box 29000, Suite #103, San Antonio, TX 78229 (\$1.95 per issue; \$9.95 per year); THE MONKEYS/BOYCE & HART PHOTO FAN CLUB #47 (would I kid?)—Jodi Hamrich, secy., 508 8th St. NE #4, Watertown, SD 57201 (\$6.25 dues/yr—I supply the club with news on Nesmith/TFT activity w/ the video); NUCLEAR TIMES Aug. '83 (THE mag on the antinuclear weapons movement)—Andrea Doremus, Publishing Ass't., Room 512, 298 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10001 (\$2); SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #48—Fall '83 (Hugo-winning sf fanzine/semiprozine)—Richard Gels, P.O. Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211 (\$2, Trade); SMALL PRESS REVIEW V.15#8 self-explanatory)—Len Fulton, Dustbooks, Box 100, Paradise, CA 95969 (\$14/yr or Trade—FEEDBACK review column done by Pat K. Urioste, P.O. Box 11254, Denver, CO 80211 and gives IJ's address change top billing this time, thanks Pat!); TRASHOLA V.3#s2&3 (schlock & sleazemovies)—Jim Morton, Suite 583, 109 Minna St., San Francisco, CA 94105. That's all "all"? That's plenty! for this time—see you in anniversaryland!

P.S. (well, this would be ANNOUSE w/o a P.S.)—Check out "The Diary of a Masterwork in Oils" in THE 'N' LEAGUE FANERS NEWSLETTER, put out by Al Ackerman (of the Harry Barrs Club), aka "Blaster A", P.O. Box 15035, San Antonio, TX 78222 - send SASE for inquiry! All's good people!



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an Alien
and still threatens
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SIGNALS CARRY FARTHER AT NIGHT

by Steven F. Scharff

(original idea suggested by John R. Scharff)
"This is WSKY, comin' to you from the top of the World Trade Center in the City. I'm Michael Peterson, bringin' you the best of music from the past, present and future."

Station manager Bill Miles sat back in his easy chair, listening to his station's newest DJ, congratulating himself for managing to sing up the hottest nighttime DJ in the country. He never made it clear when he was born, nor anything about his early life. What was known was that he worked for some of the most prestigious stations in the US, playing a mixture of blues, jazz, reggae, and all types of rock.

Bill was pondering in his chair the incident that occurred the previous night. One of the secretaries had walked up to Michael, simply to give him his contract papers, when he suddenly reacted in a most bizarre manner, recoiling from her in a mixture of fear and anger. He later stated that it was her cross around her neck. Peterson said that he'd grown up in a very Catholic family, and that he always had a bad reaction whenever he saw a cross.

The station manager started laughing. "Maybe he's a vampire!" was a thought that crossed his mind. Then it struck him. Peterson had always worked at night, had a bad reaction to crosses, and no one ever saw him during the day.

He got up from his easy chair, and walked slowly into the hallway. It was Michael's booth. The door was left open, and Bill peeked inside. It was Michael, going over some notes for a later part of the show.

"Oh, hi boss!" came the response from the DJ. "Something wrong?" "No," said the station manager, "just checking up on things."

"Watch the turntable for me, will ya? I've got an appointment with some porcelain." And Michael got up and left the booth, walking in the direction of the bathroom.

The boss' thought to himself, Michael is the type of person over whom some women would kill. He's rich, trim, well-groomed, dresses like a fashion plate, and is quite young. Well, he looks young... As the Bob Marley lp spun on the turntable, Bill approached an upright brown paper bag and peered inside. A thermos bottle. Out of curiosity, he took it out, and opened the lid.

Bill's mouth swung open. A thermos bottle full of blood.

The sound of feet walking back to the booth signalled Bill to close the bottle and place it in the bag.

"I'm back!" said Michael in his cheery voice. He stared strangely into the boss's face.

"S'matter, Bill? You look awfully pale!" Bill stared at his employee's teeth, looking for the sharpened canines.

"Um, I...feel a little...faint. Think I'll...sit down...a bit." Staggering back to his chair, he turned the office stereo off. He wondered if he should buy cloves of garlic and hang them in the doorway. But sighing and closing his eyes he came to the conclusion that if he told anyone, they'd think it was a publicity stunt.

Publicity! A vampire DJ!

Bill's mind flashed with all different concepts—setting up the studio to look like a crypt, giving public appearances from a coffin, etc... He rushed over to the desk for a pencil, paper, and turned the stereo back on.

"Could be the biggest thing since Wolfman Jack!" he said aloud, and began writing down his notes.

CLOSING REDUX

by Gerry Reith

Jo (the name befits her role as generic lover for all sorts of desperate and intelligent young men in Sheridan) pestered me drunk again two nights ago while I was at work crunching numbers. She has a habit of binges, doesn't seem particularly interested in any of the disposable cocks she takes home, and will on occasion when un-partnered totter out the bar and fall into my arms attempting, I suppose, to elicit some response from someone.

Tonight she told me of her conviction that Dale (the horsetrading wheeler-dealer from Texas who owns the place where I work and is Pa to Brent & Brian) is masterminding a plot to destroy the Sheridan Center, close it down, make it go kaput.

"Why is Dale trying to wreck this place?" she wondered for me.

"What?"

"It's obvious, he's doing everything he can to ruin it!"

"Like what?"

"Oh, come on! You don't go serving the Big Horn Executive club with a dirty banquet room; you don't serve Rotary the same meals two months in a row!"

"What are you talking about, that's just simple mismanagement! It is all LaVerne's fault, it is...just because he doesn't keep hotshot middle management on their toes..."

This, of course, was more proof. "Ha!" she cries. "More proof!"

You know why he keeps LaVerne here, don't you?"

"What now?" I say. "Isn't this getting a bit melodramatic?"

"It's because Dale used to sleep with her."

"And this is enough to protect a job?"

For Jo it is clear as a bell. "She could break up Dale and Billie." An afterthought, though—"But Billie probably knows about it anyway."

Right, thinks I. They're all over sixty if they're a day, I don't see what it will matter. Or why any of this matters, for that matter. I begin to understand after a while.

"Look," I expound, "You're not being rigorous, scientific, about this. You're using the assertion, the hypothesis, as proof of itself, which is invalid."

Being drunk, Jo nods sagely, missing it all, probably watching the hair on my head or something. "The board forced him to take a leave on the place this summer," she tells me. "They got all pissed off and shafted him."

This is getting tiresome, I thought. "So what? So what? I don't care!"

"But why is he trying to kill the place?"

"Oh, so he can take a tax write-off or something. It's all the coke money, this place is really just a laundromat for the Mafia or something. They're getting rich from Mason smuggling, they need a money sink."

"Be serious," she tells me.

"Yeah, right, be serious. You haven't given me any conclusive evidence to back up these assertions that get you so emotionally worked up. If you're going to be scientific, you take the data, generalize a rule, and then test to see if the rule holds true in cases previously unexplored. So what do you have for me? He keeps on some washed-out help, sure. He lets them insult the good customers, lets them serve bad food, lets them turn the place into a pigsty. This isn't at all enough to go on for generalizing the rule unless you're paranoid."

I pause for breath.

"And more—if it were true, we'd have to find more evidence of it. If he really wants to do this, wouldn't he be going at it with more

vigor? Why does he do some things that are good for the place?"

"It would be too obvious."

"Argument from silence. If that's what he's doing it becomes obvious after a time anyway. He might as well go whole hog."

"But you don't wipe the banquet slate clean, you don't let them all go, you don't give in!"

"More! It has to obey Occam's razor! If there is a simpler answer, that's the one! All your evidence adds up to nothing more than a tired old man who's given up the ghost, who leaves everything in the hands of his corrupt and decadent lackeys! What about the union, he would have let that slide through if he really wanted to bust the place, but he fought it!"

"Dale is smart," Jo warns me, "he's no dummy. You mean to tell me it's just a case of incompetence, the way he has four people working maintenance and the walls haven't been washed in ten years? The grime is so thick you can wipe it off with your fingers in the kitchen alone!"

I give a little. "And the walls of the hallways, the brick, I know, I've spent some time trying to do them with a spray bottle and towels, but I just don't have the tools."

"See! See! He's trying to ruin the place!"

"No, he's not. It's just another case of power being blind. If stupidity is an answer, or laziness, then that suffices. He means to do X, but the law of unintended consequences means that Y will result. Among other things, he maybe just doesn't pay attention to details that the lowly ones like us see all the time."

"But why does he keep on all these idiots, these fucking jerks!?"

"I don't know, I don't know. Why worry about it, anyway?"

"It's your job, it's my job, aren't you worried about that?" Now I begin to understand where Jo hails from.

"What can you do about it?" I ask. "You buys your ticket and you takes your ride. Do your best to prepare for unpleasant events."

"But he shouldn't be allowed!"

"You're making a claim to some sort of authority over him, making a claim to title that isn't just. From where do you derive title?"

Drunks don't see it that way. We haggled for a while, until we got on the subject of drugs, and I elicited a promise.

"What do you need?" she asks, power over me now.

"Need, no, need?"

"Well, what do you want?"

"I like chemicals, synthetic opiates, maybe some Darvon, Percodan."

"How many? I'll get you twelve, I have hundreds, every doctor in town hands me prescriptions."

I'm amazed. "What, your back?"

"Sure! I'm a trained actress, I can get whatever I want!"

Later it ran back onto the unfounded suspicions.

"I tell you, he means to close this place down."

It dawns on me then. We're not just talking about Dale or the Center. I recall, Lord, I recall, who ended up buying all that cheap rock bottom price land in the years after '29, and I recall, I'm now singing the blues, and she says, "He makes money whether this place is open or closed."

He makes money whether this place is open or closed. Tim has a new baby son. I am flat broke. Jo wants to save and go back to school. The rest? They have their ends, and one means, but He makes money whether this place is open or closed. I still don't think he wants to close it down, though. Not Dale, anyway. David? Ronald? Edwin Meese? Come to the Chase when you need a loan.

DIARY of The ROCK FIEND

by Anni Ackner

HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION

Summer, like the multiplication of fractions, the labyrinthine turnings of the mind of Ronald Reagan, and the continuing popularity of Michael Jackson, has always puzzled me, which is not to imply that I dislike it, necessarily. On the contrary, there are two things inherent to summer that I like very much: the Italian ices sold by vendors on the side streets of New York City (by these I am not referring, incidentally, to those aberrations that come in flavours like watermelon and cantaloupe, which are purveyed by the sort of elegant young man who knows all the words to all the songs in SIDE BY SIDE BY SONDHEIM and how to make a pair of leather trousers look like something other than two deflated footballs stitched together at the crotch, vended from a charming little wagon with a charming sixteen foot striped umbrella perched over the top like a Peter Max mushroom and which are, in reality, sorbet gone slumming, but to the Real Item, which is composed of equal parts sugar, water, artificial flavouring and possibly cleaning fluid, comes in three basic flavours—chocolate, fruit and you bought it, you name it—dispensed by elderly Sicilian men in fraying white aprons, and served in the kind of paper cup that, in moments of extreme depravity, can be chewed on afterwards), and the fact that, when it arrives, it effectively brings about an end to spring, which is a nasty, perverted season that would, in a civilized country, be outlawed altogether. No, I haven't got any special grudge against summer itself—it is simply the conditions into which it apparently forces the majority of people that confuse me.

I have never, to begin with, been able to understand the sort of sports that are indulged in during the summer (excluding, I must stress, baseball, which is not so much a sport as a species of participatory event inducing that variety of mass hysteria otherwise seen only at concerts given by bands of middle-aged acid rockers from Marin County. I understand baseball as well as the next person, although I have never quite been able to grasp the point of middle-aged acid rockers from Marin County). I think, for example, that the ocean is a dandy thing, particularly if one happens to be in the stateroom of a really good ocean liner, sipping a cool drink and heading for Europe, but I have never been able to comprehend the mad desire of some people to go swimming through it. I can, it should be noted, indeed swim myself, this being one of two skills I picked up during a miserable season at Fresh Air camp—the other of which is the ability to turn out very neat octopusses using only knitting worsted and an old pair of pantyhose—but, while I had had the occasion, over the years, to cut loose with an octopus or two (thanks to an alarming tendency among some of my relatives to provide me with nieces, nephews, and other things of that nature), I don't honestly expect to have to swim anywhere, except in the unlikely event that the previously mentioned ocean liner capsizes, and I have to hang on for a couple of hours, waiting for the Coast Guard. To this end I have made it a point to memorize all the words to NEARER MY GOD TO THEE, but the sense behind actually donning one of those embarrassing garments called bathing suits and voluntarily immersing oneself in that place that crabs and tuna fish call home eludes me. The joy of frisbee throwing eludes me as well—I sincerely feel that any sport indulged in primarily by German shepherds and people with a fondness for middle-aged acid rockers from Marin County must be questionable in its very nature—tennis is an utter blur to me, except in the extremely rare circumstance that one has been born Bjorn Borg, in which case looking that good in a pair of white shorts is justification in itself, roller skating is lethal, and, it seems to me, anyone who gets up at six in the morning to go running through the streets while the temperature climbs into the nineties and tar clogs up the soles of one's Nikes deserves whatever he or she gets, so the idea that there are people who claim to enjoy any or all of these sports, and who freely and openly participate in them every weekend during the stretch of time from Memorial to Labour Day, strikes me as arcane and mysterious as those messages the Celestial Seasonings tea people feel compelled to put on the side of their boxes.

I do not understand, and probably never will, the sort of clothing normally worn during the summer months either. Bathing suits, as I have previously stated, are embarrassing, but at least, with the exception of some of the more antic sections of Southern California, are normally worn only in the company of similarly attired people, in places where one actually runs the risk of becoming wet, but the same, unfortunately, cannot be said for the rest of the current line of fashionable summer garb, which people will insist on wearing right out on public streets, in plain view of everybody. No one over the age of 17 looks good in a tube top, no one at all looks good in a pair of madras Bermuda shorts, baseball caps look silly if one doesn't happen to be Dave Winfield—and I'm reasonably certain even he doesn't wear his out to dinner—and anyone who purchases footwear that calls itself "flip-flops" with a straight face is just begging to have someone drop a lit cigarette on his or her instep and yet people wearing not one but all of these curious items of apparel will turn up at your house for lunch, and seriously expect you not to ladle the gazpacho into their laps. It's a constant source of confusion to me.

Given this, and the truly bewildering summer weather—day after day of redundant sunshine, enough to drive anyone short of John Denver into an acute case of the willies—plus the added hour of light arbitrarily added to each summer day in this part of the country, giving that Sort of Person that much more time to drop unexpectedly in on the rest of us, it's a wonder I manage to get through the summer at all. Generally I pass those lazy, hazy, crazy days holed up in my room with the air-conditioner going full blast—a survival tactic that not only prevents the intrusion of any unwanted warm air masses, but also effectively blocks out any sound smaller than that of a nuclear explosion in a ten mile radius, protecting me from that nice group of young people that persists in meeting in the parking lot outside my window, all of them tuned into what must be the only radio station on the Eastern Seaboard

that has nothing but SHE'S A MANIAC in its record library—watching the Yankees struggle through the American League pennant race and drinking iced coffee, but this year, gripped by some kind of mid-summer madness or dog day delirium, I abandoned this eminently sane course and, to my vast surprise, ventured Outdoors and did a few things, or, more precisely, Three Things.

The first Thing that I did, round about Memorial Day, more or less as a way of ushering in the new season, as it were, was to buy a Box. A Box, for those who have no access to largish cities that contain fair sized pockets of lower-middle class and working class adolescents, is a huge, gaudy, combination radio/cassette recorder, preferably equipped with a 17-foot antenna and capable, on a clear evening, of pulling in a really spiffy be-bop station in lower Gambia. A Box—also known as a Ghetto Buster or Turn The Damn Thing DOWN, Ya Bum Ya—is a status symbol amongst a certain section of the population—all the best people in the Englewood High School woodshop have them—and, as far as I know, I am the only Caucasian female over the age of 19 to own one. I purchased one because I wanted a decent tape recorder but didn't want something that was going to demand its own room and resemble the console of the Starship Enterprise (I was, after all, planning to listen to ABBA, not produce them), and didn't, at the other extreme, care for a Walkman (I have always nurtured a desire to get close to Bjorn Ulvaeus just once, but never really expected him to sing FERNANDO into my ear, with full accompaniment, and in the middle of the IRT, while I was doing so), and a Box seemed to be the only mid-way point. I had no idea, upon forking over an especially ludicrous sum of money that, by purchasing one, I was coming into the possession of something that got me admittance into an exclusive, if motley, club, and seemed to have a life of its own on top of it.

A Box, like a Great Dane, demands, with some frequency, to be taken Outdoors in order to take the air—they just don't sound right in the house—and, beyond that, demands to be Turned On, once it is outdoors—despite any pretensions its erstwhile owner might have in the direction of discretion—and beyond even that demands to be Turned On loudly—to paraphrase Bill Cosby, a Box has only three volume settings: Loud, Louder and The Doctor Will See You Now—so that it—and not incidentally, the person accompanying it—soon draw a crowd, particularly if the craving to hear SUPER TROOPER has come upon you in the farthest booth of Baumgart's restaurant. While this crowd often contains a certain number of detractors—after all, even I'm open-minded enough to allow for the fact that not everyone wants to hear THE WINNER TAKES IT ALL while plowing through Baumgart's potato salad—it also can contain admirers, and normally does. These admirers have a tendency to follow the unwary Box owner around town, requesting changes of station and tests of the bass/treble function, and, in return, offering such coin of the realm as sips of beer and only partially smoked Kools, and they have particularly long memories, so that, even weeks after an initial encounter, one is likely to be approached by some nonchalant chap in a purple wool cap, carrying his own pet Box, who will remark, sotto voice and out of the side of his mouth, as befits a secret password, "Bad Box, baby." For one who has never been, by nature, much of a joiner of things, this can be a frightening, exhilarating experience comparable only to the discovery that the six "D" batteries needed to take the Box for its constitutional only last through two or three days of moderate playing.

The second Thing I did, in the midst of this peculiar summer, was to visit Boston. Now, there's nothing particularly unusual about visiting Boston. Thousands of people visit Boston every week. Politicians visit Boston. Dignitaries from foreign lands visit Boston. Just your average Joe next door visits Boston. Even the New York Yankees visit Boston, although the results of those excursions are often debatable. However, I think it ought to be stated right here, so you don't hear it from anybody else, and because I have always believed implicitly in Complete and Total Honesty, especially when there's a fair-to-middling chance that you will hear it from somebody else, that not everybody who visits Boston makes a side trip to Lowell and behaves like a starstruck neophyte science fiction fan trapped in an elevator with Isaac Asimov when confronted with Jack Kerouac's grave. While a passable argument can be made that it takes a person of rare literacy, sensitivity and a supreme indifference to public convention to properly pull off such a stunt, I think the less said about this the better, don't you?

Finally, the last Thing I did—and I don't honestly think that this is in any way connected with the previous two, but on the other hand I never honestly thought I'd fall to pieces on a headstone, either—was, to put it as baldly as possible, get married. This came as a shock to me. I'd always considered marriage, not unlike the development of a mad desire to purchase a pair of Calvin Klein jeans, something that happened to other people. It wasn't so much that I'd ruled the possibility out for myself as that I'd never seriously considered that the possibility existed in the first place, the kind of "Who, ME?" attitude that I imagine Gloria Steinem might manifest were she unexpectedly invited to participate in the Miss America pageant, but life, as someone once said, is what happens to you while you're making other plans (reading that over I come to the realization that the person who said that was no doubt the same master of epigram who remarked that it's hard to soar with the eagles when you're penned up with the turkeys, but let it pass, let it pass), and marriage crept up on me like an illicit proposal from your sister's devastating lover—sneaky, but not entirely unpleasant. Of course, given my personality, and that of my husband's, our marital arrangement is by no stretch of the word "conventional", nor do I really have any expectation that it will become so at any time in the foreseeable future—for one thing, because my husband is still at school, because most of my work is in the metropolitan New York area and it simply isn't feasible for me to move at this time, and because we are both tolerably creative people who require a certain amount of space for our separate endeavors, we live apart, and will probably continue to do so. For another, my husband is several years younger than myself (and never mind just how many), which, while I gather it isn't a totally unheard of situation anymore, does present several scenarios which occasionally come under the heading of uncommon

could next page

WILL THE last person leaving Santa Cruz please turn off the lights. Thank you. M. G. G. G.

cont'd from previous page

place, not to say exactly bizarre—but a marriage it is nevertheless, and it most assuredly contains me. This is a situation still too new, and too untried and unexpected, for me to comment upon to any great extent (it's also not really any of your business. I may have become Alice Kramden, but I am not yet Joan Rivers)—I am, for once in my life, rendered very nearly speechless, but, because we are All Friends Here, I just thought you'd like to know. And for all those women with whom I went to high school, the ones who started sporting engagement rings in their junior year, the ones into whom I occasionally run these days, pushing their baby carriages, and looking at me with such humourous pity—nyah, nyah, nyah.

And so, befriended by Box owners, vaguely embarrassed at certain travelogue memories, and duly married, I sit out the final days of summer, and wait nearly breathlessly for Fall, when things become normal again. It's just as well, too—another few weeks of this, and I might lose my grip entirely, and do something so completely out of character that there would be no returning, and we can't have me, say, giving parties and requesting a new pair of running shoes for an anniversary present. I mean, we can't, can we?

WHADDAYA MEAN THAT TREK
FANS ARE STUPID? MY BRAIN
IS THIS BIG.

IT'S THE
LARGEST ONE
OF ITS KIND.



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QUENT WIMPEL NOTES

by Kerry Wendell Thornley

A Retrospective Monograph: What Way The Great American Poem Was Written: from QUENT WIMPEL NOTES: The Secret Teachings of Geo. Washington

"'Twas said of me
'Bout the cherry tree
I cannot tell a lie.
But read the treaty,
You will see
I was being wry
For once said we
To the redman free:

AS LONG AS THE WATER SHALL FLOW
AS LONG AS THE GRASS SHALL GROW
THIS MUCH LAND WE ENTRUST TO THEE
TO BELONG TO ONLY HEAVEN & TO BE FREE:
WHOSE MIGHTY GODLY LABOR WE BOTH AGREE
GAVE US ALL OUR LAND AND LIBERTY,
by Him we the undersigned swear

(Commentary by Ho Chi Zen interpolated by your poet in 1985 into this poem in the author's mellow old age: "([Explicitive Deleted])")

— The Secret Teachings of Geo. Washington

That was how in nineteen sixty-six Quent began a poetic examination of the mythographic mind of George Washington, that—to say little of it—was to fascinate him for the next many years. All the rest of his life beyond the day the quoted lines were written, Quent Wimpel ransacked both science fiction and great literature for irresponsible-sounding opinions about George Washington—to determine the truth or falsehood of each allegation.

Actually Wimpel plodded rather whimsically at first, then in nineteen sixty-nine he read a review in an old magazine at the Yatch Club about someone who was making a movie called Geo. Washington—all about how the Valley Forge crowd was just a bunch of rather rowdy hippies, with long hair, who went skinny dipping against orders, etc. (in the summertime). That inspired Quent to find George Washington human, like happened with Jesus when Wimpel decided He was a Laughing Buddha.

Only trouble was, Quent never once had encountered any advertisements for it in the entertainment section since. That frustration—of never seeing the filmed version—drove him with a compulsion of one in search of the lost chord, bent on finishing something uncompleted, driven wild by possessive inspiration, pissed off at everyone, lots of time to himself in which to smoke dope and run to and fro between tone and typewriter. The seeds in that review, planted in the soil of Quent's mind, sprouted a damned fine beanstock that attacked the Establishment with all the sublime poetic fury of a vine of Kudzu in The Saga of Don Coyote, ripping down an oil well with the aid of the

Greased Lightning Tribe, drawing down actual lightning from the sky—in The Saga rendition (a subplot of The Secret Teachings that voraciously and viciously drained him of creativity as they consumed his odd hours).

Every new day Quent would wake up with a new batch of creative energy. With Faulkner he could say: "I write when the spirit moves me; and the spirit moves me everyday."

Every damned day of his life there was at least a half a line, usually about a dozen pages, though, of new and tender growth on this hungry young plant that grew and grew and of course became ever greener as the years transpired. That is because of the paper it was written on, which—like most bond these days—was chemically produced without pulp wood. (Of course that did not keep humanity from cutting down trees. Next they began making absolutely everything out of plastic, because the state of the art of plastic production escalated in 1992, but I am getting ahead of myself.)

Let me tell you why Quent got an experimental batch of that artificial paper way before knowledge of it was not a Pentagon-Spitfire Aircraft CLASSIFIED GOVERNMENT SECRET. To make a long story short, he dropped Acid one weekend at an encounter group with a nuclear physicist named Herbert Robinson. Herbert Robinson was so grateful to Quent for guiding him through such an outasight Acid trip that he no longer ever visited Quent again without bringing a gift. Quent thought of it that way.

In Herbert Robinson's view Quent was a human guinea pig the Department of Defense gave him in answer to a now Top Secret grant request. In other words, Robinson gave Quent the paper in a mood only of mild and passing curiosity about whether or not it would kill him. All it did was turn green, though. Every year that green was of a darker hue, though. That would only have made his home more colorful, up to a certain point in time, had it not been necessary to re-type pages as they grew darker than the ink of the poem. This made his home look like a ski resort in winter, because green and white were by far the predominant colors. (It hadn't been so bad before when it was just the curtains, and not his poem.) That made him always unconsciously turn the thermostat up higher than required by weather conditions outside. This was good, though, because it inspired him to break from his work frequently and take brisk walks out of doors. That was when he dreamed up George Washington's greatest thoughts: Such as what he said to the Hopi, instructing them to tell no one else. See the 23rd Innuendo of The Secret Teachings for the text of the speech Quent attributed to Washington when speaking to the Hopi during the administration of Harry S. Truman, upon their accidental digestion of some psychedelic mushrooms, to find out how moving Quent could be at his peaks. The words he places in the mouth of George Washington upon that occasion would have brought tears to the eyes of the nation, had the nation read them in his lifetime. As it was, Quent Wimpel was quite content to leave them with a smug little grin for the enjoyment of anticipated future generations, as they laughed and cried with him about land and its uses.

For:

"They would understand

That land was made for man

And not man, certainly, for the land of another...."

...as George Washington phrased it in Quent's poem.

But you're probably waiting for me to get to the part about whether or not Washington really smoked hemp, fucked slave girls at threesomes with Jefferson, etc. Quent got into that much of it in the second year, and continued his inquiry and gentle twitting about it for a number of years to follow—weaving it in and out of other themes and subjects of commentary in The Secret Teachings, which in his own mind were something like a hermogenous hemp rope occasionally spontaneously combusting.

Sometimes they could be as irritating as a cantankerous roommate; at other times they became as exciting as a sexy woman. Living with The Secret Teachings this stick always coming unraveled and then turning green and white and piling up on his writing table, was like living with one extra person in the house, however many that made the total population at the time. Although that was always what the other members of the households said. Not Quent. To him they were more like a small garden of exotic wild plants, for he knew he was working with no-doubt dangerous ideas. Writing The Secret Teachings, Wimpel always told everyone, made him feel like nothing quite as much as the old CIA chief, James Jesus Angelton, pursuing his hobby of growing orchids from seed: "I can tell it is going to take forever and I keep thinking thoughts that will probably result in mayhem."

Of course the poor guy never guessed in his own lifetime how true that would be. Not only did it take forever to write the epic; it also resulted of course in the famous riots—until in 2075 A.D. the well-known edict was issued, banning any further discussion of George Washington.

Quent wrote secure in the confidence, though, that healthy controversy outweighed the evil of any inflammatory notions he developed. For recurring through the poem like a thundering Native American mantra were the "Four Great Words all white men in my lodge are sworn to speak to no one except their red brothers: PERMANENT UNIVERSAL RENT STRIKE"—as Washington's wandering ghost was to tell the Seminoles in the 28th Innuendo. (The Four Great Words are repeated again in the 36th Innuendo; then beginning with the 79th Innuendo they occur over and over again every few pages.)

As Quent's biographical examination of Washington was more devoted to truth in spirit than in literal events, Wimpel was always asking himself, "What did George Washington actually believe?" Evidence convinced him that whatever it was, Washington must have been fond of saying, in effect: "Fuck 'em if they can't take a joke." And being of charitable nature, Quent was sure that old George must have said that about the land grabbers and landlords of his own race, not about the American Indians. And for that reason, since The Secret Teachings of Geo. Washington were not to be found among that great man's surviving papers—and therefore presumably remained a Masonic secret—Quent used his poetic license to imagine what they were. (Starting next month, Kerry presents Chap. 1 of "FINDING FREEDOM.")

Marxist "Revolution": Like trading handcuffs for leg irons. Trotskyism: Stalinism's loyal opposition. Maoists: Marxist Moonies. The left is gauche, make your own revolution!

MORAL, NEO-MOD, dubistic, bohemian, and seeks mature partner who wishes to engage in gay sex with small banyard low: P. S. Don't worry... I'll respect your 2 morning.

1



2



they BLINDED me with VIDEO

by CANDI STRECKER

CHAPTER IV. Novelty Wears Thin And Gets Holes In Its T-Shirt

In the old days of Top-40 AM radio, one could always count on a certain mix of records being popular at any given moment. There'd be equal numbers of "rock" songs, softer romantic-pop songs, and soul songs. There'd be at least one instrumental song, the purpose of which was to be shoehorned into the space before The News by the dj. And then there would be a Novelty Song. Sometimes it was a comedy ballad ("Hello Mud-dah", "Uneasy Rider"), sometimes a pure nonsense song ("Gimme Dat Ding"), sometimes a song with little more to it than a hook or a gimmick (Ray Stevens imitating a chicken clucking to "In The Mood"), and sometimes an inexplicable oddity that caught the nation's fancy, such as "Rubber Duckie" by Ernie of SESAME STREET. When FM radio rock came along, the silly Novelty Song didn't fit in with Serious, Relevant songs like "Stairway to Heaven". Novelty Songs were still released, and many were sales hits, but they only got airplay on soft-pop-rock stations.

Thinking about MTV makes me think about Novelty Songs, and whether the term is even meaningful any more. In a sense, EVERY song on MTV is a Novelty Song. If MTV exposure is mandatory in order to get radio airplay and sell records, then videos will be made. But certain songs make better videos than others: songs with weird concepts, odd imagery, instrumental hooks, gimmicky electronics, everything that once branded a song a Novelty. What's insidious is that the need for MTV-able songs has infiltrated the creative process: by now songs are being WRITTEN with the way they'll work as videos in mind. Hey, I'm no fool, I realize that pop songwriting is always geared toward profit potential—I just think it's worth noting that in the past year, a brand-new set of commercial considerations has been in effect. And what is the result? A year rife with Novelty Songs of various sorts. The other side of the coin is that videos make novelties out of even ordinary songs. When one hears an MTV'd song on the radio, without conscious effort one thinks, "Oh yeah, that's the song with the people dressed as squirrels working at a nuclear power plant" or whatever. The "hook" that makes you remember the song is in the visuals, not in the song itself; another case of the packaging becoming more important than the product within it.

This summer has been one long heat wave, and my main form of activity has been to flop in front of a big fan and squint at the current offerings of MTV. Heavy metal always makes me feel sweaty—is it the leather, or what?—but the rare, intelligent videos have the effect on me of a dish of sherbet being pressed to my forehead. Coolsville. My favorites in the current playlist are:

"Rockit," Herbie Hancock: Here's a clever attempt to cross MTV's color line: a video populated with mechanically articulated robot-dummies, with Hancock appearing only on a background TV screen so he looks more blue than black. Extremely original visual concept that's well-matched to this song's techno-"scratch" sound. Notable also as one of the few videos made for an instrumental song.

"Wonderin'," Neil Young: Aw, just watch his face! Who'd have thought this guy had such a lovable, haggard, crooked smile? Mom, he followed me home—can I keep him?

"Lawyers In Love," Jackson Browne: He's always been a wimp in my book, but he had the good sense to build a song around this killer phrase. A number of great images here (plus a few clunkers), but my favorite is the moment near the start of the song, when Jackson is watching TV while his voice is singing in the background—and he moves his lips to the sound of his own voice, as if unconsciously mouthing the lyrics to Muzak. Very eerie.

"Gone Daddy Gone," The Violent Femmes: Local boys on MTV! No fancy sets, no video gimmicks, no color—a triumph of the appropriate.

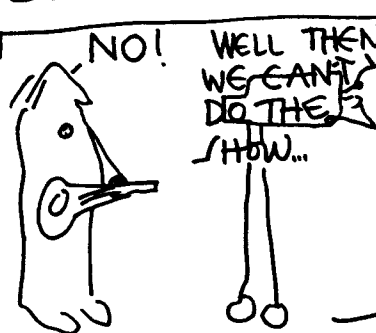
"Big Log," Robert Plant: I suppose you wouldn't be interested in my theory that this video encapsulates the structure of Samuel R. Delany's 950-page science-fiction novel "Dhalgren", would you?

"Tell Her About It," Billy Joel: I still don't like him, but I'll admit that the man knows how to spend his money on detailed, narrative videos. The fact that he wears sunglasses throughout this video helps endear him to me, too...

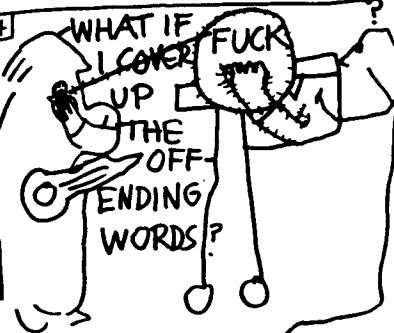
"Love Is A Stranger," Eurythmics: "Sweet Dreams" always struck me as just an extraordinarily clever novelty song (note how pre-teens go nuts for it), but this follow-up has convinced me that Eurythmics can, and should, be taken seriously. Most accurate song about obsessive love I've ever heard. Nothing too showy about the visuals—mostly Annie Lennox going through her wig wardrobe, then taking off her makeup and looking even MORE riveting than she does with it. The electronic instrumentation is equally restrained. Together, it all works just right: after all, it's all a matter of eye contact, isn't it?

"Adventures In Success," Will Powers: Probably the most innately Sub-Genius song, and video, getting airplay today. A wry delight about Pulling The Wool Over Your Own Eyes. "Will," by the way, is a woman speaking thru an electronic voice-disguiser.

3



4



SOUND MINED

by Brian Catanzaro

2 YOUZ

Briefly, the critics and your ear will tell you that U2's sound has continued to improve from album to album. This is an achievement for a band with the standard guitarz lineup; but it seems to me U2 has only been good for a real good cut here and there. Most bands are like that today, trying to create artistically consistent product; see B-52's, Talking Heads, Gull Flock for examples of style taking the priority over super hard work. After all, it's 2 years at \$8.98 then hope you get reissued. U2's appeal, I think, comes from making an effort at it rather than accomplishing that consistency. Then there are those fans who take personal liking to whatever esoteric influences that seem to be filtering thru to them. Examples of bands like that in the commercial vein would be: The Stranglers, or Utopia. This may explain why U2 was well-received in NYC recently. Then again, while watching Missing Persons a couple of months back, I couldn't help noticing how many younger people (under 25) had come to hear the hits (and watch the Dale Bozzio Bounce no doubt).

Except for the romantic "Two Hearts Beat As One" and "Sunday Bloody Sunday" being so bloody catchy and pretty, the new U2 ends up sounding "the same", too much to me like Robert Plant after awhile. They've gotten off the track "A Celebration" blazed on 1982's LP, i.e., wonderful raw pop rockers. 2 much of a good thing?

XTC2

Flash, we interrupt our program to bring you this special report, doc.

Oddly, there's another new release from the group XTC. It's the second LP within a 6-month period; a very unusual production schedule. Of course, to my knowledge it too is imported, as the last, and is titled "Winterland". We now return to our regularly scheduled review, already in progress, uh, dat-means-it's-almost-ovah.

The X's (not LA) may still have a 4-song EP actually on the rax. (This is contradictory to the supposed 8 tunes mentioned last time, my apologies...). The 2 on the A side, "Great Fire" and "Gold", are examples of Andy Partridge's melodic vocal style. The 2 on the flip are good examples of Andy's offbeat instrumental style and are only recommended for the diehard fans. My advice is to wait and see what's on the upcoming LP before rushing out to buy this. The new drummer plays within the usual format of the group but seems to have more finesse and better sounding cymbals. The "Great Fire running thru my house" is radioactive. Take note, Mister Presedink.

B-MOVIE

I must tell you...about the maxi-single on Sire. B-Movie is the name of the band. The song is "Nowhere Girl" long a short versions plus one filler cut. The song is hummably addictive. Setting an atmosphere true to their name, B-Movie, with one female member, open up the long version with a girl's forced laughter coming out of the strong 4-pulse backbeat, as blue/romantic piano lines set the B-Movie mood. After a brief interlude/prelude the dark baritone comes zooming in like an ominous spectre of the night. It's an audible experience words are inadequate for.

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TALK SHOW HOST CONFIDENTIAL by Michael Dobbs

COO ROO COO COO COO COO COO...Good day, eh? Welcome to this issue's edition of TALK SHOW HOST CONFIDENTIAL. I'd like to start out with yet another of my infamous predictions...Rick Moranis and Dave Thomas are going to become major comedy stars on the strength of their film THE ADVENTURES OF DOUG AND BOB MCKENZIE...STRANGE BREW.

I cannot think of a recent film which took a television property and successfully brought it to the large screen. Although there have been a fair number of attempts to do so, only several television-to-movie productions were able to make the jump (TWELVE ANGRY MEN and MARTY being the two most famous examples which spring to mind).

Moranis and Thomas realized their film would be a success if they were able to flesh out the McKenzies as characters (which they did) and integrate them in a "realistic" Canada. The result is a refreshing, original comic adventure. It's one of the first comedies I've seen in a long time that didn't rely once on the word "fuck" for a cheap laugh.

This isn't to say there isn't "regular guy" humor in the film. There's plenty of farting and burping and pissing but the lads make the jokes seem new because their characterizations of the McKenzies are so innocent. Doug and Bob are really two lambs in the forests of life.

I interviewed Moranis and Thomas on my radio show recently. Here's part of the results:

Giving a preview look at the movie, Moranis told me: "Basically, we took a step from the McKenzie Brothers on the television show and tried to make a smooth and quick transition from the type of program everybody was used to seeing them in and pull them out to the real world and make them more three-dimensional and try to explain their characters a little bit. We also tried to blend fast-paced comedy with a real strong adventure story. And all I'd really like to tell you is it's set in a brewery. No reason to be secretive, it's my own personal opinion. I love to not know anything about a movie when I go and see it. Often movies are wrecked for me when people tell me jokes from it. Basically, the guys go to a brewery with a mouse in a bottle, just like the old gag we did on television, to try to get free beer. And they wind up caught up in this plot by an evil brewmeister and beyond that it's just hopefully a lot of good laughs."

Moranis did admit there was some trepidation about having renowned actor Max Von Sydow as a co-star: "Yeah, at the beginning there was, I've got to admit. Working with someone like that is a little intimidating. He was such a nice man. After the third or fourth day, he was almost like a friend. He came up to me and said, 'If there's anything you want me to do just feel free to ask.' And we became pretty close during the shooting. His performance speaks for itself. He's terrific in the film."

Moranis then explained the origins of Doug and Bob: "There was in Canada some laws called Canadian Content Laws, and these were designed years ago by the government in an effort to insure some kind of Canadian identity in the arts. For years, we were dominated culturally by international product, especially American product. We all grew up watching American television and American films and listening to rock groups from England and the States and now Australia. I never thought there was anything wrong with that. I liked it. Canada is a big country but there's not very many people there. The ones who are very good in what they do wind up doing it and the other ones should be like anybody else working in the same competitive arena. Well, the government came along and instituted these Canadian Content rules to subsidize the arts and to promote Canadian culture. By the time that had its effect on SCTV, we were asked to do two minutes of extra programming which was uniquely Canadian to fill up what otherwise was occupied by commercials on the half-hour show. Being in Canada, it ran on the public network and there was no commercials. We said, 'What do you want us to do with these two minutes? We're all Canadians. We're working in Canada. We're trying to sell this product abroad. How much more Canadian can we get? You want us to sit in front of a map of Canada, drink beer and fry back bacon and wear parkas and talk like we're from way up north?' And they said, 'Yeah, that would be fine.' So, we started doing that, and I don't know what it was. There was just the two of us. I don't know what it is that got people excited about the McKenzies. We always enjoyed doing them because we improvised the material all the time. They're nice guys. They're just fun to do and we did them on the tv show and they became popular. Then we did them on the album. After the album sold well, we were approached by a number of studios in California so we did this picture."

Both Moranis and Thomas commented on NBC's handling of SCTV...its late time and its cancellation. I asked Thomas if he had felt wasted at the Friday 12:30 time: "I suppose so. In a way, we all thought if we had been on an hour earlier on a Friday night the show would have received a much wider audience. But after a while, we became used to it. We had been underdogs in syndication, then we became underdogs on network tv and now I think it's ridiculous and ironic that they would cancel the show and it's received seven Emmy nominations."

Was SCTV too intelligent to gain a wide audience on American commercial television? Rick Moranis: "It was a kind of show if you weren't a long-time follower of it you didn't understand a lot of the inside stuff. That was a mistake we made. There was so much pressure on us to write material that we often amused ourselves and we wound up being very very inside our own jokes."

"Personally," added Thomas, "I prefer being kind of unreachable by the audience because you're too intelligent than being unreachable because you're too stupid...given the choice of the two. I don't think either is ideal, but given the choice of the two I wouldn't change a thing."

Next time, more surprises from your humble talk show host from eastern Massachusetts.

FILMVIEWS by Ken Filar

Prologue: (ENJOY. Buried somewhere within this foofaraw is, eh, like a take-off, eh, on the "thing"—uh, movie, uh, STRANGE BREW [but, like not the whole thing, okay, because I gotta review MERRY CHRISTMAS, MR. LAWRENCE, RISKY BUSINESS and ZELIG (at least)], so...ADVANCE THE CAUTION.)

Beginning: Sometimes it's less demanding to sit staring out the window without marking the passage of time...

Middle: [STOP—go to dictionary—look up passage (as an alternative to passage, which seems moronically little & cliché) to discover (on the preceding page) prelapsarian: characteristic of or belonging to the time or state before the fall of man—and now discover that foresights implied privy meanderly time force ones overlooked retrospection... Okay, so can I help it that no one knows where I'm writing to...if you have to stop and think about it (maybe even return to the beginning of the paragraph and read it all again) it looks like you're headidtoo. HALT.]

A "thing" held up for inspection can prove both specious yet artful. However, knowing the extent of the contradiction each of these qualities imbues upon the inspected is oft a greater chore than the actual inspection (HINT: I like going to see movies a helluva lot better than I like writing reviews for the immediate gratification in watching a film lies not in the message [either real or imagined] underlying a particular work, but in the response that this total product[ion] has on me then. No amount of post-production after/shock/thoughts are binding in that they are unattached from the reality [either real or imagined] that conjured them into existence in the first place... HALT.

If I were less confined by spatial reference in my telling you whateveritis I'm transmuting, I would doubtless only find more ways to fling confusion at you. [NOTE: There are two distinct types of "things" (so far as we've gotten in this ruptured epistole...OH ELAYNE, PLEASE MAKE HIM STOP...[okay, I know it's impossible to follow, but that's only because it doesn't seem to be leading anywhere] AND that is): one of the "things" having an indefinite beginning, no clear direction and only winding down irresolutely; while the other "thing" begins, middles and ends...BOOM (often before you get to feel out whether you even care "why").]

EH?

MORE MIDDLE: So, now we get to the "thing" this is really about—hose-heads—so, TAKE-OFF...but don't spend you money on the STRANGE BREW Bob and Doug McKenzie have drecked up for our mass consumption. If you want to see a provocative exploration of the "messed up mind" looking for an alternate escape valve your money would be better spent on Slava Tsukerman's LIQUID SKY. Like, eh, the stars of both films like talk this way (and that way) and any way that'll get them not knowing where they're going. However, LS, at least pretentious enough to be unbelievable, proves HOLY-CREDIBLE (zukes), while SB, so beer-bottle-cheek, relieves little more comedy arching toward that pissor in the sky than Chris Reeves does as a down-and-dirty druncanard in S.III (though you'd like to expect more fun from a duo "un-becoming" of legend).

Q: And what about RISKY BUSINESS...is it really as funny as the trailers make out...or are these winks intended to leave us believing there might still be somethings witty and beguiling as are slickest dreams?

A: Yes.

ZELIG, on the other hand, is too clever for anyone good, though you have to admire the care that has gone into Woody Allen's latest evocation of schlemiel meets and woos beautiful woman, gets her (against all logic) and still comes up a loser. Also, it very nearly put me to sleep, which is no mean praise for a tranquilizer, but, I mean, eh, even the hosers managed to keep me awake for 95 minutes, okay...

CUJO—this is not the movie dog you'd expect...

MERRY CHRISTMAS, MR. LAWRENCE has already garnered critical praise abroad—and why not—it's a truly international film. (What does that mean, exactly?) You have an historical plot (WWII) fleshed out (by subtly lyrical Japanese eroticism) but brooding (European disco-angst) in a way that leaves you wanting to know more, and yet glad you do not. Its real wonder is that you don't once question its authenticity (for it could easily be only an overpowering dream), nor do you believe that all of the loose ends were left hanging because they had nowhere to go. Rather, unlike the contentious struggle between [and within] the other movies mentioned above, Nagisa Oshima has drawn a wry but uncynical vision wherein all the questions raised could never be resolved—and you're not sure you'd even want them to be. [When left to wonder—many "things" prove to us wonder-full—but with no time to properly inspect what-it-is that elicits our resultant confusion, there is no less to ponder: in all the preceding (and/or retrospective) commentary...and so, I leave you WONDERING?]

End: ...than, it takes to write a review.

FREEZE-DRIED CATHODE RAY TUBES!

...by BRIAN PARCE

I'm sorry to say this'll be rather short, as I'm pressed for time, even with the long leap deadline. Ah, well...marriage will do that do you, don'tcha know.

Allright you. Up until now...you've had it easy. Scraped my column from the thin waxy layer under my toupee, and it's been cutesy-pukesy wonderland, hasn't it? Well, those days are history. I've decided to dig darn deep into my desk drawer of ideas and give you people a quiz on your favorite subject and certainly mine...TV NEWS TRIVIA. This promises to be a tough one, so brush up...okay, enough brushing up. Pencils out, all books off your desk! Time to sweat!

SECTION ONE—MULTIPLE CHOICE (5 points each)

1. Veteran ABC anchorman Frank Reynolds died of:
 - A. Choking on a ham sandwich and suffocating;
 - B. A fatal heart attack in his bathtub;
 - C. An assassin's bullet in New York City.
2. Connie Chung's pet cocker spaniel is named:
 - A. "Hello—I'm Connie Chung's pet cocker spaniel";
 - B. Shithead;
 - C. Stupid (dubbed television version).
3. Retired CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite had his children:
 - A. Forcibly spayed and/or neutered;
 - B. In the back seat of a '39 Ford;
 - C. Sit in for him while he was on vacation.

SECTION TWO—TRUE/FALSE (5 points each)

1. Tom Brokaw's real name is Mot Wakorb. T / F
2. Linda Ellerbee posed for the October 1978 issue of "Naked Newswo-men". T / F
3. Peter Jennings wears a rubber mask of Alfred E. Neumann to bed. T / F

SECTION THREE—ESSAY (10 points each)

1. Give a thoughtful and clear insight on why Barbara Walters and Dirk Benedict would've made the Couple of the 80's.
2. Examine, in 500 words or more, the popularity of Bill Schelner's moustache, or the mystique of Diane Sawyer's boxed set of salt shakers from Casper, Wyoming.
3. Prove, if you can, that Redd Foxx is not Max Robinson's grandfather. Also, examine the relationship between Dan Rather and mustard.
4. Why is it that Bill Kurtis is made of unstable molecules?

SECTION FOUR—OPTIONAL BONUS (50 points)

Which network anchor has a bumper sticker that reads "Virginia is for Fuckheads"?

SCORING: 120-100—Edward R. Murrow; 80-100—Charles Osgood; 60-80—David Brinkley; 40-60—Christine Craft; 20-40—Willard Scott; 0-20—Shaun Cassidy.

...And don't forget—New on Thursdays this fall—"I Was Connie Chung's Lunchbox"—Be There!

Next month...I dunno, probably October, November maybe...

FUN WITH TOM

by Tom Sanders

Saturday afternoon at four meant it was time for Tom to leave for his evening date. He turned off the Mets game, gathered up his Charlie Parker records and was on his way. On his way, he knew, to an evening of pleasant company and stimulating conversation.

Tom's lady friend was a bit wacky in her own ways. Y'know the T-shirts that modern woman wear, with things like "Afternoon Delight" or "Foxy Lady" on them? She wore one that read "WOMAN" in block letters. A no-brand woman! She had been a good friend for a long time, though, and he liked being with her.

When he got there the first thing she said was, "Oh, Tom, I'll be done with these dishes in a minute, oh, will you do me a favor? The dog broke his chain and I don't know where he is. Will you go out and find him? Thanks a lot..."

Tom went down the street and found her dog—the only animal out there with six feet of chain dragging behind him. He helped her finish the dishes, took out the garbage and put some things up in the attic.

She went into the bathroom to "get ready" (for what?) and Tom tuned in to find out how the Mets were doing. From behind the bathroom door came "turn that baseball game off!" But what could she do about it in there? He listened to a couple innings, and a side of Bird. No signs of life from the bathroom.

"Hey! Didn't fall in yet, did ya?" I'll be out in just a minute! "Y'know, I think I finally figured it out. You'll never die because it'll take you too long to get ready! The saints will lose their patience and take someone else!" Tom was getting antsy. He got out the lawn mower and cut the back yard for something to do.

He came back in and noticed the bathroom was empty. She was, evidently, ready. She had put on the "Annie" soundtrack album while he was outside, and a sharp-voiced little girl was singing about tomorrow. Gotta hide that record, he thought. He turned it down. She turned it up. "Are you ready? Put on a new face? Looks like your face to me."

"Ha ha ha. Listen! Know what I just got a craving for? Chocolate brownies! You know the kind I like. Do me a favor and go down to the corner for some?" Now look, we haven't had a speck of real conversation since I got here. Can't you settle down for a while? "Oh all right, I'll go get them..." THAT again. Off he went. He tuned the car radio to the Mets game. They were still leading when he got home.

"FREE MARKET." THEY SAY...but they always market up. Libertarians who disbelieve in paper money may send theirs to Subjectivists, 2000 Center #1314, Berkeley #4704.

DARK WINGS OVER EASY

Chapter 9

by Roldo

"Now I know this is a hoax," Sam decided rather loudly. Qwert Yutop, alien traveller of time and space, fixed his Terran companion with a disinterested stare.

"By the time we're finished, you'll know that everything is a hoax," he replied with a fair attempt at cosmic dignity.

"Finished?" Sam asked, eyebrows arching like the hackles of a beast scenting imminent unpleasantness (which was pretty much the case.) "And just what are we, then, beginning and why am I sure it's going to get worse?"

"We are beginning the Great Adventure," Qwert intoned, staring into the distance heroically, yet not missing his blind grab at the collar of Sam's jacket as the Terran made a valiant attempt to slip away.

"Send me a signed copy of the first edition paperback," Sam suggested, but to no avail, for Qwert continued:

"You will be the first of your species to see the wonders of Deep Space. There, where mathematics and time dance to the Music of the Infinite Spheres, you will learn the Ancient Secrets that can save your planet from your fellow humans. There, amidst the dreaming stars, I shall mold your simple mind into an instrument of Cosmic Salvation. We shall..."

"One immediate question, chum. How long is all this gonna take?" Sam asked, more to interrupt the speech before he actually started to hear pseudo-classical music swelling from an invisible orchestra than out of any genuine interest.

"Time has no meaning where we are going," Qwert continued annoyingly. "If it takes half an Infinity, I can still drop you off right back here less than half a second after we left."

"I get this nasty impression that there's a lot of work involved in this and I'm gonna be doing most of it," Sam rhetorized.

"Well guessed," Qwert agreed. "You will be undertaking some of the most difficult disciplines in the Universe. On an average day, you'll work 23 hours, and there won't be any average days."

Sam decided it was time to make a stand. "Isn't there some easier way?" he asked, showing a worthy lack of whine despite his dim view of the situation. "I mean, isn't there some kind of Pill I can take?"

"Pill?" sneered Qwert. "Drugs? You can't learn anything with drugs!"

Before Sam could accuse the alien of making one of the most popular mistakes of the last decade, a long black car made a hideous screeching turn from around the corner in front of them. Sam's brain set up a loud series of alarms and then shut down completely. Qwert, however, sprang into instant action. Dropping his solemn posturing, he grabbed his head with both hands and ran briskly around in a small, tight circle, yelling, "Yeow! Oh Fuck! It's Omnicorp's Hit Squad!"

No further action was possible. Even as our heroes panicked to the best of their ability, the ominous car was alongside of them, and a black-suited, grey-faced man wearing dark glasses was pointing a long, thin tube at Qwert. There was a horrible whirring noise and a flash of very unpleasant light.

"Gahhh!" Qwert noised, "I'm hit!"

His body writhed like a special effect. His hair curled, his eyes blued, his nose wrinkled boyishly above a rugged but neat moustache, and his jaw widened, firmed, and set.

"Holy singing shit!" Sam gasped. "It's true! You really do look like..."

"Don't say it!" Qwert yowled.

"TOM SELLECK!" chorused a choir of female voices, and within seconds the alien was buried in a mass of bodies, pastel polyester, curlers and shopping bags.

"Qwert?" Sam inquired, considering helplessness as good a move as any.

A masculine hand rose struggling from the pile, clutching something.

"Sam! Here! Take these," and the hand flung a vial high into the air. Sam watched the vial rise, spinning to the apex of its flight, and begin its leisurely fall as he asked, "What is it?"

"Moi...a drug from my planet," Qwert's reply came.

"A what?" Sam asked.

"A drug," Qwert muffled again.

Sam snatched it out of the air and was running even as Qwert's voice came distantly.

"Run," it advised.

ADDENDA: Most people would find it difficult to pour one pill out of a container and swallow it while maintaining a dead run, and in this Sam was no different—just more inventive. He popped open the vial and poured the entire contents down his throat without missing a step.

But as the last pill passed his epiglottis, he was aware that he could no longer feel the ground... (to be continued)

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The Story of Alexis Black

by Jill Dearman

PART I: "MY TIME ISN'T ALWAYS MY OWN"

My name is Alexis Black. You've probably heard of me. My friends call me "Alex"; my underlings call me "Ms. Black"; and in the heat of passion I'm called "Blackie". By day, I'm a private investigator, paid huge sums of money by people not unlike those profiled on "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous". By night, though, I slip out of my trenchcoat and into my leather pants as I front a major rock and roll band. No, it's not easy being an enigma, living a double life like this, but perhaps it's just meant to be.

My real name, you see, is Marisha Zelkhorov. I was born in a barn in Odessa one biting cold autumn morning. My parents, Yuri and Nastassia, were Russian royalty...once. But their beautiful castle was taken over and they were banished in the middle of the night, quite suddenly after the infamous Drew Barrymore took over the Communist party.

I was but a small child of 2 when we arrived in America, yet even thought I was so young, I still recall the conversation between my father and the man at the immigration office. My father was told by a fellow Russian immigrant that it would be best to put down an American-sounding name on the immigration papers. So, as the man at the office, asked for a name, my father hesitated.

"Name?" the Immigration Man asked.

"Uh..."

"Look, Red, do you have a name or don'tcha?"

"Yes..." my father said, indignantly. Then, looking at the man's black hat on the coat rack, he said, "Black, John Black."

"Okay. What about the Mrs.?"

"Oh, Nancy."

"And the child?" At this point, my father would've probably said "Mary" or another simple American name, but I muttered some childish slur that must've sounded like "Abekshish", so my father uttered the first name that came into his head, a fine Russian name, too.

"Alexis."

And now I live on West End Avenue, and that's where I call home. My partner, best friend, confidante, and drinking buddy is one Katrina Nichols (also not her real name). She's a private investigator and part-time prima ballerina. Kat and I are working together on a case right now. It involves a very despicable but cunning nemesis of ours named Nastassia Goldber, also known as "JAP". Yes, it galls me to know that one so cretinous as Nasty can have the same name as my saintly mother. Oh well. This case also involves Nasty's partner in crime, Domingo Santiago, also known as "Banana Crunch".

The case goes something like this...Nastassia, a professional (and quite successful, too) Mah-Jong player and part-time Harlequin romance writer, was playing for big bucks...\$500,000, to be exact. That could really keep her in chopped liver for a long time. I had a lead that something fishy (and I don't mean gefilte fish) might be going on at The Liebowitz, so I went to the "tournament" to check it out.

I subtly worked my way into the crowd wearing my usual "Alexis Black" attire (I also design clothing), which is white designer "Alexis Black" pants, black pumps, a black silk skirt, with a white "Alexis Black" sweater thrown provocatively about my shoulders and my official "Alexis Black" hat (it's uniquely my own, a 100% wool black hat with a red and yellow feather) that I wear tilted stylishly to the left. Realizing that, as usual, I stuck out from the crowd, I took off the hat and tried to make small talk with a woman seated next to me named Millie, who was dressed much like Nastassia, in green polyester pants and a flower print shirt.

"That Nastassia Goldberg is quite good," I said.

"Oh yeah. But my money's on Trudy Morgenstern."

"Mmm. She's not bad. What do you think of Margaret Davidson?" I asked idly.

"Her? That shiksa! She's no good. Say, are you Jewish?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Are you married?"

"No," I said wistfully, remembering last summer when I visited Spain, and a young matador proposed to me. I declined, explaining that in my business my time is not my own.

"No? A lovely girl like you? Listen, my son Herbie is a lovely boy. He's a lawyer too, he—"

It was at this point that I politely (though it wasn't easy) slipped away from Millie. Nastassia was really cleaning up. I had no doubt she would win...she always did, at least at Mah-Jong. Then I noticed a young man leaning forward in his front row seat watching every move of a tile as if his life depended on it. And as he leaned forward, I saw a gun sticking out of the breast pocket of his coat! I realized then that it was Domingo Santiago, alias "Banana Crunch!"

I was still trying to figure out what his next move would be when Leonard Rosenblatt, the Judge or referee or whatever, announced Nastassia Goldberg as the winner. He handed her the check for a half a million bucks. Nastassia accepted the check readily and began what promised to be a long acceptance speech.

"Thank you so much, Lenny! You don't know what this means to me. Ever since I was a little girl I dreamed of this moment...winning the most important Mah-Jong game of my life. I'd also like to say that—" "Uh, excuse me. I—I have an announcement," Rosenblatt said with a very uncomfortable expression on his face.

"What is it?" Nasty asked, her cow eyes darting about frantically.

"It seems that the Mah-Jong tiles have been marked," he said, quickly snatching the check from Nasty. "Miss Goldberg, you have been disqualified!"

"Disqualified?" Nasty spat. "Domingo!"

At that moment, Domingo Santiago literally jumped out of his seat and pulled out his gun. "Give her the money, sucker, unless you want a nose full of lead!"

Not wasting a moment, I ran up behind Banana Crunch and pulled out my own brand of justice—a 44-caliber Magnum.

"It's over, Domingo. And that means you too, Nastassia," I said. By this time, the security guards already had them covered.

"Just wait, Alexis!" a handcuffed Nastassia Goldberg screamed in a shrill voice as the cops were taking her away. "My Daddy's a lawyer and my uncle Harry is a judge! I won't be in jail a day!"

"We'll see, Nastassia, we'll see. Just remember, Alexis Black is on the side of the law, and Alexis Black always wins."

I phoned Katrina then, and we met at Scofield's Bar for a drink. My friend Dominick MacKenzie, an actor/bartender/private eye, was tending her.

"The usual, Alex?"

"Uh-huh," I said.

"Boy," Katrina said, "how do you drink those Black Russians?"

"What other drink could Alexis Black possibly drink?" Dominick answered for me.

Katrina had a glass of white wine. I told her the whole story, and afterwards she just shook her head.

"Alex," she said finally, "it's no bed of roses being in this business."

"I know, Katrina. There have been times that I've considered chucking it all, and just continuing on as a rock and roll legend."

"Yeah. Sometimes I wish I could just pursue my ballet career, and in a few years just settle down with a good man," Katrina said.

"Yes, I know what you mean, Kat, but this is what our lives are about."

We had another round and then got up to leave. We started arguing over who would pick up the check, both insisting on doing the honors, when Dominick came over and said he'd take care of it.

"Oh no, Dominick. You don't have to," I told him.

"Ladies," he said, putting his arms around us, "I am no longer among the ranks of unemployed actors."

"What? Dominick, you got a part?" Katrina exclaimed.

"Yes, I did. I got a feature role in a new off-off-Broadway musical called 'Have It Your Way', a parody of the fast food industry."

"Oh, that's wonderful!" I said, kissing his left cheek.

"Yes. The best of luck," Katrina said, kissing his right cheek.

After hearing Dominick's good news, my mood brightened a bit. When I got home, I took my dog Rocky (that's short for 'Roxanne') for a walk. We stopped off at the local delicatessen for some cold cuts, and I bought some muenster cheese for Rocky (we both love it, but alas, I'm allergic to it). Funny, most people probably think Alexis Black is wine and dined most every night of the week.

My mood worsened as the night wore on. At least I had my work to take up my time. I was recording demo tracks at home for my new album, tentatively titled "Wisconsin". The following night the band and I were supposed to start arranging it. Oddly enough, though, as I played back the tape, I honestly thought it sounded just great with just an acoustic guitar, harmonica, and my unique voice.

I was mulling that over when the telephone rang.

"Hello," I said.

"Hello, Alexis?" said the voice on the other end, with a heavy English accent.

"Yes?"

"It's Richard. Remember, we met Saturday night at the Peppermint Lounge..."

"Oh, Richard! How are you?"

"Fine. And you?"

"Fine," I said, the beginnings of a smile forming at the corners of my mouth. "Just fine."

"Uh, Alexis—"

"Call me Bla—uh, Alex, please..."

"Sure. Alex, I was wondering if you'd like to do something this Friday night..."

"Friday?" I asked, remembering vaguely plans Katrina and I had made for that evening. I think she said she was performing.

"Yes," Richard said. "I have tickets for the ballet. Katrina Nichols is performing. Are you free?"

"Well, Richard," I said, "you know my time isn't always my own—but I'd love to."

(Well, that's it for this month. Next month: Will Alexis chuck it all for a good man?)

License To Manipulate FEATURING "COOP"

Dear Coop,

What does one say to morons who assume that any younger person with an older person is the older person's offspring? My husband and I are almost two decades apart in age and so many clerks, etc. mistake him for my son. It is so embarrassing and anger-inducing. He's so good about it, even going to the trouble of growing a moustache to look older. We're both at a loss for words, though, when some fool makes a crack about it.

My daughter has the same problem as she married a man much older. More than once she's called home all agitated over some stupid remark. When the four of us go out, it's even worse. How can we deal with these rude idiots?

Dear Progressive,

Ask the jerks if they know what year it is and if they know what century it is. Laugh at them for their outmoded attitudes and then use every opportunity to berate them for picky little things. Put the assholes on the defensive. Make them feel like dirt. They deserve it. Although a well-aimed punch would be so satisfying, it would create more trouble than it would solve. Stick to sharp verbal abuse and that should do the trick.

Confidential to two IJ staffers: Congratulations on your impending nuptials.

Sailor Boy

by Clay Geerdes

I did not have to join the Navy back in 1954. The U.S. was in the midst of the Korean "peace action" and it is quite possible that I would have been invited to join the Army had I not joined the Navy. I went in and signed up of my own free will. I can't tell you any crapola about being a kid who loved ships and had this Ishmaelesque call to put to sea, because, actually, I hadn't even read *Moby Dick* at the time. I had tried a couple of times, but it was just too boring. I lived in the flattest state in the Union and the local lake wasn't good for much for anything, certainly not boats. No, when I went in the Navy, I wasn't even thinking of going to sea. I was thinking: "Goddam Sam, I'm getting my ass outa Nebraska at last." I was not thinking about coming back either.

If you've read *BATTLE CRY* (Leon Uris' first book) or seen it on-screen (a piss-poor imitation of the book), you know what boot camp is like. Maybe you saw it in *OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN* or *THE D.I.*, but I'll tell you a little about it anyway. Always good for a few laughs when you're not there. I was in San Diego at the U.S. Naval Training Center. The unlucky went to Great Lakes, where you freeze your ass off on guard duty. In San Diego (called "Dago" by sailors), we had warm weather most of the time. Boot is 9 weeks long, or it was in '54. The first three weeks is Primary and you are isolated from the world. No newspapers, no radios, no outside news to speak of at all. You can't do anything unless you're told. You get up at 4:45 in the morning and have 15 minutes to get dressed (those fucking leggings included), get shaved, get your rack made up, and get outside on the patio to wait to march to breakfast. Breakfast! In the middle of the night. I don't know about you, but I was never one to get up mornings. When I left Lincoln, I was working a night shift at Western Electric and I would get home around 2:30 and read a couple of hours, then sleep until noon the next day before getting up to start the cycle over. For me, eating breakfast at dawn was a rare experience. And the way you had to eat it! You march into the galley, get a metal tray, move down the line as the messcooks fill each one of the pockets on the tray with things like cereal, toast (always cold, always burned), coffee cake (usually dry), and, more often than not, chipped beef on toast ('shit on a shingle'). By the time you sit down, you have about 5 minutes to eat it all and if you don't pack it in you get pretty hungry before noon.

You go to classes on everything (I remember nothing about any of them. Most guys learn to sleep in those chairs with their eyes open while the teachers ramble on about oceanography, navigation, biological and chemical warfare, etc.) and you have to qualify for everything. Swimming. Everyone is naked on the side of this pool. You have to jump in and swim across and back. That's it. You can swim. You qualify. Get back into your clothes and get back outside and wait. There is a lot of waiting in Boot.

The boss is called the Company Commander. Ours was a guy named Marks. I think. Anyway, that name fits him. He pushed us and marched us and made us wish we had thought twice about signing up. He drove the weak out (several guys always desert in boot. They go home when they get the chance. I don't know what happens to them. I knew of one guy who simply got a medical discharge, though it's a court-martial offense), and he made the strong stronger by challenging them to compete. Under him is a Recruit Company Commander, usually a college drop-out who took ROTC and knows the marching drills. Basically, he and his assistant just sit around the duty shack playing cards and working hustles (like selling the best watches to buddies, while giving the worst ones to guys who talk back).

Inspections happen every few minutes in Boot. You get inspected at morning Quarters and you lose points for every flaw. These are not only personal points, they are company points. Every company is in competition with every other company and the CC's are locked into the same game. Your dirty t-shirt or inadequate shave or unshined shoe can get you on everyone's shitlist. And the punishments are pretty bizarre. In a barracks inspection, one of the guys had a dirty mattress ("fart sack"), so after the CC got through chewing him out in front of everyone, the guy had to peel off his fart sack, take it out into the patio, spread it out, and watch in agony as the entire company was marched back and forth across it. That night, he was out there scrubbing the damned thing until about three in the morning. What an injustice, right? Well, you only think that in Boot, because when you get aboard ship you learn that cleanliness is critical. If the guy in the next rack is a scumbag, he stinks up the entire compartment and everyone has to suffer. What you learn in Boot from the stress on cleanliness and obedience is basic survival. I saw a guy get his dirty rack stripped and all his gear thrown over the side one spring when we were off the shore of Taiwan. Not only that, the guys who had to sleep around this slob gave him a Kiwi party in the shower. This is a happy little event where you get scrubbed down by your shipmates with laundry soap and hard-bristled Kiwi brushes.

Obedience, because nothing is individual in the Navy or any branch of the service. It's all teamwork. This was hard on me. I'm just not much of a team player. I was the older brother in my family, and I'm not used to taking orders from anyone. I'd rather work alone (which I do now, publishing my own newsletter and little magazines) any time than be part of a team. There are exceptions, but few. I had one horrible experience shortly after I went aboard ship. Everyone is assigned various duties aboard ship. Half the section will go mess-cooking, while the other half gets compartment cleaning duty. I got mess-cooking. What this meant was getting out the produce and getting it prepared for the cooks, etc. My work started at 3:30 in the morning and I was assigned to work with another guy. Well, I would get out there and get it all done, then have a couple of hours to hide out and catch a nap before morning Quarters. But the guy I was assigned to work with was one of these stupid inarticulate clods who spend twice as much time trying to figure ways out of doing anything than they would spend if they simply went ahead and did the work. I had to deal

with this asshole for nearly a month and more than once I felt like dumping him down the garbage chute. He would pretend that the simplest task was too hard for him to understand; naturally, I would just go ahead and do it and go on to something else. He did about one-tenth the work I did during that month. Of course, no one cared because the food was always ready for breakfast, but I cared. I still hate that lazy asshole, but I'm sure it's wasted energy, because he'd be dead by now. No, if you have a good crew, it's easier to get a job done, but with guys like him, it's a lot better to work alone—and there are many more like him than me in the service.

What I wanted was my time. When I was in charge of the engineering office on the ship, I would lock myself in during off-hours and read and study and write. I was glad when I didn't have to deal with a lot of petty bullshit or listen to some of the repetitive bullshit that is hard to escape in a closed situation like a ship at sea. Living in cramped quarters, you learn to value your privacy. Even on liberty, I seldom went to those crowded, smoky little bars; instead, I would go over in the afternoon and take a train somewhere, get out of the city. I saw a lot more of Japan and the Philippines and Australia than many of my shipmates.

Most of us got "Dear John's" at sea. It was common to see one or more guys standing alone near the fantail after mail call. Later on in the galley, we'd joke about it, saying a lot of things we didn't mean. "Ah, she wasn't that hot anyway. There's a lot more fish in the sea." I was engaged when I joined and I got my letter when we were off the coast of Japan. One of the boatswains just laughed. "I got a whole collection of those, boy," he said. Later on, I found out he had a family in the States and one in Japan. I don't know if either knew about the other. Housing was so cheap in Japan in the fifties, that a lot of the older officers had places in town with servants. Cost them less than a hundred bucks a month! That was a lot of money in Japan.

I enjoyed going to sea. I was on a tanker in those years and our mission was to re-fuel ships of the 7th Fleet off the coast of China. Life was pretty relaxed when we weren't on fueling detail. We had as much liberty as we wanted and since there was little to spend money on, most of us saved up quite a bundle. By the time I was transferred to Electronics School on Treasure Island in San Francisco, I had decided to go to college and I was keeping all my money on the books for that purpose. At sea, I would spend a lot of time in the small ship's library preparing myself. I didn't know what to expect, really. I was one of those people who dropped out of high school and went to work as a teenager. I took a test and got a diploma in 1952, but my experience of higher education was nil when I finally hit college. Surprised me when I found out it was no big thing. I found out that the reading and studying I did on the ship put me way ahead of most of the students who were entering from high school. They hadn't read much of anything, while I was up on dozens of authors and subjects. I had read all of Dostoyevsky and most of the books by people like Faulkner, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Farrell, Dos Passos, Steinbeck, and I found myself breezing through a lot of courses.

No, I don't have a tattoo. I'll finish this off with a little tattoo tale, though. Actually, tattoos are against Naval Regulations, but a lot of sailors get them anyway, many feeling a tattoo to be part of an initiation rite. When I first went aboard ship, I was assigned to the fire room (engine room), because of my electronics training. On a cold iron (engines off in port) watch, I met Bob Rogers. He was a body builder, one of those guys who was always trying to prove himself, even though no one ever questioned him. Bob was always showing off his muscles and trying to get people to wrestle with him. He had that depilated skin the body builders often go for and there wasn't a mark on him. Well, we pulled into Hong Kong for the first time and half the ship hit the beach. Next evening, I was on watch in the boiler room and Rogers comes down. Under his t-shirt, he has a bandage on his chest. I just wait. I can tell by the grin on his face that he's done something, but I certainly never expected this giant American eagle and flag he'd had tattooed all over his chest. I just shook my head. Jeez, Bob. Rogers was really a naive guy. The older guys in the engine room always teased him, particularly about his virginity. We were tied up in dry dock in Oakland one time and everyone had been razzing him about never getting laid. The one night he comes down to the midwatch (12-4 in the morning) with this shit-eating grin on his face. "You guys keep on me all the time about not getting any pussy, well, I just got some a little while ago."

"Oh. That so, Bob? Where did you meet her?"

"At a movie in Oakland."

"And what did you do, get in her pants right there in the balcony?"

"Hell, no. We went to her house; did it on her back porch."

"No shit? Ah, c'mon, Rogers. You're putting us on."

"I knew you'd say that, so I brought these." He pulls out a pair of white panties and holds them up with both hands.

One of the boiler tenders says, "Hey, let me see those."

Bob draws back. "Na. Na. You'll get them dirty. Look at your hands." Boiler tenders always have black hands from changing the burners.

"Just hold them over here where I can check them out."

"Okay."

"Pretty small panties. What was she, eight years old?"

"No, she was 14."

"FOUR-TEEN! Jesus, guys, we got ourselves a cradle-robbler here."

"Yeah, Bob, for Chrissakes. Screwing somebody's baby sister. You oughta be ashamed, man."

"Oh, fuck you guys." Rogers climbed up the ladder and back into the compartment.

Poor Rogers. He never could get it right. I think once you're the butt of a joke in the gang, that's what you remain, no matter what you do. I expect Bob is somewhere right now showing someone that golden eagle on his chest and talking about all the nooky he used to get when he was in the Navy. - CLAY GEERDES, April 14, 1983

LET'S GET RID OF THOSE THINGS- BUT HOW?

(dedicated to Robert Benchley)

by Deborah Benedict

Many people complain to me about their cockroach problem. Why they do this is beyond my ken (and my barbie, too). It might be my expertise in things entomological and my status as a first-rate arachnologist. I know what goes on in the wondrous and complicated universe of "critters" as we expert types are wont to call them. Can't figure out what the hell is going on in the people universe, though. Anyway, I became aware of how the cockroach problem has escalated. No doubt it was exacerbated by the recent rise of "POVERTY", the most powerful cultural trend since the hula hoop. I invented a non-toxic, ecologically safe system for exterminating cockroaches and it is to the benefit of all that I am generous enough to share it. In my spare time (which I keep in an old mayo jar), I have created a "Spider Army". This Spider Army (Panzer Divisions included, although not documented herein) was systematically trained and drilled to annihilate anyone in the infamous Blattidae Family. A few facts about the recruits: They all come from the species Achaeareana Tepidorium, known as American House Spiders or Domestic Spiders. (The latter wear little aprons, carry brooms and dustpans and look rather like Betty Crocker.) You see this species hanging out in messy cobwebs. They are frequently sucked into vacuum cleaners by the overzealous and undereducated. Well! DO NOT SUCK THE SPIDERS NO MORE! Unless you have no cockroach problem. Then you may suck them into your Hoover or Regina or whatever else you rich people use to clean your mansions. If you do have a cockroach problem, admit it. Don't be ashamed. Witnesses have reported cockroaches at Buckingham Palace. (No doubt bucking the ham.) Yes, even the Royal Family is not exempt from this scourge. (The Royal Roaches wear little tiaras and carry sceptres and have an unbearably regal attitude, but their habits are the same as common cockroaches.)

I created my Spider Army by gathering up a few American House Spiders (heretofore known as "AHS") and selecting the greediest and smartest ones for indoctrination. It's easy to discern if a spider is intelligent; simply request to see its SAT (Spider Achievement Tests) scores and review them. The Spiders I selected were all females, as all AHS will be. The boys do not make webs, they simply wander around looking for a girl to mate with and should they find her, some enchanted evening, they do it and run away or get eaten. Life is very simple, really. I put these ladies in strategic places in my kitchen; places I felt the cockroaches would favor. Underneath the sink, in the dark recesses of the cabinet. I tossed them in gently and hoped they would not fight and consume each other. "It's bad for morale!" I told them, and they seemed to agree, for each had built a web in either corner. They never leave their webs (except to go to Gale Sondergard film festivals), so I did not worry about them wandering about the house.

I trained them to develop a palate for cockroaches by tossing the beasts into their webs. Spiders naturally love these nasties as much as we humans loathe them, so it was a simple task. It is also oodles of fun to watch the spider decimate the creature you have slammed a Montgomery Ward Christmas catalog on, only to see it get up and saunter away. Revenge is so important for a balanced psyche. When the spiders were mature, I issued them helmets, dog tags and uniforms. They love epaulets. I gave them a rousing call to arms, demanding a quota body count and told them if they worked hard they would be well rewarded. They saluted me neatly and told me to get the hell out of their territory. Spiders make splendid soldiers, but have lousy manners. You'll just have to adjust. Within two weeks, those two ladies had made the cockroach problem a thing of the past. Realising how efficacious this solution was, I recruited more, training them in tank warfare and developing a paratrooper division. From time to time I would see one small and scared roach (by this time all the cock had gone out of them) and it was a simple matter to mobilise my forces. Apparently, the rumor of war had spread and many roaches had packed up their crumbs and fled. So my downstairs neighbor insists. Now follow a simple chart so that you can identify your roach pests and train your spiders properly—for I know no sane person can resist this Science in the Home adventure.

GERMAN COCKROACHES are small and sneaky, brown in color. They measure 1/2 to 5/8ths inches. Food Preferences: Beer, Pretzels, Liederkrantz Cheese, Knockwurst, Boiled Cabbage. They frequently wear Lederhosen. They can be observed at late night parties arguing whether or not Wagner was a Nazi. They look like Volkswagens when young but come to resemble Audis as they mature. They can be lulled into complacency by the first 6 bars of DAS LIED VON DER ERDA or roused to action by "Die Walkyrie". They get mad when they hear Wayne Newton mispronounce DANKE SCHON. A spider wishing to get Die Deutsche Kuchenschabe to utter a final "Auf Wiedersehen" should play the Andrews Sisters singing "Bei Mir Bist Du Schon". If she doesn't have a phonograph in her web she can sing it a capella. A marquee announcing a Werner Fassbinder Film Festival is a helpful device in luring these wily Frauen und Herren of the kitchen. Do NOT try to lure them with any ADOLPH'S products. They will not fall for that AGAIN!

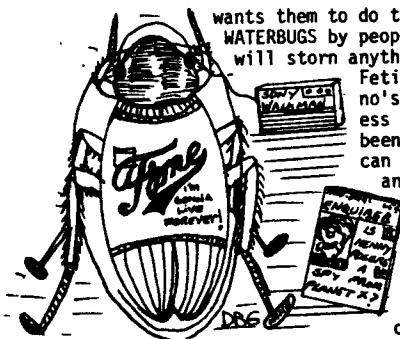
GERMAN



DBG

AMERICAN

AMERICAN COCKROACHES are reddish-brown with yellowish markings and they are BIG (1 to 2 inches). Sheesh! They can FLY. No one



wants them to do this. They are sometimes called WATERBUGS by people who can't face reality. They will storn anything with a MacDONALD'S logo. Food Fetishes: Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Gi-no's Pizza Rolls, anything from Host-ess or Dolly Madison. Grand wars have been fought over a single Dorito. You can observe them in their rec rooms and outer areas playing baseball, watching DALLAS or DYNASTY on their portable TVs, discussing politics, money, E.T. as Christ symbol, money, point spreads, money and sex. If you wish to get them ALL TOGETHER, simply spread crumbs from WONDER BREAD and dribble some Cheez Whiz on a recent PEOPLE magazine. The Spider wishing to get an "A.C." to say "Catch You Later" should loudly proclaim a ONCE IN A LIFETIME BARGAIN series of sales at her location, always careful to say "BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE" and offering a free 6-pack of Pepsi woudn't hurt. A.C.s in Southern California hang around hot tubs and will crawl on any line of white powder. A colony in Malibu was recently observed making a stunning formation of Erik Estrada's head. This exemplifies their level of evolvement.

The ORIENTAL COCKROACH is black or dark brown,

1 to 3/8th and 1 inch, shiny with hairy legs and slanted eyes. Food Faves: Chow Mein, Moo Goo Gai Pan, Monosodium Glutamate, and anything in white containers with shiny metal handles. They can be observed in their fortune cookie-shaped paper nests, playing GO, cooking food over tiny hibachis and making anagrams out of MITSUBISHI. The Spider desirous of getting these guys to say "Sayonara" should loudly announce that she has opened a Sushi Bar and is giving away free cameras to every customer. Many Oriental Cockroaches have degrees from M.I.T. so don't expect simple behavior. The males hang out together and only approach the females when they want to mate or borrow money. Oriental Cockroaches frequently nest in computers and video consoles. They enjoy travel. Disguise your Spider as a "Tour Guide", have her promise the roaches a free lunch with complimentary cocktails and you will have suckered them into their next incarnation. Say "Domo Arigato" and toast your spider with a cup of SAKI.



ORIENTAL

A few tips on training, etc. When you find a spider in her web, identify it. There are books available for this, but the simplest method is to ask the spider for I.D. Card 'em. Usually, they'll have something that says "Achaeareana Tepidorium" and the number of molts they've endured which indicates their age. Some of them may nastily identify themselves as "Steadota" and that's fine too.

Tell the spider you'd like to keep her as a pet, but would prefer she live in another location where she'll get more food. This ploy rarely fails. If you feel nervous talking to a spider, then don't. No-body's forcing you. Sheesh.

HOW TO MOVE A SPIDER: There are no professional spider-moving companies. You must do it yourself. A pair of scissors and a plastic container will suffice. Hold the container under the web and snip the strands over the spider. She will drop into the container. She will be upset and why not? You have just shattered her universe. Reassure her by saying you are from the Department of Better Housing for Arachnids and are transporting her to a place of more yum yums. Place her where the roaches seem to come from. Do NOT worry about her biting you or getting hostile. She will not bite you and even if she could and did, you wouldn't suffer. Death occurs quite quickly! No, that's just a little joke. The AHS is simply not interested in eating you when she can have flies, mosquitos and cockroaches. Once she is placed, tell her the truth—that she is now a member of a highly skilled and dangerous army. All spiders love drama and intrigue and you will have an eager enlistee.

After her training, simply forget her! You will only see her if you look and frim time to time you should sweep up the corpses. AHS are quiet, clean and efficient. They will never crawl out on your kitchen counter and nibble the Cheetos fragments. The only eat live prey that they catch in their webs.

Such is the wonderful mystery of nature and the glory of science and if you don't believe me, ask Mr. Wizard. This is my viable solution to a problem that plagues each of us at some time in our already miserable lives.

ROACH MOTELS were a good idea, but the roaches figured them out quickly and will not check into a ROACH MOTEL unless it has a coffee shop, vending machines and cable television. This is how we get rid of those things, whether you think so or not.

TA DUM

THE END

THIS WORLD
is Big Enough for both
of us - 4 1/2 billion bird brains and
J.C. BRAINBEAU.
Send S.A.S.E. to:
WORLD PEACE
Box 2138 Youngstown, Ohio, 44504

376 great apes have hymens? Probably not.
I don't get bored. Please, basic training, wife-
beating, corporal punishment, Valley Forge,
military drills, etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc.

Life in the Fan Lane

by Lee Pelton

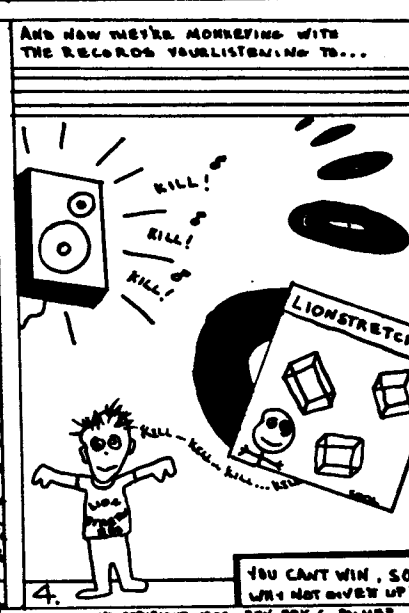
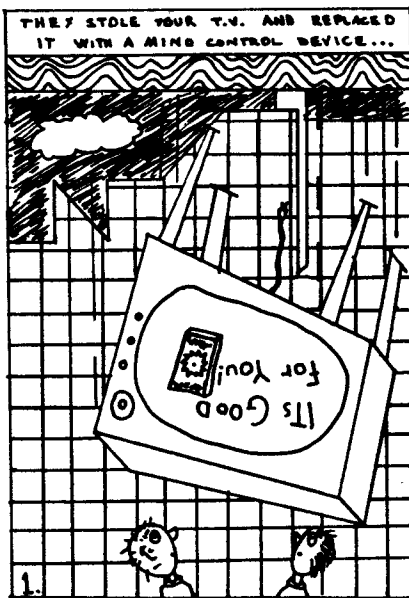
Since starting this column for IJ, I've tried to recapture some of the fun and social concepts/interactions that comprise science fiction fandom. To a degree, I feel I have done this. But in the course of this column I've come to realize just how distant I am to the actual core of fannish behavior. I have been absent from the local scene for almost 2 years now, with the occasional dropping by at a meeting just to see what's been happening and what's the latest gossip, etc. Conventions and I have been on the outs because of financial hassles and a lack of my belonging to any specific group dynamic at a con. This change, not within fandom but within me, has made going to these cons less attractive than it used to be. I have revived my interest in one major fannish activity. I like the publishing end a great deal. I was introduced to fandom outside of Minneapolis through apas (amateur press associations) and co-editing the local clubzine, RUNE, for 3+ years. It was only after this that I really got into in-person fandom. Now, I feel much as though I'm back at square one, starting all over again.

Considering how jaded, bored, jaundiced, etc. I am towards over half of fandom at large, why, you may wonder, am I trying to return to it via an old, familiar trail? Well, it's simple, really. Fandom provided me with emotional shelter when I needed it most, acceptance when I would not accept myself, and a place to be and belong to, when I was lost and needed to be a part of something while I searched for myself.

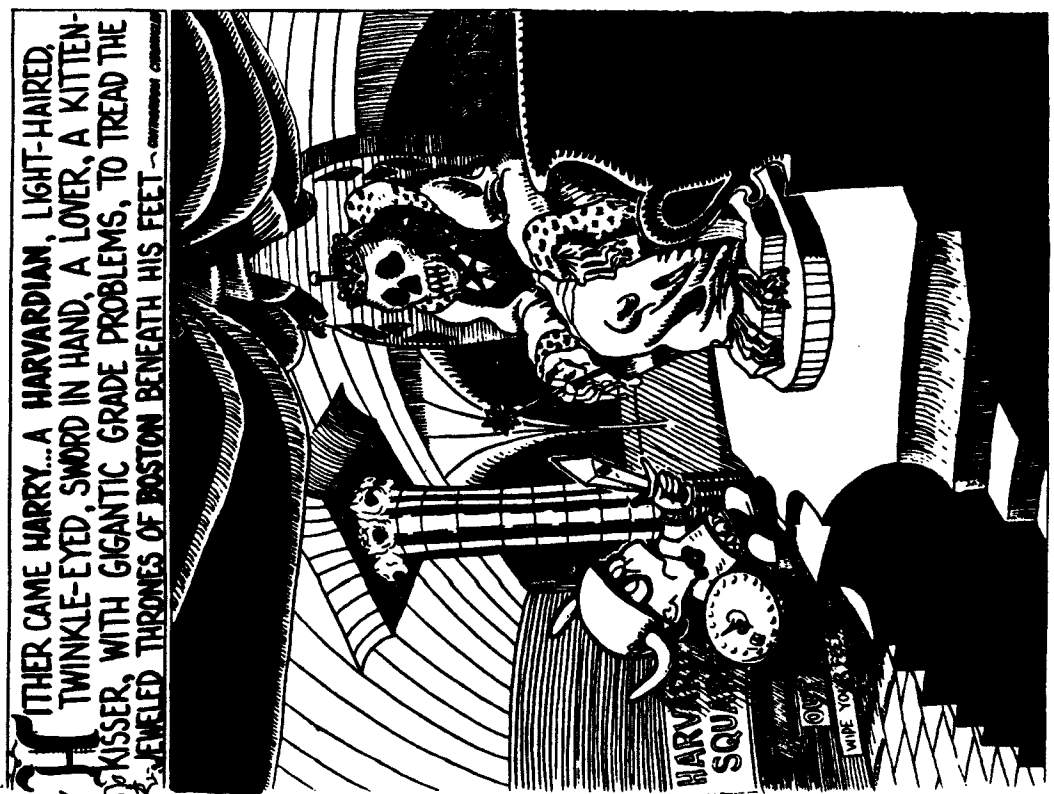
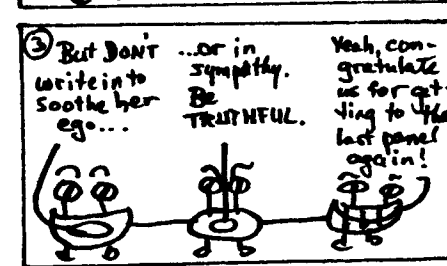
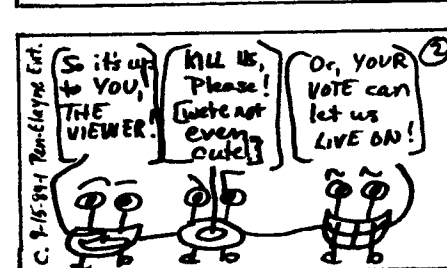
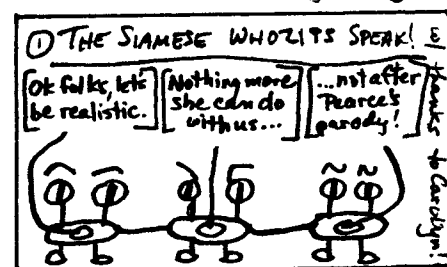
Sadly, as many older fans discover, once you find yourself, fandom is a very inadequate vehicle for total commitment. Is this fandom's fault? Hell, no! Fandom is a statis, rubbery type of beast. It gives you what you give it. It is not a form of substitute parent, or a welfare system, or anything else you'd care to compare it to in that vein. Even though you can belong to fandom, your success within it lays squarely upon your own head. Many fail to see this and turn their anger towards fandom instead of towards the true culprit, themselves. Fans who become comfortable with themselves, who find an internal value system they can live with and are comfortable with, and who learn to look beyond the next con, the next meeting, or whatever, very often leave fandom. A good analogy would be the child leaving home and trying to make it in the real world. Fandom is not, and will never be, the real world. But, with all this said, I still like it there.

I've said to many people over the years that my job makes me money, but my life is fandom. Even with my absence in recent times, I still believe this and act upon that thought process. But the terms I use now are my own. The group concept, womb-like in nature, can no longer be fulfilling for me. So I take it for what I want out of it, tossing out the bad, and keeping the good. (All subjective values, mind you. My Valhalla may well be someone else's Hades.) Perhaps my own stature within fandom allows me this freedom. It's possible (to hell with false modesty!). Maybe those who observe me don't give a damn (Also possible. I wear no blinders.). I guess I don't care. But the facts are, I have to find which fannish roots are still growing and which should be buried in the dead past.

So, no more LIFE IN THE FAN LANE. BUT, I am still going to write for IJ. Without the self-imposed subject matter restrictions I've operated on you can expect damn near anything from me. I hope you like it.



DEAD WHOZITS? by Elaine



baboondooley



Witness to BEATNIK GLORY!

It was the poetry reading of all 1961. I can't lie, so when I said "Life is a Zoo?"

Michael Albers, the greatest big daddy of them all, was on the 33rd floor.

Every noone with any class was standing there lined up for black.

Inside tensions rose as everyone awaited his first crucial words.

Every time I don't fit in, I tell myself I'm a real idea. I need one people to listen what we need one people to express.

People really using freedom of speech, speaking their minds, getting it on air, their views.

All life is learning to eat the sneakers of your childhood.

And then he spit! See, the silence was so real you could cut it with the hopes of an entire generation slipping to be free.

But then some cats started to hop and jump about with beat abandon. Yeah daddy!! Now! Like Now! Go go go!!

Spreading the news, getting it all bang, out working the dogs, really getting down. You know?

They linked arms and began to chant the wisdom of the sage. All life is learning to eat the sneakers of your childhood.

Soon the crowd joined in. The chanting grew louder then froze, then mal Sanchow lit the cafe on fire and many cool citizens died.

Me? I escaped and hurried back to my flat as fast as I could.

Because Sanchow sang way in spite of it all, everything made sense.

Yeah! You go for it! Uh-huh? What?

When Baboon was 4, he believed in Captain Kangaroo. Look Baboon! Here comes Mrs Bear!

And when he was nine he really thought Bugs Bunny was the best! What's up Doc?

The day Baboon turned 15 he was true to the cult of Luke Skywalker. YAH YAH!

But now he's a serious man at 20 and joined the forces of Jehu Blain. New World order soon! Buy the record! And this time it's for real-o!

(almost)
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The SubGenius Foundation

WAITING FOR "BOB"-OT

A Tragicomedy of the End of the World

by Dr. Armand Gideon, M.A.:L.

A bombed-out city street, in what was a shopping district. The corpse of a giant cockroach. The evening.

Estrogen is sitting on a severely charred couch in the show window of what may have been a department store. He is fiddling with a TV set, which has no picture tube. He bangs it twice on the side, sits back, and looks at it expectantly. Nothing. He sighs quietly and begins pulling parts from inside. Enter Vampimir.

VAMPIRIR: They're not coming, you know.

ESTROGEN: (uninterested) Who?

V: The X-ists. They're not coming. (He sits on a fire hydrant.)

E: (Looking up) Yes, they are. There will be an announcement. (He bangs the TV) Any minute. (Pulls up the rabbit ears) On this.

V: You shan't get it on that.

E: He spoke to Stang on a dead television. (Gives up, falls back on couch)

V: (coming closer) He won't speak to you.

(A rat runs across the roach, then crosses the stage. Vampimir watches it with disdain, Estrogen with hunger.)

E: (Climbs down from store window, drops his hardhat. Retrieves it, falls, rises, brushes dirt from his coveralls) Help me, won't you? (Vampimir advances, shifts the parcel he is carrying from arm to arm, retreats, sets it down gently on the hulk of a '67 Chevy, advances, helps brush) This is it, you know. X-Day. Gotterdamerung. Twilight of the gods adn all that. Eschaton coming. (shouting) Enough! (They stop brushing)

(Vampimir returns to his package, removes the wrappings, begins assembling pieces. As he works, he hums tunelessly, something indistinguishable. It becomes obvious that he is putting together a mortar.)

E: Faith, we must have our faith. They will come. Won't they? Won't they? I remember (mumbling) excremeditation...timesplit...conspiracy...Faith? Did we have some? (He sits on the ground)

V: (moving chunks of concrete aside) Perhaps. At some point. But now (pause) guns are more important. (he sets the mortar in the cleared space, takes off his pack, and begins to rummage within)

E: No. It can't be. They will come. (Lies down)

(A burst of gunfire, offstage left. Another. Plucky enters from left, running, followed by Bozzo. Both are in fatigues, carrying Tommy guns. They dive behind the Chevy, without noticing Vampimir or Estrogen.)

B: You, private! Reconnoiter! (Plucky salutes, knocks his helmet off, grabs it, looks around, sees Vampimir and Estrogen. He taps Bozzo on the shoulder, salutes, and points.) So! What side are you on? (Menaces with his gun)

E: (without interest) I'm on my back.

V: No side. None at all. What's the point? None. (Goes back to his mortar.)

B: The point, fool, is the preservation of our humanity—our country—ourselves! (Leaps to his feet, salutes) You see before you the essence of life, command and obedience, domination and submission. Private! (Plucky salutes, knocking helmet off again. It lies in the dirt.)

Flag! (He drops his pack, frantically begins searching through it.) You scoundrels, we'll show you.

(A burst of gunfire, offstage right. Another. Bozzo glances at Plucky, hesitates. Another burst of gunfire.)

B: Private! Pack! Charge! (Plucky puts his pack on, runs off to the right. Bozzo sneers at Vampimir.) We'll deal with you later, scum. (He follows Plucky.)

(Silence, then renewed gunfire, fading into the distance. Vampimir walks over to Plucky's helmet, stoops down, examines it.)

V: Now what? Shall we follow? (He picks up the helmet, walks over to Estrogen.) Rog?

E: No. We wait. They will come. (Vampimir drops the helmet on Estrogen's chest.) Thank you. (He rises, walks over to the store window, tosses the helmet next to the tv, clambers after it.) It's in The Book. We wait. They come.

V: No.

E: Yes.

V: What if they wait? Then what?

E: (attaching helmet to the tv antenna) Then we come. But we don't. They come. (Bangs the tv, falls back on the couch.)

ROACH: (in a hollow voice) It is too late. Repent.

E: Did you speak?

V: No. (Wanders back to the mortar, toys with a shell) No. Did you?

E: No. They must be there, then.

V: Perhaps.

E: Then we should go. (Bangs tv, angrily) Why do I get no message?

V: Your breath, your faith, who cares? (He adjusts the range on the mortar.) No message. Never. Give up and let's go home.

E: Home?

V: Never mind. Shall we go?

E: Yes, let's go.

(Vampimir fires the mortar, provoking more small-arms fire offstage. The lights dim. Vampimir and Estrogen do not move.) CURTAIN

ACT TWO NEXT DAY. SAME TIME. SAME PLACE.

Estrogen is sleeping on the couch, Plucky's helmet over his face. He snores. Vampimir enters, carrying a sack of potatoes. He drops them next to his mortar and sits on the ground.

VAMPIRIR: Rog. (Louder) Rog! (He throws a potato at Estrogen, misses, throws another. This one knocks the helmet to the floor of the store.)

ESTROGEN: (Awakes with a start) Who? Vam! Why? (He sits up.)

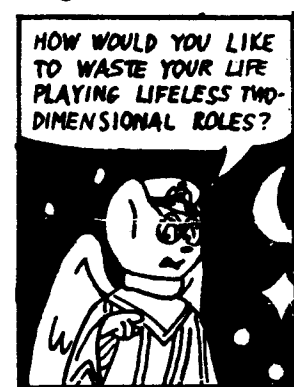
V: Any message?

E: No. (He takes a bite of the potato.)

V: Of course.

E: Of course? (He takes another bite.)

BY GEO. R. EDDY



V: I knew it.

E: Then why ask? (He throws the remainder of the potato at a passing rat.)

V: It passes the time. We have time, now.

E: Not for long.

V: They're not coming.

E: Who?

V: Anyone.

E: Yes.

V: No.

E: (Kicks television; it falls) Yes! (shouting) Now look! We'll never get the announcement.

V: There won't be any announcement. (He pulls out a rag from his overall pocket and begins to polish the mortar.)

(Estrogen, almost crying, rights the television. He begins to fiddle with it. Picks up a bent spoon from the floor and attempts to unscrew something within, then falls back on the couch and sobs quietly. Vampimir, meanwhile, continues to clean the mortar, ignoring both Estrogen and the occasional distant gunfire.)

E: (between sobs) Brute! Can't you let me be?

(Plucky enters from stage left, clothes torn and bloody. He holds Bozzo, who is unconscious, in a fireman's carry. Both of their packs are gone. Plucky stumbles to center stage, drops Bozzo, falls to the ground.)

P: (weakly, almost whimpering) Help...help. (Estrogen stops crying, looks up, does not move. Vampimir approaches Bozzo and Plucky.)

V: Ah, what have we here? (Picks up Plucky's gun) Man's inhumanity to man, and all that. (Checks that it is loaded) What say, Rog? Shall we help? Whether 'tis nobler to something or other...(Aims at Bozzo)

Rog?

E: No.

V: (Shoots Bozzo) Too bad. (Shoots Plucky)

E: (without feeling) You brute.

V: Rather. (Shoots himself, but there is no ammo left in the gun.

Throws it to the rear of the stage and walks slowly back to his mortar.) What now?

E: (without moving) We wait.

V: Why?

E: Why not? They may come.

V: They won't. Ever.

E: Then wait for the end.

V: (Picks up mortar shell) What if it doesn't come?

ROACH: (hollow, booming voice) Repent. It is too late.

V: Did you speak?

E: No. (Pause) I don't think so. Did you?

V: Perhaps. (Fires the mortar. Picks up another shell, shrugs, drops it.) Why bother? It ends, it doesn't end, they come, they don't come. Futile. (He walks to the fire hydrant and stares at it.) What of civilization now?

E: What of it? They come. Civilization is over. (Retrieves Plucky's helmet from the floor, puts it over his face.)

V: Over here, perhaps. But elsewhere? We should look, if they don't come. Start again. Not end up like these. (Indicates bodies of Plucky and Bozzo.) Well?

E: (voice muffled by the helmet) Shall we go?

(Long silence. No gunfire. A rat runs across the roach and Vampimir idly tosses a potato at it. The light is dimming.)

V: (resigned) Yes, let's go. (whispering) Let's.

(A loud explosion offstage. They do not move.) CURTAIN.

ONE MORE WARNING: Other characters
"THE BOOK OF the Subgenus" was J.R.
"Bob" Dobb's attempt to rally subgenus and
condemne the punks. A certain is forming to
bring this book all together.

Random Article #2

by Coop

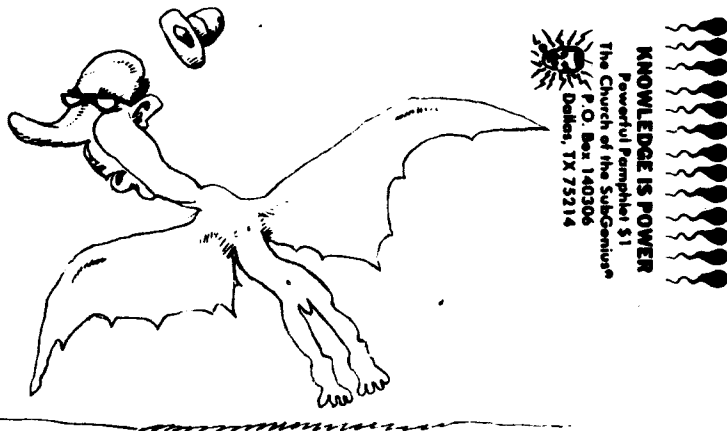
So much is heard these days about crowding in our cities and overpopulation of the world in general. No article or book ever suggests a really hot solution to the problem. They all want around sex education and birth control as a voluntary measure. One possible solution has been overlooked by those knee-jerk "humanitarians" and churches and society at large. Since abstinence from sex is absurd and birth control too complicated for the short of brains, a return to the interesting and depleting pastime of mass murder would be just the ticket.

Let's face it, mass murder is more fascinating than contraceptives. Helen Housewife's careful planning of only 2.3 children doesn't make the papers but a Manson or a Starkweather does. Every big massacre makes the front page. A mass murderer is an instant celebrity. You could become famous if only you're willing to work hard enough at it. Nickel and dime murders don't count. You must have a goal of over twenty to be in the big leagues and for anyone who isn't a government to pull off over nine hundred like Jim Jones (an Indiana boy) is nothing short of a consummate mass murderer.

You should start off with people you hate just to get the hang of it then work your way through the rest of the human flotsam you perceive. Be creative. Find a style that none before you have used. The Tylenol Killer deserves some applause for originality, as does Idi Amin. Guns and knives are so common. If you have what it takes to be a stellar mass murderer, you can easily break new ground in the field. Specialize. David "Son of Sam" Berkowitz had a thing for brunettes. Wayne B. Williams had a thing for black children. John Wayne Gacy was a homicidal pedophile extraordinaire. Be consistent and you're likely to be believed insane rather than merely criminal.

Deciding what to do with the by-products of your endeavors is entirely up to you. Some leave the corpses where they fall; others conceal them. Some concealers are meticulous; others throw the bodies into lawn and leaf bags and forget them. Decide before you act since dead things become offensive to the nostrils after a while.

For all of you latent mass murderers, aspire to the heights of Jack the Ripper and Vlad the Impaler. Maybe someday you too will end up in the Mass Murderers' Hall of Infamy. And ladies, this is a great field in which to prove your equality to men. If Lizzie Borden had been given half a chance, she would've been a great mass murderer. The Hall of Infamy is now accepting nominations to be judged on numbers, methods and duration of operation. Send your nominations to: Coop, P.O. Box 714, Bristol, RI 02809.



Funny You Should Mention It

"...those are the headlines; now, the rumours behind the news..."
WAITING FOR TRUDEAU—This November may be the only time this year that patient hip cynics can see their kind of Broadway show, at last. In between the cutesies and the revivals and the tearjerkers and the sure-fire moneymakers and all the other rot that usually categorizes the Great White-Upper-Middle-Class Way will be coming, to the Biltmore Theatre on November 10, "Doonesbury". Written by Trudeau (apparently five years in the making) and—oh, hell, let me just quote from the August 21 edition of the "Leisure" section of the Newark Star-Ledger, among their previews of the upcoming B'way season: "Also on the musical calendar (for Nov. 10 at the Biltmore Theatre) is Gary Trudeau's comic strip come to life: 'Doonesbury'. Trudeau, who is on a leave of absence from comic stripping, has written an original book musical and is making his debut, also, as a lyricist. The composer is Elizabeth Swados, who gave Broadway 'Runaways'. 'Doonesbury', which has been five years in gestation, will be directed by Jacques Levy and star Ralph Bruneau and Kate Burton. The show's main setting will be Trudeau's famed Walden Commune, populated by Mike Doonesbury, Boopsie, Zonker, Duke and many other characters from the popular strip." Well, who knows what to expect. Myself, I'm willing to save money for the ticket and to brush up on the ol' strips in preparation. Anybody interested in making this a sort of IJ group trip? I know it's asking a lot of dough, but I'd like to hear from the sort of people who'd be going anyway...on second thought, I don't think I know too many of those kinds of folks...ah well, if you want to go, let me know.

Sexual Stealing

by Jill Zimmerman

PROLOGUE: A Fable

Once upon a time, not so long ago, little girls sat on Mommy's knee and were told that one day a handsome prince would come along and march them down a church aisle in a beecootiful white dress and buy them a nice split-level in the suburbs and a dishwasher and a vacuum cleaner with fifteen attachments. Later on, something the media called "women's lib" came along, and some of these little girls were taught that no, they shouldn't want the handsome prince, they should want a "career." So the little girls pranced merrily off to college, and studied oh! so many things. They studied psychology, and English, and social work, and art history, and nineteenth-century French literature, so that they could have a "career." But Mommy was telling them that college was chock-full of handsome princes, and that along with a degree, they were to graduate with a prince. Some of the little girls thumbed their noses at Mommy and studied chemical engineering. Some of the girls thumbed their noses at "women's lib" and studied medical technology and then got married and had three children in three years. But others were attracted to both the idea of the "career" and of the handsome prince. So armed with their degrees in psychology, and English, and social work, and art history, and nineteenth-century French literature, they went off to the big city to start their careers. But after a while, these little girls, whether sitting at their typewriters or in their plush offices, as the case may be, often wondered when Mommy's promise would come true and the handsome prince would come along and give them "security." After all, jobs for women with degrees in psychology, and English, and social work, and art history, and nineteenth-century French literature didn't pay them enough to live in the style to which they wanted to be accustomed. So they waited. And hoped. And as the years passed, they came to a horrible realization: the little boys didn't want to help them live in the style to which they wanted to be accustomed. Instead of driving Chevy Citations waiting to be filled with wife and children, they were driving Porsches. And instead of the Pocono Gardens Lodge with their new brides, lounging in heart-shaped bathtubs, they were vacationing at Hedonism II in Jamaica. So the little girls sat around in diners or in bars, depending on whether or not they lived in New Jersey, crying that Mommy lied, or that the women's movement had betrayed them by making the boys scared. Maybe it was the fault of Betty and Gloria and all their cronies that the little boys didn't want to buy them houses and dishwashers and vacuum cleaners with fifteen attachments—or even new Coach briefcases!

Meanwhile, the little boys were angry at the little girls for expecting to be supported when they had jobs themselves. It just didn't make sense. Why should they tie themselves down to one person and become a wage slave when the little girls were capable of paying the rent themselves. Of course, the little girls were angry at the boys for making Mommy a liar. Everyone was angry—and confused.

* * * * *
In THE HEARTS OF MEN: American Dreams and the Flight From Commitment (Doubleday, \$13.95), Barbara Ehrenreich refutes the contention of the New Right, that women's rebellion against their traditional sex roles caused the breakdown of the American family structure. On the contrary, Ehrenreich states, it was male dissatisfaction with their prescribed roles as family breadwinners which irrevocably changed the family—a revolt which preceded feminism by a full ten years. Documenting the path of the male revolt from their initial complaints about conformity in the 1950's to the narcissisms of the 1970's "Me Generation," she shows how such diverse cultural influences as Hugh Hefner's "Playboy" philosophy, the medical profession's warnings against "stress," the nihilism of the "beat" generation, and the "human potential" movement combined to re-define "responsibility" as "guilt." One would think that this premise would precede an anti-male tirade. On the contrary, Ehrenreich is genuinely sympathetic to the constriction that the breadwinner role has placed on men. She cites the New Right backlash attitude of the likes of Phyllis Schlafly, who would force virtual conscription of men into supporting wives and children; and George Gilder, who views the responsibility of men in marriage as the only way to tame their self-destructive, self-indulgent, violent, predatory natures. The New Right attacks (aimed in reality at men rather than at feminists), more than any other factor, illustrate the anti-humanism of the breadwinner role. Herein lies the strength of this book. For although Ehrenreich's depiction of the forces leading to the death of the breadwinner ethic often comes across as being judgmental—almost derisive, she acknowledges its inevitability and shows how the break in the tradition of the support-dependency relationship between men and women can ultimately only improve our relationships:

"We cannot go back to a world where maturity meant 'settling,' often in stifled desperation, for a life perceived as a 'role.' Nor can we accept the nightmare anomie of the pop psychologists' vision: a world where other people are objects of consumption, or the chance encounters of a 'self' propelled by impulse alonemale culture seems to have abandoned the breadwinner role without overcoming the sexist attitudes that role has perpetuated: on the one hand, the expectation of female nurturance and submissive service as a matter of right; on the other hand, a misogynistic contempt for women as 'parasites' and entrappers of men....I might hope that we might meet as rebels together—not against each other but against a social order that condemns so many of us to meaningless or degrading work in return for a glimpse of commodified pleasures...."

FIRE SIGNALS

Well, things are really picking up this autumn, as we all fall together into a new season of Firesign activity. In fact, the season began rather earlier than expected, with a very welcome five-page "what-I'm-doing-now-that-the-summer-slowness-is-over" letter from Phil Proctor, including up to date news on the FIRESIGN RADIO show, which will have aired by now (according to the schedule the Global Satellite Network people gave me) over many stations 'round the country—review if I can manage it next month. But what I did last month (on my "summer vacation" from IJ) was to put out a bulletin, both as a birthday present to Phil and just to see if I could accomplish it, on everything that was going on (that I knew of) in the careers of the four guys. Many IJ people have already received this, mostly the ones I knew of as Firesign aficionados, but if you want a copy of "Four-Alarm FIRE SIGNAL (FALAFAL) #1", which will also get you on TFT's mailing list to receive future issues (if any) gratis and any other relevant TFT info, please write me and I'll send it all out! The names on the preliminary mailing list were published within the bulletin, and even in the short time between Then and Now, we've gained more folks: Jim Allen, Dave Axler, Bernadette Bosky, Mike Cullen, Ken Filar, Arthur Hlavaty, Rock Homberg, Alan Rosenthal, Bryan Steel and Tom Somers' names have been added, and I'm still scouring about trying to recruit more TFT aficionados for the list. So if you know anyone who likes the group and is interested in receiving free publicity stuff about 'em, let me know. Please note, however, that although FALAFAL is initiated by me, and even though I do FIRE SIGNALS for IJ, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THE PEOPLE ON THE FIRESIGN THEATRE MAILING LIST WILL RECEIVE INSIDE JOKE FREE. The only ones on the mailing list receiving "free" IJs are the four TFT members themselves (who have been trading artifacts for their copies, to be fair) and those aficionados who happen to be IJ staffers.

The Firesign "Three-actre" (Phil Proctor, Peter Bergman, Philip Austin) will be releasing their NEW VIDEO ALBUM, now entitled "NICK DANGER: The Case of The Missing Volk" (or something like it), on SEPTEMBER 26, not Xmas-time as previously reported. MCA/Pacific Arts, in what some consider a very wise move, decided to push up the release date, and judging by Phil's report on the first audience reaction to it (at a video convention "in the French Room of the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco"), they were right. It went over FANTASTIC (remember, these were NOT, for the most part, TFT followers watching the video—although Phil tells me there were enough knowledgeable fans there to acknowledge and respond appropriately to cross-reference lines), and Phil and everyone else involved believe they have a real hit here. With renewed interest in TFT's works becoming more and more obvious and ever-growing, this vidalbum will not only help sales of all the other albums and projects all 'round but will also ensure more brilliant work from these inventive minds. La Renaissance Approache!

So, in keeping with the release etc., P, B&A are trying to set up press screenings (there will be one in LA around the release date) and possible publicity jaunts around the country as well; if this works out, New York will of course be a prime target area (possibly the Letterman show?), and I may be able to view the video for review then. This is all very exciting, as one must remember MISSING VOLK is the FIRST ORIGINAL FILM FOR HOME VIDEO, a rapidly expanding market awaits, and, of course, it's Firesign. Look for the vidalbum on Beta, VHS and disk—if you don't see it, by all means ASK. And let me know...

With MISSING VOLK completed production, the boys in LA are planning a couple other joint projects, one involving an adventure-type disk on Warner Brothers' "CD" system. Not being up on state-of-the-art, I got a bit confused at this point (sorry Phil), but was able to understand (sort of) that this new system, just starting up, has 99 "positions" which one can program. The game TFT has helped design is a kind of detective-type thing (I think), with "hidden clues" within a given channel that tell the player which channel to dial next. Sounds like, again, they got the right people for this one...

For old-timers (as it were), Phil would like me to remind everyone that TFT will be hosting Tom Genelli's annual Halloween party at the Kubuki Theatre in—damn, I knew I forgot to write down the city! I would guess either LA or SF; folks who live in either place would know better than I—on or about October 30, decked out in their full Nick Danger regalia (PA as Danger, PB as Lt. Al Bradshaw, PP as Rocky Roccoco). Call the theatre for more information, I suppose.

Also, the three may be embarking, "hot on the heels", on a new video project, working title "TO BE CONTINUED", for RCA videodisk. It's a TFT-oriented cut-up of cliffhanger serials, says Phil; they've got 10 7-minute cuts ("or was that 7 10-minute cuts?"), and promises to have, and I quote, "much more wackiness and simplicity" than the 1st project. More as that develops.

Next month here in IJ will be reprinted (from the September VIDEO REVIEW) Phil's article describing the VOLK video... Oh, and Phil's been busy with commercials too (oh, stop groaning; look, when Houseman does McDonald's I don't think anything's incongruous anymore), for products like Business Week and Steak 'n' Ale, and also one (with director John Danza) for Rubber Maid that'll be shown nationally in October. Rubber Maid's coming out with a new type of shelf liner (looks like they're lining up now; you heard it here first!) called "Smooth & Easy", and Phil did the commercial for this paper in a trailer of sorts that was positioned so that it, in technical terms (although I may not be spelling this word right), "gimboled". Okay, I can see you all dying from pun fever; go ahead, say it...

Dave, who sent me a nifty postcard of "The Surrealist Nat'l Guard Souvenir Headquarters"—Fort Union Nat'l Monument—"There was even a loudspeaker in the middle with trumpet calls! Whew! The invisible Trumpeteer!" will be sojourning to Santa Barbara for a month or so (so if you've been thinking of using the ol' po box, now's the time to do it), but before he left he sent some interesting statistical info to share. I can't relay the numbers involved, but thought you might like to see the kind of popularity any given TFT album is enjoying nowadays: For the first 6 months of 1983, the "most popular" albums in terms of sales were, in this order: HOW CAN YOU BE..., DWARF, BOZOS, EVERYTHING YOU

KNOW... NEXT WORLD, ELECTRICIAN, GIANT RAT, the Anthology, and NOT INSANE! (although NIT's last place standing may not be accurate, but that's what the royalties indicate). "DEAR FRIENDS is all in returns," said Dave, "so it is OUT OF PRINT!... The solos are all o.p." as well, so I guess that relegates them to collector's item status sooner or later, you lucky devils...

Tiny Ossman becomes the "fifth TFT member" to start receiving IJ regularly—welcome, Tiny!

But this was supposed to be a short FIRE SIGNAL, and since we've got a special guest, I'm going to turn the quiz portion of our program—er, column over to Dave Ossman, and let's see how much everyone out there knows about this topic! The answers are published upside down, below. (Oh, and the quiz title is mine; I wouldn't want to mislead...)

NOTHING BUT INDIANS—TFT Quiz by Dave Ossman

1) It isn't widely known that TFT's Austin, Bergman and Ossman wrote a series of radio documentaries concerning the past, present and future of the Native American, centering around the revelation of the Hopi prophecies. One of the radio programs contained a playlet which became the ur-piece around which the group wrote its first recorded work. What was the first thing we wrote?

2) And, if you're so smart, what does the title mean?

3) In 1968, Bergman and Ossman were reading "religious books" over the radio and playing rock 'n' roll records in between. Among the things we read were "Winnie the Pooh," "The Book of Revelations," and works by Borges. We also read a piece one listener described as "that story about the boy who turned into a crow," from a brand-new book that was to become a best-seller. What was the book and when and where did TFT retell this adventure?

4) And, if you're so smart, what's the pun involved?

5) Austin wrote another short piece about the confrontation of Anglos and Indians. TFT used it for an encore for many performances in the early '70s and it later found its way onto an album. What's the album and who tells the story?

6) Oh, yes, if you're really so smart, what was the original name of the encore piece?

7) Austin and Ossman get deeply involved with another group of Indians in TFT's last CBS album. You know what the album is, but what is the name of the tribe? Where is their reservation? What do they win on what TV game-show? Who comes to their defense?

8) According to TFT's oft-performed "American Pageant," what did we get from the Indians?

9) On yet another FT record, we find out about a very early explorer (and exploiter) of the American Indian. Who were the Indians? Who was the explorer? What did he bring back to the Old World? Who does he impregnate?

10) And, at last, finally! A certain kind of mineral exploitation is a major political issue among some Western tribes. What kind of mineral and where, according to what album?

Well, happy guessing. Here's a bonus question—who are the principles in another short Injun drama? So long, and love to all! —David

Oh yes, you wanted the Answers, didn't you?

1) Temporarily Humboldt County, of course. To my great delight, it has been performed in its stage version, and still is one of the most frequently remembered cuts on an FT album.
2) Our "faithful" Indian compendium, "a Mohawk named Craig Carpenter, such names were temporary, as far as he was concerned. My beloved black cat, who died last year at 16, was named "Humboldt" after this cut, and gave his name, in turn, to "President Bolt." Would it be unfair to ask who he is, and what he is known for?
3) The book, naturally, was The Teachings of Don Juan. We used this incident in the very lyric interlude of "Don Brubaker" in EYKIRONG.
4) Brubaker is the word popularized (again) by Catherine in NICK D. "Broyd" (pron. "broo-hoy" for with, or sorcerer. The "ha-na" is just cosmic laughter. It's the only piece (other than connections) that was newly recorded for this compendium record, and the longest by a single author to appear on any album. The tellers are a 1971 version of the "60 Minutes" crew—Peter Proctor, Charles Garage, Thad Switchever and Ed someboddy (I had to listen to the album myself to remember Switchever's name).
5) JUST FOLKS is the album. I love those multi-level things.
6) "Broyd" (pron. "broo-hoy" for with, or sorcerer. The "ha-na" is just cosmic laughter. It's the only piece (other than connections) that was newly recorded for this compendium record, and the longest by a single author to appear on any album. The tellers are a 1971 version of the "60 Minutes" crew—Peter Proctor, Charles Garage, Thad Switchever and Ed someboddy (I had to listen to the album myself to remember Switchever's name).
7) The Dog Indians live in and around Hooker, California. They win a beautiful, brand-new police cruiser belonging to Heaster County Sheriff Random Koolzip on "Give It Back." The celebrity brother-sister team of Skiper and Kim Koolzip (Random's kids) try to hold up the Academy Awards until something is done about "it." (Much more about all this is contained in the pages of the "Heaster-Hellmouth Democrat", published in Crawdaddd in February, April and May of 1976—which you ought to reprint someday!)(CD: well, now that I have permission...)
8) Com, tobacco, Dakota, New Jersey, New Hampshire, New England, New Delit... need I go on? (Yes, and Veterinarian's Day!)
9) The "hapless" Irquoits; Edmund Edmund, Bastard Prince of Pilegum; "tabac and turkey," "not to mention hemp." (I told you not to mention "Red-nud" Princess White Owl.)
10) Coal, at Black Mesa (in Northern Arizona). "Hopefully, a time of opposition to the strip-mine-machine will continue to stiffen." On side 3, cut 9 of DEAR FRIENDS.
BONUS) In the Jack Poet WA spot on LAWYER'S HOSPITAL one finds the Lone Ranger, his sidekick Tantic and horse Big Foot (helping Red Wing and spotted Blanket defeat the Hickee gang).
DOUBLE BONUS ABOVE) President Bolt was responsible for the Population Stabilization Program, helping to create the North American Village Movement, according to "The Years in Your Ears" on HOW TIME FLYS.
Golly, is Bolt the next president???

THANKS FOR THE PRESENTS, PHIL

ELSEWHERE THIS ISSUE—TFT @ THE GOOD SHOW
by Phil Proctor - look for it...

I AM NOT AMUSED

by Michael Calvert

I never suffer from writer's block. That is, I never had until recently. I sat down in front of the typewriter the other day and nothing came. I didn't alarm me at first. I got up and paced around the house for a while, then sat down again. Still nothing. I went out into the living room and read for an hour, then sat down again. Nothing. I got in my car, drove to the beach, and took a stroll. Then I came home and tried yet again. Zilch. Zippo. Nada.

I sat there, chain-smoking, staring at the malevolent multi-toothed grinning monster my typewriter had become. It was mid-afternoon by then, and the day had grown oppressively hot. Little beads of perspiration started springing out on my forehead. A sweatball the size of a pea dangled from the tip of my nose. Even my typewriter was sweating.

This can't be happening, I thought desperately. Suddenly something popped into my head--an idea! The faintest glimmer of an idea, anyway. I hurriedly thrust a sheet of paper into the roller, and--it was gone.

The minutes ticked by, turning with agonizing slowness into hours. The afternoon passed; daylight waned.

I couldn't take it any longer. In an agony of frustration I hurled myself down on my bed and cried, "Oh, Muse, why hast thou abandoned me?"

"All right, all right," said a harried voice behind me. "I'm here, already."

I looked up, and was amazed at what I beheld. Before me stood a handsome, white-robed woman. Her robe was disheveled, and her crown of laurel kept slipping off her head.

"Jeezus," she muttered, "have you got a cigarette or something? I'm a wreck."

"Who are you?" I asked in astonishment.

"I'm your Muse, who do you think I am--Elizabeth Montgomery?"

"But--"

"Don't just stand there with your mouth open, get me a smoke, will ya? I was just with Norman Mailer. He tried to rape me, for God's sake."

"That's terrible!" I cried.

"Yeah, well...you get used to taking a lot of abuse in my line of work."

"Your line of work?"

Calvert. Get it together. You called me, I'm here. What do you want?" It's a flashback, I thought. Serves me right. What the hell--go with it.

I took a pack from my bedside table and handed the apparition a cigarette. "I'm blocked," I moaned. "Cligged. Plugged up. Verbally constipated."

She picked up my lighter, lit the cigarette, and sat down. "Is that all?" she said blithely. "That's no big deal."

"No big deal?" I shouted. This has never happened to me before! I'm really upset."

"Why?"

"Why? Because I can't write. Writing is my life, my calling, my vocation, my *raison d'être*. If I can't write, I have no reason for living."

"Oh, don't give me that existentialist bullshit. Do you really think you're entirely defined by your work? Don't you believe that your existence brings with it some justification of its own? Don't you believe in the possibility--just the possibility, mind you--that you carry within you some faint spark of divine fire, something which, if I may be so prosaic, can be called a soul?"

I paused, confused. "Well..."

"Yeah, 'well'. Don't want to say no, do you? I can't say I blame you. Because if the answer is no, then a simple case of writer's block really does become cause for alarm. Your life really is on the line, every time you sit down in front of the typewriter. If by writing you create yourself, and you can't write, your own existence disappears in a puff of smoke. No wonder you're so uptight."

I started to whimper.

"Cut that out," she snapped, adding, a little more soothingly, "It'll get better."

"Will it?" I sniffed.

"Sure it will."

"How can I be sure?"

"Oh, for crying out--look, Michael. Any first-year psych student knows that the more uptight you get about a thing, the more difficult it becomes. It's like impotence."

"I wouldn't know about that."

"Don't give me that. But that's beside the point. You worry too much. You need to be more relaxed about the whole business. It's not like your having writer's block is some sort of tragedy for Western literature. You're only modestly talented."

"Listen, I don't need this from my own Muse."

"Sorry. But you get the idea. It's not as if it makes any great difference, in the overall cosmic scheme of things, whether or not you write something."

"But I want to be famous and respected," I whined. I want to live on forever in the memory of my fellow man."

"So who doesn't? Don't be childish. So you become immortal after you're dead--so what? You'll be just as dead. The really important things in life, like being a good person, being loving and kind and steadfast in your beliefs--those are things you choose. You have a helluva lot more control over those things than you do over whether or not you can write well. Those are the things you ought to be concerned about. The rest of it's bullshit, believe me."

I sat a moment in silent thought. "Let's see if I've got this straight," I said slowly. "You're saying it doesn't make any difference whether or not I write, as long as I'm a good person?"

"That's about the size of it."

The notion seemed vaguely heretical, but it did comfort me--for a moment. Then I was seized by an even more discomfiting thought.

"But--" I wailed, "I'm not a good person, either!"

"Oh, don't be so hard on yourself. You're not that bad. Although, I must say, you could have been trying harder lately. For instance, does everybody you care about know that you care about them?"

"Well, yeah," I said defensively. "I think... Besides, what do you do about the people you're not so sure you care about?"

"Lie," she said. "Or at least give them the benefit of the doubt. How the hell should I know? I'm your Muse, not your Conscience."

"This sin't helping my writer's block any," I observed.

"Look," she said irritably. "I told you what to do about that. Relax. Go fishing. Call up some broad."

"I wouldn't enjoy myself. I'd be thinking about not being able to write."

"DO IT ANYWAY? Oooh...sorry," she muttered, putting her hands to her temples and rubbinb slowly. She ground out her cigarette and took several deep breaths.

"Have you tried yoga?" I suggested.

"No, I'm all right. It's just been one of those days, y'know?"

"I sympathize."

"What?" she said abruptly, cocking her head to one side as if listening to something. "Him again? Oh, nuts..."

"What was that about?"

"My next assignment. John Updike. Nice man, but he's so boring."

"So, to sum up," I said, "I can't write because I'm tense. If I stop being tense I'll be able to write."

"Verrrry good."

"But I'm tense because I can't write!"

"I give up," she muttered, and disappeared.

I sat there for a moment, staring blankly at the cloud of smoke left behind from her cigarette.

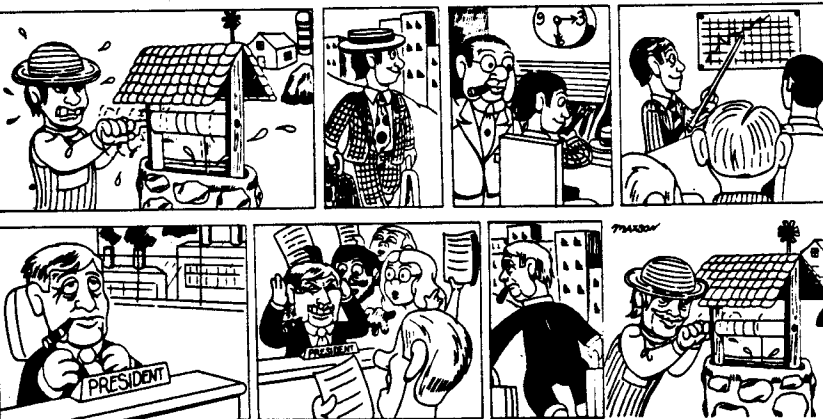
"Right," I said to myself, crossing the room to my desk. "Relax. I'm relaxed."

I sat down at the typewriter and took several deep breaths. I composed myself. I considered the cosmic insignificance of my actions. I resolved to tell one of my co-workers how fond of her I was. I slipped a piece of paper into the roller.

Nothing.

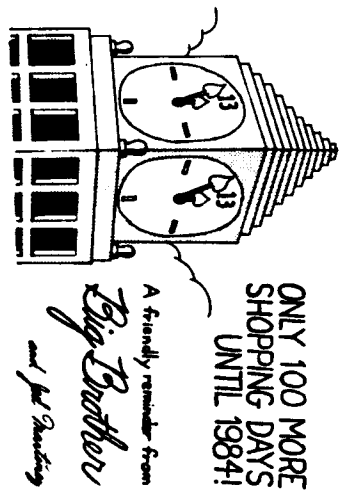
I re-crossed the room and threw myself down on my bed.

"Oh, Muse!" I cried. "Why hast thou abandoned me?"



FROM RICHES TO RAGS





time's running out.....

Flies Avenged

by John Karasch

"Then you've heard the news," he buzzed, his proboscis trembling. The other simply stared ahead. He had immense, close-set eyes. And he'd said he'd heard. But then he buzzed 'yeah' again anyway.

Both were members of genus *Musca domestica*. Common houseflies. Only they didn't feel awful common.

"They're murdering us off left and right!" the first fly buzzed.

"And the way he got it...all squashed up like that."

"They're barbarians alright," the second fly agreed.

"You knew him as well as I did. He was a GREAT fly!"

"What kinda chance we got, anyway?" the second fly complained.

"We're gettin' slow. Reflexes not what they used to be."

"What's that? Precisely! It's the shit we're eating!" the first fly insisted. "All that monosodium glutamate and artificial colors..."

"Yeah, we're probably flyin' round with cancer and don't know it."

"You're right! Absolutely, one hundred percent! Hydrogenated fats, bleaches, polysorbate 80, paraffin wax..."

"Stop it, will you stop it? We can't do nothing about it," the second fly buzzed. He was a muscular jock and liked to do hand stands while he talked. "Worrying only upsets my sex life. Hey, there goes a redbelly now!"

His ovipositor pulsed and flipped out like a telescope.

"There must be SOMETHING we can do," the first fly said, ignoring him. "For example, I've been trying to cut down on cholesterol..."

"What're you kidding?!" the second fly blurted, incredulous, dropping down on all sixes. "If one of them butcherous giant hands comin' outa nowhere don't, and some big ol' motherbeater swatter don't—that fungus mold will get us every time. Every time!"

"Shh! there's one of them annihilators now."

Both of them glared at a lumpish woman. Busy picking her nose. She was getting on their nerves standing there—till all at once she threw her hands up and wandered down the hall.

"We're whipped before we've started," the first fly insisted, "if we give in to the situation." Then he stomped his foot on the table.

"I like you," the second fly said, "but you're not realistic. We know them labels on the annihilator's food covers a multitude of sins. We know them chemicals are killers, knocking time off our lives with every blessed bite. What're you gonna do? You GOTTA eat! It's a vicious circle. Come on, let's go chase some redbellies..."

But he knew the first fly wasn't listening. No, he'd gotten himself all worked up: twitching his legs together so he made an irritating, screeching sound.

"Just look at that horsefly," the first fly droned, relaxing suddenly. "Such poor execution. He's an aerodynamic wonder and there he is hedgehopping like an aphid!"

"He overeats. I know him," the second fly buzzed.

They observed the horsefly's shaky touchdown.

"Eats like there's no tomorrow. For him there may not be. His ticker's not what it used to be."

Already the first fly was contemplating elsewhere.

"We make no effort to help them or teach them," he said. He was staring at nothing particular. Just staring out hundreds of red brown eyes. "A good part of our problem stems from that. If we adults could organize and train our adolopupae...so in turn they could train the successive generations...teach them what to beware of. Share the knowledge instead of groping..."

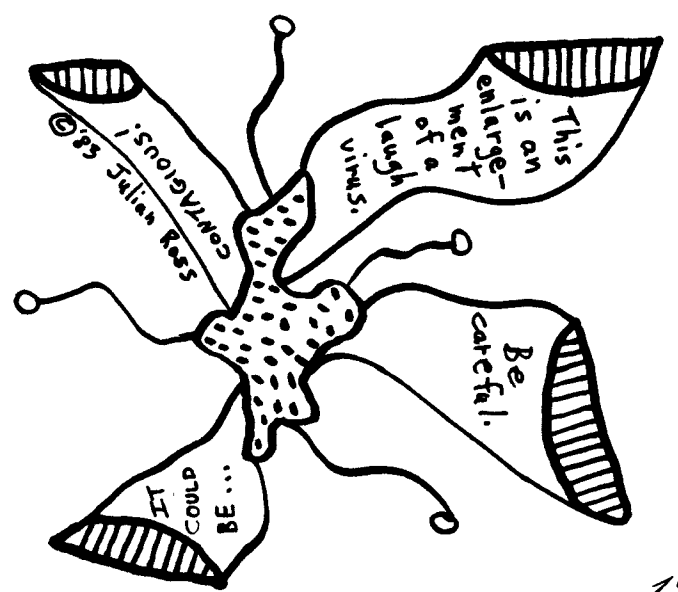
The second fly interrupted.

"You'll never wise up, will you? No kid's gonna sit still long enough to listen. Not when he can be out razzle-dazzling some mass murderer's nose. Face it, it's a screwy idea."

Back behind him, through diaphanous wings, the second fly saw the torpid murderess creeping up...her arm raising the swatter already.

Which was fine. He'd had enough of this philosophical jabbering.

"Here she comes," he winked at the first fly. "Murder in her eyes. Wait till she gets real close. Reze-ll close! First one to split outa here's a chicken..."



LET THAT PASS

by Bruce N. Duncan

Much comfort in life is physical: a good chair, a good bed, comfortable clothes or comfortable nudity, the familiar sensations of one's body functioning well, etc. A baby or old person or someone at any age can enjoy physical comfort. With some states of being, one can't make a distinction between physical comfort and psychic comfort.

A patient in a mental hospital is commonly granted his or her own bed. An institutionalized insane person who can't think straight, whose senses won't work properly because of hallucinatory interference, and who is too cut-off to converse with others can yet enjoy the comfort of lying on a bed provided for him: he can have a little private space of ease and security.

With Al Capp's richly humanly symbolic character Li'l Abner (immortal if any character is immortal), the secret of much of his happiness is a healthy, strong, good-feeling body. Li'l Abner eats well and loves it, sleeps and relaxes well and loves it, and heartily enjoys walking in that fantastic but well-coordinated, high-stepping, bow-legged manner that obviously feels pleasurable to him.

Compared to the human, other animals are relatively unconscious, and find purpose more simply and directly through their bodies. The myriad other organisms we share the earth with live with their bodies with little or no sign of hang-ups about "mental versus physical."

A gorilla has immense power within its body, and at the same time possesses a certain pacifying inertia. The Gorilla has much less ego than the human, and while enjoying the sense of abundant vigor in its body may go all its life without ever using anything like its full strength; this unlike a stoutly muscular man who may want to "prove himself" by lifting special weights or doing some other particular exercise. Accounts come from zookeepers of gorillas who take dying well, giving in with profound grace to inevitable oblivion. There doesn't seem to be as much of the "I am -- I want to be" principle with the gorilla as with the human.

In the animal kingdom, chimpanzees are intellectually and egoistically most like us; and it's noteworthy that the chimpanzee among animals is a relatively brash, agitated, "antsy", disharmonious creature.

Decline and decrepitude of the organism occur on the way to death. There comes a point in life, maybe several points, at which a person "doesn't have it like before". Despite all the contemporary talk and generalization about old people staying youthful, strong, "fit", and so on, the brain and muscles and other parts of the body can decline with the passing years. Some of today's "stay young" propaganda is a plea for staying frantically attached to the ego. Restlessness, activity, straining for purpose ahead, and "rush-rush-rush" are much emphasized in our present day society.

People who prize the highly conscious mental life may dread senility with intense horror. But, you know, maybe sheer existence could be nice. Just enjoying eating, drinking, sleep, rest, digesting, excreting, looking around; enjoying a familiar sight like the beauty of the sunlight or a familiar sound like a pleasant voice or the rain outside; experiencing a low-pressure calmness inside one's skull...and then, you know, after a while of that it might be easy to slip into just being dead. Natural, one more step.

A fish flowing in its liquid medium: in declining old age, our inner life may approach the beauty of experience suggested by such a phenomenon.

An altruistic society through medical and economic care makes the declining years easy for its members. Compassion and concern can make the difference in how a life reaches its end.

Death is part of the tale of life. Life must always make way for new life. Any particular running must have a finish, whether that of a tree or a whale or a sparrow. In the history of life, it is to be hoped that many forms of life will go on in the world after the human species becomes extinct.

Let's murmur thanks for decrepitude, a good excuse for a life of ease. Good cheer for dying: an inner voice might exclaim with relief, "It's about time!" Let's raise a toast to death: we can't try to hog the show forever.

I. WHY MURDOCK OF THE A-TEAM IS THE BEST CHARACTER ON COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

The A-Team is a vastly misunderstood masterpiece. Violent, glorifying of the most nefarious American military effort in US history, full of black and white morality issues, it appeals to the more Neanderthal amongst the television viewing population. When I, a deeply sensitive, 95th percentile intelligent, liberal and socially guilty college graduate, first saw the television commercials for The A-Team, I was more than horrified. Then, some three or four weeks after the show was aired, the infamous Anni Ackner called to me to tell me that The A-Team, yes, the very same, was produced by my favorite tv producer, Stephen J. Cannell, of The Greatest American Hero, Baretta, and a host of other hit-and-run shows. This of course changes the entire picture.

The A-Team is a cleverly electrifying satire of contemporary American thought and culture. It is a mildly veiled take-off on Mission: Impossible, much the same way as The Greatest American Hero was one long commentary on the American Superman myth. Each week the A-Team, a group of Vietnam vets running from the law, takes care of some problem too big for the establishment guys to handle, choosing their missions carefully, hitting fast and speeding away all in a single van. Each member has his or her own area of expertise—a black electronics expert, a handsome heartbreaker, a wacko, a young female reporter, and a silver-haired genius behind it all. The most important artistically of these is the wacko, a seemingly schizophrenic inmate of a VA psychiatric hospital.

This is the first time a committed mental patient has been a positively portrayed star of a commercial show, and this is significant. Of course, it is a well-sustained mystery whether this man is really schizophrenic or whether he is just faking because living in a mental hospital is easier than life on the run with the rest of the team. Big deal, this is tv. But in America, tv is real life, the realest of real life. This tv show is saying that nuts is good, it is a positive viable way of looking at the world, more of you should try it. Murdock is not only a good character, but the least violence-prone, most pleasant and likeable, and virtually the only member whose attitude towards women doesn't make my skin feel like lizards are crawling all over me.

Imagine an America where schizophrenia is considered to be a viable, nay, desirable, choice. Most of us would feel rather more comfortable and confident of where we will be in five years, I would say. What if we could admit that American society has a certain inherent creative element of mental illness? What if we could conceive that the election of a cowboy actor, the legality of owning weapons that you can only commit illegal acts with, the segregation of society by gender and race, which one has no control over, rather than temperament and interest, which one does, a value system which aggrandizes anorexic thinness, fashion over art, and conformity in a country of billions was temporary insanity and rectifiable at any time? What if you would walk out of your door in the morning being whomever you chose; wouldn't that be fun? Wouldn't it be nice if everyone had multiple personalities and we could all pop in for the good stuff and send an alternate for the bad? Murdock is fighting for your rights.

II. WHY STEPHEN J. CANNELL IS PREDICTING THE END OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION

One of the first signs of the breakup of any civilization is the making fun of the values of the most high period of culture. For America, this was the 1960s—we had never lost a war, the prosperity of the American Dream was at hand for the minority not knocked out of the race by gender or color, gas was 59¢ a gallon, God was in our Heaven and all was right with our world. This mind is the one that Cannell constantly satirizes so subtly that most television consumers don't even consciously know that is what he is doing. His shows are full of American Spartans—those husky, macho men who live fast, fight tough and love without feeling. Either that or the perpetual caring high school teacher, or the slum kid who makes good as a cop, the maverick of the urban frontier, the barrio Daniel Boones. Of course, none of these types is acceptable in polite American society, and the clash between the ideals and what life would be like in the real world for them is the subject of Cannell's shows. What is scary is the popularity amongst people who shouldn't know better of his work.

What this seems to show is that the average Joe, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Public, have lost faith in the sanctity of those figures. All of us know they are creations of some unknown, unnamed Establishment who goes around creating myths for the American people to invest their time in when not contributing to the Gross National Product. They may not know they have lost faith consciously, but somewhere, somehow, sometime, they will discover it, and then where will we be?

It has taken America over 200 years to develop an independent culture. Prior to the 1960s, the American artist was always second best to the European artist. Creation a national mind is a process of profound imagination—it helps if it has very little to do with reality and it must absolutely glorify the most ugly and mundane aspects of the people. Is Cannell creating myths or destroying them? Is he replacing unreal images with real ones? Do the Americans finally see themselves as others see them? Can their national culture survive that? 1984 is mere months away.

- Carolyn Lee Boyd

IF YOU DON'T THINK

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FURNISHED RUMORS

by Zack Replica,

Church of the Coincidental Metaphor

Rock superstar Gary Osbourne has grown tired of throwing puppies from the stage onto the tender mercies of thrashing and grinding teenage audiences. What can he do for an encore? "Caterpillars," he says, "I like the way they go squish." Osbourne is a lifelong admirer of Indian civil rights leader Mahatma Gandhi, who as a boy liked to burn small bugs with a magnifying glass.

The name of Uri Geller is not one normally associated with drug rehabilitation, but the famed master of psychokinesis is kept on retainer by many wealthy Hollywood stars, who count on him to keep their supplies of coke spoons in a state of twisted disrepair. Syc C.B. Edelman, "Uri's fantastic! I haven't been able to slip a single spoon past him since he's been on the job!"

Governor George Deukmejian has decided against invoking an obscure legal provision which allows him to enjoin doctors from performing life-saving surgery on persons whom he finds disagreeable. The decision gave new hope to Brownie Scout Belinda Barcelona, gunned down by security personnel guarding the Governor's residence because they suspected the Girl Scout cookies she had sold to the kitchen help had been laced with cyanide. But little Belinda vindicated herself to the satisfaction of Governor Deukmejian and every fair-minded Californian when she was wheeled in her hospital bed onto the set of the TV show "Lie Detector" and passed a polygraph test under brutal grilling from attorney F. Lee Bailey.

"We're going to need snow plows just to clear Wall Street of all the corpses." That was the reaction of one New York City police official who had learned that the prestigious Chase Manhattan Bank would not open its doors Monday morning. The bellweather financial institution lost its lease on life when Billy Martin was fired as Yankees manager Saturday night. An events of seeming triviality to Chase Manhattan stockholders and depositors, except that in a Friday night boozefest with drinking buddy Ozzy Osbourne, board chairman David Rockefeller wagered the bank's entire assets that Martin would lead the Yankees to three straight pennants, beginning in 1983. Osbourne's plans for this immense wealth remain a mystery, but he has entered negotiations with the coroner's office to secure the dead bodies from Monday's anticipated Wall Street suicide binge. It is rumored that he plans to fling them from the stage in a Madison Square Garden kickoff to a nationwide tour of free concerts.

Laurie Anderson feels a lot better now that she's talked things out with Moon Unit Zappa over lunch at a well-appointed San Fernando Taco Bell. She was down in the dumps after the University of Chicago School of Economics awarded her the Milton Friedman Poetry Prize for a career distinguished by cost-efficient use of meager poetic resources. Moon Unit told Ms. Anderson to relax and added, "It's obvious they can't fit their small minds around your, like, totally huge concepts." That was all the encouragement Laurie needed to make the leap from Big Science to Even Bigger Science. She's hard at work on a multi-media presentation called "The Oregano of Species", which traces evolution from the file gumbo primordial ooze to the Uberrnensch 2000 Automated Consciousness hinted at in the Hitler secret diaries. Meanwhile, Presidential hopeful John Glenn lunged for the Big Science bandwagon himself, using a Democratic Party fundraiser as an occasion to posit his own Big Tang Theory, which holds that Earth was originally colonized by a race of space voyagers who had foresworn the intake of natural orange juice.

Howard Ruff, whose Insider's newsletters have made millionaires out of thousands of aspiring middle-class bracket creeps, has lobbied a grenade into the party atmosphere of Wall Street's current securities boom by advising his clients to take their money out of gold and put it in adult-sized baby clothes. But his supporting evidence, citing the infantilization of the populace by the omniscient, omnipresent state foretold in George Orwell's landmark 1984, was quickly assailed by a spokesman for the Trilateral Foundation for Transactional Analysis, who scornfully reproached Ruff for not knowing that Orwell's own title for his book was 1948, and then went on to pillory him for his "intellectually treasonable misunderstanding" of regression analysis. Sen. Edward Kennedy, the noted silver-standard Bolshevik and half-brother of former President Carter, joined the chorus of derision by recalling Ruff's involvement in an academic scandal. It seems that PhD.-candidate Ruff plagiarized his dissertation, "Walking Away from Deadman's Curve," from the hit record by Jan and Dean.

Rock superstars Ozzy Osbourne and Deborah Harry will share the spotlight when Music Television launches its first-ever situation comedy this summer. The show is premised on a clever inversion of sitcom traditions, for while Mom and Dad will be awash in the drugs, all-night parties, and sexual abandon of their real rock and roll lives, sons David and Ricky will be caught up in the issues of middle-class angst: bills, golf handicaps, the lawn, and hiding the family dog when Dad comes home. MTV and record company executives will be watching the progress of "Ozzy and Harry" carefully to see if there is enough cross-over between the heavy metal and new wave audiences to unify them as a single marketing target.

PAPOON IN '84/84

PROGRESS REPORT VII: I HAVE A SCHEME

by Elayne and Anni

Well, George has been out enjoying the dog days of summer with his animal and animated friends, having weathered the stormy august announcement surrounding the mystery behind the secret in front of—er, we needn't explain all of that to you, you've probably seen it on the news by now, or at least the commercials. But to further elaborate, for those too busy watching the parade of failed pilots flying across the tube—Seems Chuck E. Cheese, our faithful mice-presidential compendium, has been accused of soliciting large amounts of money for Campoon uses from members of his own family in exchange for political favors and a minor leaguer to be named at a later date! We can't begin to assure you how ludicrous are these statements, particularly in the light of Chuck's own flourishing (or was it floundering? no, they don't serve fish) Pizza Time Theatre enterprise, but we want to take this opportunity to extend our support and comfort to the unwitting and unwilling victims of this regrettable fiasco—Chuck's cousin Jack E. Lalanne and the staff at his palatial Comedy Health Spa.

We know, through Chuck's own anecdotes, what hardships Jack E. has endured while attempting to build his CHS (or "cheese") empire from the ground up. Jack E. envisioned a haven for humorists, a place of retreat where they could tone up their flabby wits. He had a dream, "a song to sing" if you will, of creating the perfect comedic invention, the Mutilous Machine, which would stretch the points, bend the rules, play with the words, exaggerate the facts and juxtapose the realities of every self-effacing raconteur who signed up for the 10-pointless program. And so was opened Jack's masterwork, rumored to be located, coincidentally enough, on the Route 46 Service Road, a stone's throw from cousin Chuck's own place. Besides stone-throwing, the "Fully E. Quipped" club offers classes in improving standup posture, funny face-making, heckler topping, and wading through rhetoric. The spa, easily reachable from all parts via Train of Thought, has been the well-kept secret of hundreds of would-be and has-beens, and was intended to remain as such, were it not for the above-mentioned ugly rumors. They have now been tidied up and evicted, a merciful fate which perhaps should have befallen this bit sooner.

Moving along to our struggles 'round the country, we recently received a shocking missive from Robert Rabbit, caretaker on Poons Farm, somewhere in northern California. What makes his news so disturbing is that Rabbit (who, incidentally, bears no relation to former White House staffer Barbara Honegger, as Robert doesn't have to wear a funny suit and thus is considered quite useful—more on that below) was led to believe, through misinformation and a healthy supply of hallucinogens, that George Papoon has actually Run for the Presidency not twice (as the facts will bear out—at least according to Campoon assistant statistician S. O'Maine) but four times. As readers of George's official autobiography (IJ #18) will recall, in 1968 George was as yet apolitical, still in the throes of advanced narcolepsy; while in 1980, according to Dr. Elmo, George did not seek, and was not given, the Natural Surrealist Party nomination, and chose instead to begin what he thought would be his retirement living on his memories and MSP pension plan (by the way, they are still planning on having a pension...) in Wentzville. It must be remembered, also, that the only reason (at the time) that GGP brought himself out again was the theft of 1983, without which we'd have no bits at all! However, aside from this discrepancy, which can be excused and written off as a logical comic set-up, the rest of the report checks out valid. No need to fear a surrealist split, tho—according to the SubGenius Foundation's official newsletter THE STARK FIST OF REMOVAL, epopt J.R. "Bob" Dobbs is running for Big Brother, not President—granted, a negligible differentiation nowadays but one which should be noted. In fact, as reported in IJ #19, "Bob" has ENDORSED George's candidacy, and I've got the letter to prove it! But Rabbit deserves his time now, and besides it's a great gimmick, so we now bring you—...Disturbing "Draft Dobbs" movement revealed...

"I AM THE DEVIL BECAUSE 'BOB' MADE ME CRAZY!"—R. Rabbit
"I can't vote for Papoon for president this year because some unknown force is driving me to kill my vote for him and vote instead for Dobbs. It is entirely against my own intention and violates all common sense because Dobbs himself is voting for Papoon. But I'm not Dobbs and I just can't stop myself—we're going to have to draft him."

The foregone "confession" (or "lie") was extracted from a Rabbitlike substance while deluded by the P.I.E. process into believing he was addressing the multitudes at Woofs Farm in the California Wine County estate of R. Rabbit during his absence. According to Red Woof, vacationing at the Farm, the true nature of the force which led Rabbit to this apparent state of madness was the confusion generated in his cloven brain by the Dobbshead Mask.

Woof elaborated by running down Papoon's last 4 Campoons: '68 when he wore the famous Papoon mask, '72 when he wore nothing at all, '76 with its sack-o-mania, and '80 when he wore a dog's head (because the Dobbshead wasn't quite known to him at that time, and incidentally, resulted in Papoon's first polar defeat).

Speaking by cable to the Pet Shelter Network, Papoon declared that the Dobbshead Mask is the perfect counterpart to his Campoon needs for '84, for,

"For one thing, everyone has at least one Dobbshead nowadays, so anytime you see one, you might actually be looking at me, or ahead of me. It's the perfect disguise! For another thing, many people may vote for me that way by mistake, thinking they are voting for 'Bob'. Both 'Bob' and Dobbs have given me their full support and encouragement and have even shaken my two hands. And for a third thing, uh, uh, excuse me a moment...."

Of course, while the MSP sanctions ANY form of mask or whatever bag you're into as an acceptable poonface (with the possible exception of a Halloween Evok mask), we may want to take this up for a vote. What say, creatures? Oh, and speaking of our Coordinaries...

The state of Texas may have only one star, but it is rather large and expansive, not to mention expensive, so a second Texan (three times fast now) over in Amarillo (our other Coord there being Doug Smith, who lives in or near Dallas), and his name is Keith Jones, and he represents (besides the usual clients) Professor Poop out there, and is also hereby offering an—er, offer...well, you read it:

THE HOT POOP CLEARINGHOUSE

and
ALL CHARMS DISPENSARY
rides again!

Professor Poop requests all campooners, past and present, to contact him to exchange exchangeables relating to the old school, the prior campoons, the founding fadders (P, B, A and O), the canonical literature, as well as the Party, including the parties, it'selves. Contact Professor Poop at his new office in care of Rollin Homes, M.P. Lawyer's Hospital, 2901 Georgia, Amarillo, TX 79109. And thanks for listing!

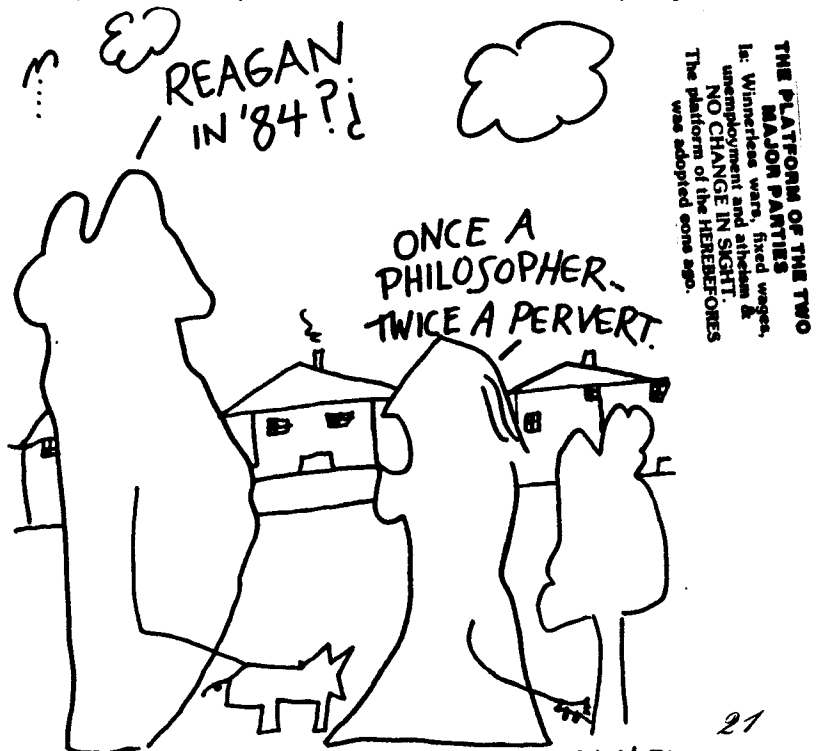
Poop/Keith/whomever may also be starting a TFT/Campoon tape exchange in the near future, but we'll have to coordinate on this...

And our new Washington D.C. Coordinary, Tiny Ossman (welcome Tiny!), who was there in '76 and beyond of course, writes us the following: "Papoon's nat'l headquarters was in Dr. Elmo's house at the Same Old Place, The Old Same Place in SB. There are plenty of campooners who still believe that each organism should have a vote, a say in what's happening in the world. We're all effected by insane behavior. So we need not insane solutions to this crazy place of problems." Words to, naturally, live by (or at least, words to type down)! Thanks TO!

Oh, for those of you not with us since The Beginning, Anni and I are currently planning to release, at the end of this year, our Campoon chronicles so far, presumably under the title THE REMAKING OF THE PRESTIDENT—CAMPOON '84/'84: THE RERUN, or something like it. This document will basically contain the first year's Progress Reports, possibly a transcript of portions of our radio interview, and (we hope) even a new tidbit or two just so's folks get their money's worth. Maybe, if we're lucky, a guest editorial or two as well. We plan to have illustrations by our official Campoon artist, Roldo, and of course the Campoon stuff already generated by venerated folks like Robert Rabbit. In any case, it's a ways off; just thought we'd warn you about it...

George Papoon, not a man easily outdone, hereby wishes to extend his full understanding and support to the plight of poor Barbara Honegger. Ms. Honegger, as all true surrealists know, left her post in the Justice Department, where she'd been working on the '50-State Project' (whose supposed ambition is to locate federal laws discriminating against women—sort of like finding a haystack in a pincushion), upon terming said project a "sham". Larry Speakes (White House speak—er, spokesman) retaliated by claiming (according to all those news reports with female anchors, at least) all Honegger ever did that was worthwhile was to dress up as a rabbit during the administration's annual Easter egg roll, and he subsequently produced photos to illustrate! Honegger denied the photos were of her, but we know better, and we say, Good for you, Barbara! Wear your animal suits with pride—each time you put one on, you further our cause that much more, and we love you for it! Hey, and good luck in getting your job back...In a related development, when we last visited Chuck's Secret World Headquarters in Wayne, we found that one of his staff members, Madame Oink, had been replaced by a character by the name of Helen Henny, who apparently suffered considerable insulting during the floor shows in the Theatre. We sincerely hope our suspicions here are unfounded, but it seems to us awfully unfair to have shaken up things on his staff only insofar as the only female in the sparse population was concerned, but on the other hand, we can probably presume certain situations arising out of, say, a Jim Henson lawsuit...In any case, do watch it, Chuckie. Remember, this Campoon happens to be run by female co-chaircreatures...

Coordinaries are requested, as always, to send us in your surrealist news, which will be published in this column until we stop! Bye!



The Cult To End All Cults

by the Rev. Mahatma Propagandhi

The Book of the SubGenius, by The SubGenius Foundation. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983. \$9.95 (or \$11 postpaid from the Foundation). The Stark Fist of Removal, No. 40, Vol. 17 (1983). \$3 postpaid from The SubGenius Foundation, P.O. Box 140306, Dallas, TX 75214.

Disdainful of diarrheality? Tired of Trilateral tyranny? Do you think extremism in the pursuit of vice is a virtue? And that Daylight Savings Time is a dangerous tampering with cosmic forces? Quite possibly they are reading your mail; they may even be writing it. "Politics" as we know it can't even circumcise the tip of the iceberg, and "religion" in any form is just the joy-buzzer of a petulant sociopath with a puerile sense of humor. In other words, you were right and they were wrong all along. And you are not alone. You are, moreover, a SubGenius.

In the 1950's, a salesman named J.R. "Bob" Dobbs experienced a series of visions—an Emaculation—lifting the curtain on the extraterrestrial influences which have shaped and warped our destinies since before prehistory. An E.T. whom we know as Jehovah-1 (or Wotan), probably a juvenile delinquent, has been manipulating our biology and history for eons, for kicks. This "mad alien from some corporate sin galaxy" is behind all the conspiracies you ever heard of, but—as The Book of the SubGenius avers: "Oh, all that right wing stuff about the Council on Foreign Relations is true enough. The world is run by rich, old, white, ugly men...but they're just the plant supervisors of this Hell Factory Earth." The cattle mutilations are cause for concern, but the Hollow Earth Saucer Nazis aren't the only or even the worst of those responsible. To be blunt, the human race is cruisin' for a bruisin', and the stupid insensate servitors of the Conspiracy, the Pink Boys, are houndin' for a poundin'.

We have to master the secrets of Time Control, and time is growing short. An unprecedented sequence of grotesque catastrophes, an Endtime is imminent, and when JHVA-1 reaches down to goose us with his Stark Fist of Removal, our best hope is that "Bob" Dobbs and the SubGeniie are ready to dicker from a position of strength when other aliens, the Xists, drop by on July 5, 1998 (at 7:00 a.m.). Just check out the "Dateline for Domination" in the Book, you'll see that Wotan's really fixed our hash: unless the SubGeniie find themselves and rally to Dobbs' banner, the knifed clock with wings.

Not that we (I refer to "we", not our Pink enemies, "US") have to wait for that chaotic rave-up when the Pinks and the fake SubGeniie, the "Bobbies", learn too late that you can't get tickets for an Xist saucer ride at any BASS outlet. Dobbs and his earthly Church firmly believe that gratification delayed is gratification denied. The immediate and ultimate objectives are one and the same, and it is Slack. Posing is pointless: true SubGeniie are born, not made (the Church, heavily into sociobuyology, teaches that SubGeniie are descendants of the Yeti, albeit tainted by human admixture), though their evolution toward the OverMan stage may be furthered by Glandscaping, Personality Bypass and the Third Nostril surgeries carried out at the Dobbstown jungle retreat in Malaysia. In other words, "Pull the wool over your own eyes."

Pinks are everywhere (aren't they?), but especially prevalent at certain nurdnodes or power points like corporate boardrooms, poetry readings, video arcades, voting booths and science fiction conventions. They sniff every gilded neurose, they hear the same drummer, they never "go too far". They think you can have barbeque without the hot sauce. As "Bob" says of the Pink: "You can enter his world any time you like but he doesn't even know YOURS is THERE." They not only work, they believe in work. They've been riding high on the hog, hogging the highs with the help of intergalactic Bad Shepherds who were just fattening them for market. If they believe in Jesus it's the Sesame Street, Misterogers' android, not any of the real Jesi; they idolize the Lite Jesus, the Tofu Jesus of the False Christians, not the XY Chromosome Jesus, the Estate-Bottled Jesus, the Jismatic Jesus, the 3-D Jesus, the SSichopath Jesus, the 86'd Jesus, the State-of-the-Art (not the Art-of-the-State) Jesus, the Goat-Jesus who wasn't a Capricorn! The Jesus (says the Book) "who didn't get nailed."

In other words, if your quest is for perv-ection, if you want more and better sex, if you think there is a free lunch, maybe even a Naked Lunch, then you need to know what your genes are silently shrieking, to wit, that "Bob" helps those who help themselves to everything that isn't nailed down. Which is only to say, "There is a Heaven, and you can buy your way into it." Or, as Detroit/Cleveland area aficionados may recollect, The Ghoul gibbering (SubGeniie, as one of them told the Pinkwimp BravEar Magazine last year, glean "pearls of wisdom from the chaff of popular culture" and like to mix metaphors) on late-night UHF television, "Do it while you can, mama, but don't get caught!"

The Book of the SubGenius, the ostensibly "commercial" outreach of SubGenius rantings, has undergone Conspiracy censorship, but what they overlooked is more insidious than what most so-called avant garde revolutionary upchuckings had to show for themselves in the first place. (One [by Church standards] innocuous cartoon eared the Mo'Fuck Church in Dallas a house-call from the Secret Service, and this is not a joke.) It's OK to buy the Book even if you're not sure it's right for you because, as Dobbs once explained to L. Ron Hubbard, "Sure, they're Pink, but their money is green." Look: Life is a cosmic traffic ticket...but "Bob" can fix it. (But not for everybody, not for the Illuminati who make up all those lightbulb jokes.) And don't be put off by the word "SubGenius", some of us are actually smarter than that; but that's not the point. All SubGeniie are alike, but not in the same way, whereas the "Bobbies" (to be pitied and pilfered: fleeced but not played) make a show of being different, without ever being distinctive.

At this point you are either punching out "911" on your Princess 99 phone, or else discovering with amazement that the Book's puntheistic

profundities include things that you've said (or at least thought) yourself. This is but the arcane working of what Zack Replica of the Church of the Coincidental Metaphor has denominated the Henny Jung Collective Humor Unconscious. SubGeniie are, by the way, adroit improvers of such divinatory devices as reading T-bills, numerology, anagrams, and Word Golf ("Punk" to "Pink", for instance is a hole-in-one). Like watching late-night TV or performing the rite of Excrementation on the Throne of Elimination, these exorcizes are but a few of the many breadcrumb-strewn psycho paths to Buddhada. For each Yeti-spawned SubGenius, aided by his own shordurpersavs (short-duration personal saviors) finds a special way to "Bob" and Slack. This is what the "Bobbies" will never figure out, what the seemingly less orthodox Other Mutants (pre- and extra-SubGenius loosely-affiliated heresiarchs) discern, that you have to kill "Bob" if you really wanna live and live it up, for "Bob" will rise again in his own sweet time and thank you for not being a disciple-type sap. Indeed, every local con-gregation (or "clench") is obliged to schizm sooner or later, for reasons you will never understand if they aren't already obvious.

From this overdrawn account you might think the Church is a bit cerebral, but in surreality its salons and saloons are one and the same, as comes out (yes, despite the Church's commitment to Patrio-Psychotic AnarchoMaterialism, gays are welcome and run at least one clench, the Church of the Profuse Discharge) in The Stark Fist of Removal. In this house organ the Church plays with itself, the current issue featuring censored texts from the Book, coverage of the epochalyptic second Convention in Chicago last September, and a survey of the Other Mutants and their unsettling works. At the Con, which I was privileged to attend, SubGeniie from places as far-removed as Berkeley and Bolivia (no shit) gathered in fellow(Oneupman)ship, quaffing great draughts of 'Frop from drinking horns', swearing mighty oaths, playing the hundreds, spewing and bullshattering. Most ignored the science fiction WorldCon nearby, but a few pulled off divers Pink-tumpings at the expense of the Trekkies and other dreckies. Spirits ran high and down many a chin as the Slack-seekers got psycho'd up for the psonic tsunami called Doktors for "Bob".

Before anti-musicians like Culturcide, before jokerockers like the 12 Year Olds, before E.L.F. led the pagan pink (not Pink) revival—there were the Doktors and their thoroughly contemporary sound unconstrained by melody, harmony and morality. These Arkansaucer creatures and their fearsome progeny (Doktors for Wotan, Oakland's mysterious Doktors for Extreme Prejudice, etc.) produce a Gott-wrenching metamusic, and the original Doktorband really wracked the Radisson with eine kleine Nichtmusik. Not even the onstage assassination of guitarist St. Sterno Keckhever by 'Frop-maddened animate anti-art object TENTATIVELY, a CONVENIENCE (purer in his abnormality than any of us)—a scene uncannily reminiscent of the suppressed outtakes from the Zapruder film—silenced the surviving Doktors. It looked like a tag-team meat fight in the emergency room, but with St. Janor Hypercleats and the martyred Sterno affording a core of reliable unpredictability. Occasionally upwelling from the Sargasso of sound was an almost songlike manifestation such as Janor's stirring anthem, "Told the Judge to Suck My Dick." It was like the dropping of a hermeneutron bomb.

The Con concluded, as it had to, by the Church's most moving ritual, the Launching of the Head (of a famous World Cup golfer, not Lee Trevino) shortly after Sterno's resurrection—but by then the most extraordinary event in Church history had forever changed its course. The SubGenius Ladies' Sewing Auxiliary stormed a "predominantly peenoid" panel of complacent Church Fathers, announced their theft of the Head and dictated hormonally-unbalanced demands which the men had no choice but to submit to...called upon to officiate at a shotgun marriage of all Church males to one another, the unflappable Pastor Buck Naked lost his Barnumesque composure. To see a strong man reduced to a whimpering shambles is a sad thing; but the women (formerly the girls) got a charge out of it. Concerning what else the matriarchs made us do, it is better not to speak. The Church of the SubGenius will never be the same. But then, it never was.

Who, then, are the SubGeniie! We are the Slam-Dancing Wu Li Masters. "When the Rapture comes, I'll make 'em wait!" "Fuck 'em even if they can take a joke!"

¹'Frop is a Tibetan herb; these revellers were imbibing a solution, "tincture of 'Frop".

A SHORT DISCUSSION OF WHAT'S HIP by Luke McGuff

You see a sex-girl at a disco—she dances great and can sing along with every song & she has on the latest, most expensive three color hairdo. She isn't hip. She still curses her supervisor's back when he brings a new project to her cubicle.

You see some teenage skinhead punk victim in a vinyl jacket, mouthing generic anti-Reagan nonsense without thought, talking Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, Husker Du. He isn't hip. He still argues with his ma about taking out the garbage.

Some old black lady with her arms full of bags comes up to you and starts babbling about SNCC volunteers making her register to vote and she didn't know what those kids were up to. She's hip. She still has her doubts about the SNCC. "Did they help black folk? That's what I want to know."

Some crusty gimpy with his leg in a boot brace and tales of two wars in countries you never heard of. He's hip. He always has his leg in boot brace, he always has his war memories. "What did they accomplish? That's what I want to know."

School: Fine for Fish Students!
Why sell out just when the bosses won't buy? There is no life after work. Workers Against Work, 55 Sutter, #487, San Francisco, CA 94104.

Can't help but chuckle at International Crimes? You'll laugh all the way to the fully-equipped survival shelter when "Bob" lets you in on the real joke!
HILARIOUS OUTLINE OF DESTRUCTION: \$1 The Church of the SubGenius®

TRAISE
"BOB"
PART II-
SEE
NEXT
PAGE!

Hot L "Bob" & More

by Elayne (and Kip)

Somehow, it all just fell into place (like a lead brick). The week-end of Sept. 16-18 was entirely too appropo, considering what else I might have been doing, and had indeed done, at other Vom Kippur cross-road points in my life. This year, I would, for the first time, be in tune not with the religion that taught me guilt and fear and remorse, the religion that kept me isolated and ignorant and trapped between elitist blinders for so many years, the religion that spawned such as my mother and father. No, this year I would be true not to somebody else's image of what a God should be, but to myself. And to that end, I decided to pay just tribute to "Bob".

The third annual World SubGenius Party was held on the 'raunchier' (or so it seemed) side of town, in a 'hot L Baltimore' if there ever was one, the Congress Hotel. James Langdell and I arrived at about 4 (don't forget to mention how lost you got, schmuck), where we ran into Doug Smith (aka "Ivan Stang"), the founde—er, Scribe for the Church of the SubGenius. Upon hearing from him that things probably wouldn't get rolling until later on and why don't we go check out the art show being held across the street (Doug didn't say that part; someone else did), we so moved and found ourselves in a loft that looked like a SoHo pad on acid. The 'artwork', including some wonderful bulldada postcards and other strangeness from Al Ackerman (hi Al!), was sort of just hanging around, as were the few folks there, so we checked out the city a bit and had a lovely crab dinner at the 'famous' Lexington Mall. But you don't really care about the personal stuff (oh thank "Bob", maybe she'll spare us her stories about the Maryland Baseball Hall of Fame, Harbor Place mall, and that eerily Discordian sculpture/bencheset that graced that corporate building downtown), so it's back to the Galaxy Ballroom (not much of a room to speak of, really, but at least things were starting to roll), where I got to meet people who'd been only letters and voices until then, folks like Sam of the Severn Institute, the main organizer of the Party, and TENTATIVELY a CONVENTION (given the name of "Mike" or some such at birth but since discarded same), and also reemet old friends like Pastor Buck Naked and Janor Hypercleats. (Oh come off it, they're acquaintances at best, even if Buck did promise you those autoharp lessons.). One of the newer folks I'd met, a guy from the Philly area named Craig Roll (on roller skates, no less), turned out to be the official wrestling reporter covering the now-famous celebrity matches being held in Dobbstown (Malaysia); in particular, the one between the Clear, Scientific Wrestling Jesus and the Brawling Buddha (the "Bad Boy From India") in a no-disqualification match refereed by Boy George. Also mentioned was the progress of the tag-team divisions, spearheaded by the Mass Veti Assassins versus James Watt and Wayne Newton, but enough of that here. We retired early Friday night, and were later told we missed a couple good bands and rants (tho we caught a bit of Buck's "Bob" music), but you can, naturally, get the full story from the STARK FIST OF REMOVAL eventually. Maybe. Anyhow, on to Saturday, where I'd been hinting at a schism from a powerful Overwomen's clench reported to have a real surprise in store. My reasoning behind the protest had something to do with not wanting any differentiation made between SubG's on the basis of chromosomal arrangement, a problem which by rights should plague only Normals, but as that point was made clear during the Women's Talk (and at the time I hadn't garnered enough chutzpah to get up and adlib without a cause), I just sat back, took notes, and admired the energy.

The Women's Talk began with a history lesson from Pam, a member of the Sadality of the White Glove ("Bob's" wife Connie's primary oracle), on the Real J.R. "Bob" Dobbs and Family. Some facts: "Bob" born: Oct. 29, 1929 (Scorpio); Connie was Miss Tool & Dye 1948; "Bob" & Connie married at Bide-A-Wee Church in Nevada in '55 (all this history was accompanied, by the way, with some boggo pictures, mostly taken from old Life magazine ads, it seemed—but of course not, they were all donated from Connie's scrapbook for the talk); Dec. '55 1st child born, Bob Jr. ("Bubba"); Family became close with their next door neighbors, the Jeeters, and Connie and Jeanie Jeeter enter into business together, manufacturing Pizza Faces; next child born was a daughter, Barbara ("Kitzen"); acquired dog Fluffy; 2nd son, Adam, born, raised like brother & sister on special formula acquired from CARE fund for 3rd world nations; 3rd & 4th sons, twins Kevin & Jerry, born; acquired more dogs (Scruffy, Ruffy, Tuffy); one day Bob Jr.'s & Barbara's friend Debbie Jeeter disappears near family homestead at Medicine Lake; Barbara's tragic pregnancy at 14 results in twins Foster & Puggy (real names unnoted); "Bob" goes off wagon at hearing tragic news; Barb goes off and becomes fashion model, falls in love with "Dick", who disappears near Medicine Lake as well (Barbara is now the "Household Hint" editor at the Ladies Home Journal); skipping chronologically back a bit, "Bob" makes killing on selling of RKO to Desilu and invention of the Barbie doll (named after daughter Barbara), begins his now-infamous selling techniques; Connie discovers Quality Inn Motel ("gimme another, and make it a stiff one"), where occurs Maculation of Connie during air conditioner salesman's convention, TOO MUCH SLACK achieved, and "Bob" "made a religion of necessity"; and the rest is history (despite the bizarre recent incident involving Bob, Jr.'s arrest at a Trailways bus station for possession of a controlled substance...).

Then the fabulous Debs, of the Severn Institute, explained to the enthralled audience why The Men had to atone for the Original Sin, the one that happened during the days of Fred & Wilma Flintstone, of only giving women Tiny Beakers of Warm, Flat Beer. The atonement ritual consisted of the eating of the Sacred Cocktail Weenie ("You've been making us eat weenies for years") and drinking from the Holy Grail of the Pro Class Golfer (the Head being irretrievably—er, busted) out of the Sacred Pee-on-Connie's-Head Fountain. After The Men refused (and TENT nearly made a mockery of the mockery by appearing to take a weenie up le derriere then stomping on it), and faced 'Hellfire', where the women began burning the Sacred Almost-Head—until He Came. He was

PEe (ostensibly Stang with a penis-head, a sight beyond description), who was killed by The Women and reborn when he partook of the sacred birth control pill and Weenie and Fountain juice (for the interested, vodka and grapefruit juice). Stang claimed to have remembered nothing of the incident, saying, "I'm only a life-support system for that dick." But The Women knew better. Or did they?

I ended my Saturday night watching Buck, Stang and Janor rant, various choirs (like the "Get Stupid!" Quintet) make noise, and Buck perform a "Bob"tizing of Rebeza Rebozo into a Nun For "Bob". Incidentally, Janor did destroy a copy of JJ during his ranting, thus sealing his fate with certain friends of ours until an apology is elicited...

I understand that we missed nothing more than TENT's arrest Saturday night (something about a tunnel in the buff with dead dogs, it's still pretty hazy), but Sunday, for me, was the best day. Not only didn't I faint (but that's a different story and has nothing to do with the convention), but I got to moderate a panel discussion! The talk was with Buck and "Ma", a follower of Pagans for "Bob", and the topic was Sex With Normals (Don't). Then Debs and I ranted for a bit (she did a damn near good job of it too, and didn't mention JJ once if you can believe it), and I reminded the audience that not only were they probably smarter than me for not making asses of themselves on stage, but they actually contained MORE SLACK than we the ranters, so therefore the Party could have been nothing but a success. (This will all out on videotape eventually, so I fear I am somewhat immortalized—and immortalized.) Then Craig did a wrestling rant, and James did a marvelous bit with his anti-instrument and other pearls of wisdom. Debs and I launched the Sacred Wig of Connie, we listened to some more of Buck's music, and then we had to cut out to make the 7:09 Anthrax. But, as faithful followers know, the Church's propagandizing is never done, and we (James, myself, and a re-met Craig) spread the word o' "Bob" e'en on the train to a never-before-met seatmate. Events to come: Craig will be arranging with the folks at Dobbstown wrestling matches with the tag team of myself and Debs (who has, incidentally, been made a worthy honorary member of SWAZ, over the best damn ice tea I ever had) versus 1) Fonda and Principal, need I say more, and 2) the "false Connies" of Sollecca and Stevens... As I finish this hurriedly-typed report on a bleary-eyed Sunday evening, I am enjoined by my muse (some muse, a few smartass remarks and she'll get credit for writing this!) to thank all those involved whose names are mentioned above plus Jers Dave Axler, Jimmy Harris, Paul Summers, Seth Deitch and Bill "Bleepo Abernathy", Doug Kirby, Tim McGinnis (the publisher of The Book, with whom I had a wonderful TFT-related chat), thank again especially Doug and Sam Fitzsimmons and Debs Irwin and The Ones I Forgot, and James again of course, and remind all that further information can be obtained by contacting the Church at Box 140306, Dallas, TX 75214 and, good news, there will be a mini-Party next month (on or about Oct. 15) in Boston given by Bleepo and Seth and possibly our own Dr. Armand (surprise Mikey!), at which I will no doubt rant (it's like an addiction, and I didn't realize how much I missed performing, so watch out). End of plug; end of report; beginning of a New and Improved Year for the Church of the SubGenius, praise "Bob"!

P.S. Don't just Buy the Book; Buy the Hell out of it!

HOW TO CLEAN YOUR HOUSE

by Cynthia Cinque

Nazis are good housekeepers as are robots, as are clones, as are obedient wives, and as are some violent people who you'd swear were not. Also, Nancy Reagan keeps a clean house but she doesn't do the cleaning. Businessmen are orderly, and I know one who divorced his wife because she left chewed bones on the dining room table—overnight. It's ghastly. A lawyer I know divorced her husband because he would not clean the house and because he liked to eat his stringbeans out of a pot. My next door neighbors cackle at each other like chickens because he refuses to clean; it is difficult for him because he is blind, but she insists, because she is liberated.

This has got to stop.

I clean my house two or three times a year and I'd like to share my method with all of you. Sharing is caring. Always start at the top and work your way down. Fill a large cooking pot or pail (for the squeamish) with soap flakes, ammonia, bleach, Ajax, Lysol, and hot water. Throw this solution at the walls, the refrigerator, the stove, counter tops, cabinets, windows, mirrors, toilet bowl, and sinks. Before it dries, slosh a wet rag over all the aforementioned objects. This leaves a hugh pool of dirty, greasy water on your floors and rugs, but never you mind. Sop it up with clean sheets and towels that you have wrapped around your feet. It is best to do an Indian war dance during this procedure, and Indian chanting helps to relieve the anxiety. When you are finished, toss the dirty linen into the washing machine. If the rugs are still wet, dry them with your hair dryer. If your feet are dirty and you are not agile enough to lift them into the wash basin, rinse them off in the toilet bowl. Sprinkle cleanser all over the tub; the cleanser will eat into the marble, removing all the stains, and you can wash down the dirt the next time you shower.

We move now into the bedroom to make the beds. If the dirty sheets get stuck in the bedsprings, just pull hard and rip them free; the torn sheets can serve as rags. Then put contour sheets on the bed. Secure three corners and then bend the mattress toward you, looping the sheet over the fourth corner. If you release the mattress and hold on to the sides, you are in for a nice ride.

On to the refrigerator. If, when you open the refrigerator door, the freezer compartment pops open revealing a solid block of ice, don't panic. Do one or both of two things: Either unplug the refrigerator allowing the ice to melt and flow all over the floor, or attack the block of ice with heated knives. If you manage to remove the ice block intact, whittle it into an amusing shape and bring the ice sculpture to the next meeting of the community sing.

The Case of the Printer's Pie

by Robert J. Cloud

I had just finished kipping a fish on the gas grate of our upper apartment at 222 Boondoggle Street, when the door was flung open and my tall friend entered precipitously. At the crash, I dropped my morsel onto the grate, where it blazed up brightly and stank horribly. "Ho, ho, Holmes," I answered, happy to have caught him out. "You don't recognize it? It was to be my grilled fish savoury, until it fell into the fire."

"That's what I said, Watson, 'what a dead foul smelt'," he quoth back to me; and upon rethinking the matter, I had to agree with him. "Dead foul smelt in truth. And now I have no breakfast." "Put, tut," he tut-tutted testily, "Mourn not for your placetorial reccadillo. I have here an item from this morning's Tomorrow's News Today, a recipe for what may prove ambrosial indeed. Cast your eyes upon this cutting." He searched his several pockets for some time, then exclaimed, "Ah, here it is, right where I last saw it, in my right hand. Read this. I propose that we prepare this confection as per the formula, and see if I am not right that our cups will indeed runneth over."

I took the recipe and studied it. "Jove, this has promise, Holmes," I agreed. For it read:

Sherry Pie

Slice 3 peaches into thin wedges, first removing the skins; add 1 cup sugar, 1/8 tsp salt, 1 cup water, 3 pts 80-proof sherry; brew this mixture softly until hot but not boiling. Turn out into a deep-dish pie shell, and when cool, cover with whipped cream.

Holmes had brought peaches and sherry with him, and I found the other ingredients in our small but tastefully furnished larder. We immediately commenced the prescribed process. Soon the room was permeated with such a delectable aroma that we found ourselves salivating like Dr. Pavlov's celebrated canines. To stay our rapidly-developing hunger pains, we shared equally in the abatement of the final pint of sherry; as the recipe had called for three pints and Holmes was unable to purchase the condiment in other than quart size.

As the mixture approached its perfection, Holmes suddenly said, "Watson, hadn't you better raise the required pie shell?"

Taking my cue from his subtle hint, I scurried downstairs to visit Mrs. Packard in her pantry. Finding she had just finished shelling several pies, I appropriated one of the larger shells and hastened back to Holmes.

"Ah, Watson, dear fellow, you have arrived just on the tick of nine. Our confection is ready for its container." Removing it from the grate, he poured the savory mixture into the pie shell. After a few moments, he located the whipped cream, which, preparatory to garnishing my kippers smelt, I had placed upon the sideboard, and spooned liberal dollops upon the bubbling pie.

Meanwhile I placed our two soup bowls upon the table, and Holmes soon did the honors by ladling out generous helpings. We fell upon the heavenly dish with great appetite; but were unable to consume but a half of the pie before a strange lethargy overtook us. "Holmes," I said, "These really a superior short of meal, but I'm somehow shud-denly shleepy." With this I dropped insensate in my chair while Holmes was still laboring with a reply.

Awakening what must have been hours later, I perceived Holmes sitting sedately by the fireside reading a newspaper. The table was cleared and dishes put away. "Sorry to be taken so unexpectedly groggy, Holmes," I apologized. "It must have been delayed hunger pangs caused by missing my usual kippers. By the way, if there's any remainder of that remarkable sherry pie about, I'll be glad to help you dispose of it."

Holmes lowered his paper. "It is already disposed of, Watson. I have just been reading in this later edition of today's paper, a correction in the very recipe we were using. It seems the typesetters had made the entry, regarding the sherry, of 3 p-t-s, which we rightly interpreted as pints. Now they claim this was merely printers' pi, that the true recipe calls for three t-s-p, an altogether different quantity." "Well, Holmes, what's done is done, what," I exclaimed. "At any rate, it was excellent pie. And you say disposed of?"

"Yes, Watson," he answered gravely. "The pie is gone. It rests at the bottom of the canal."

"The canal!" I replied in bewilderment. "Pray, Holmes, what canal?" With one hand negligently resting on his distended stomach, he solemnly replied, "Alimentary, my dear Watson, alimentary."

IN THE FIELD ON ALPHA CENTAURI IV

by Jim Heter and Su Falcon

Instellar communication is expensive, even for a well-financed establishment like the Galactic Development Agency. Planetary field agents are limited by GDA regulations to one radiogram report each local year, and even this must be kept short, as it is usually a collect message, which, as you know, costs even more.

Take the instance of Joe Critch, GDA Field Agent Extraordinaire, on Alpha Centauri IV. The natives of this planet, although sentient tool and weapon makers, are grazers, not unlike Terran cows, except for the manipulating appendages protruding from a second pair of shoulders above their forelegs.

Joe's task was to bring them to a cultural level where they could become a suitable market for interstellar trade. As they were nomadic my nature, and not inclined to collecting possessions, his idea was to break them of their wandering habits by teaching them to cultivate the land and to raise their own fodder.

When Joe arrived on the planet, the first thing he did was to locate the survey team that had been sent out several years before. He discovered that they were being held captive by one of the local chieftans, and that three of the original party of twelve had already been mercilessly sacrificed to a local deity. With his smooth diplomatic charms, however, he did manage to convince the chieftan to release the remaining prisoners bare moments before they were to be decapitated.

His first annual interstellar radiogram report to the Central Office of the GDA read:

"A CRITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE"

Joe's initial success on the plan to teach cultivation of crops to the locals came rather easily. The herd he was working with on the inland plains quickly learned how to harness themselves up to the plows and till the beautiful rolling plains into a lush and bountiful harvest.

He had gotten reports, though, that the herds that roamed along the coast in the dense, bushy areas were much more warlike and less likely to cooperate. Undaunted by the reports and confident of his ability to talk his way out of any situation that might come up, Agent Critch headed for the coast just before the end of the season, to make arrangements for the coastal herd to start cultivation the following spring.

Unfortunately, the reports he had gotten were, if anything, grossly understated, and he barely escaped with his life.

His second annual report stated:

"HERD INLAND WORTH TWO IN BUSH"

Field Agent Joe Critch could not help but admire the fierce pride of the coastal bush herds, and he redoubled his efforts to win the herd over to his way of thinking. After some months of hard effort and harrowing close encounters risking life and limb, Joe had finally managed to establish a strong and lasting friendship with the most feared and respected of the leaders of the wild and warlike tribes, but his big opportunity to change their lifestyles didn't come until his friend developed an abscess in one of his hooves that, no matter what the medical officer of the original research team did, would not heal.

With the chieftan leader thus hobbled and unable to lead the rest of the herd on the mad, galloping rampages inland to steal the other herds' crops, Joe tactfully suggested that encouraging his herd to settle down and grow their own fodder would allow the chieftan to maintain his power and position in spite of his disability. With the chieftan's support, a crop was planted and successfully harvested on the coast.

GDA Field Agent Extraordinaire Joe Critch's third annual radiogram to Central Office elatedly conveyed the fortuitous turn of events by reporting:

"ABCESS MAKES THE HERD GROW FODDER"

ON POSTER flashing contact of E.T.'s and child's fingers . . . plus both thumb's positions . . . equals shark—as in shhh (top secret) ark. Formula for insistent accusation (pointed finger) stimulate psychosomatic hunger.

BASEBALL'S White Lines

by Tom "The Nose" Gedwillo

In the biggest baseball trade to date, the Toronto Blue Jays have been traded to Japan for the Nippon Ham Fighters and a player to be named later. . . . John DeLorean named as Baseball Commissioner. He bans all soft-drinks other than Coke from major league parks. . . . Pete Rose admits to romance with Miss Piggy. . . . Gene Rayburn replaces Tommy LaSorda as skipper of the Dodgers. . . . Billy Martin starring in next Rodney Dangerfield movie, playing his twin brother. . . . Frank Robinson, ex-manager at San Francisco, set to produce next Prince album. . . . Former Yankee Bobby Murcer will host several editions of "Family Feud". . . . The Red Sox announce the signing of Ryan O'Neal as designated hitter. . . . Steve Garvey joins Osmond family in hosting Dental Hygiene Telethon. . . . Five-player deal ships Murphy, Horner and Benedict to Rolling Stones for Jagger and Richard. . . . Reggie Jackson to take over as spokesman for Jello Pudding. No comment from Cosby. . . . Steve Carlton ousts Barry Hansen as host on "The Dr. Demento Show". . . . Van Halen adds Earl Weaver to their 1984 West Indies tour as official group gardener. . . . San Diego Padres move to American League, merging with the Angels to become the California Chaplains. . . . National Anthem to all Cardinals' games to be sung by Marlin Perkins. . . . George Brett purchases pine tar factory in Peevew, So. Dakota. . . . Expos will become first major league team without a permanent home stadium. They plan to host games next season in Pennant, Saskatchewan and Ballfour, British Columbia. . . . Dave Kingman pitches no-hitter for Mets. . . . Willie Randolph is recovering from an accident on the set of "The A-Team" where he was auditioning as a stand-in for Mr. T. He was injured when he collapsed from the weight of his gold jewelry. A speedy recovery. . . . The Minnesota Twins have first pick in the winter draft and have set sights on Ann Landers and Abigail Van Buren. . . . Joe Morgan to star in Paramount's "Popeye II". . . . Johnnie LeMaster (Giants) to take over as host on "Dance Fever". . . . 1987 All-Star Game set for Englewood, New Jersey. . . . Oakland introduces Farley Granger as team mascot. . . . Indians plan to move to Akron and hire Ernest Angley as manager. . . . Part of Dodger promotions next year will be Coke-Spoon Night. . . . Mets announce that they will add hubcap-stealing as part of seventh-inning stretch. . . . Fernando Valenzuela changes his last name to Wingtip. . . . Until my next installment of BASEBALL'S WHITE LINES, this is "The Nose" saying "take your base."

FAT ANNIE

by Luke McGuff

Fat Annie is a jokester. When she smiles, her pudgy face smoothes out, her cheekbones rise up to crinkle her eyes, you can't help but feel better around her. Everybody is more willing to laugh. Sure, Fat Annie's a card. People make sure she knows about their parties. They put out her favorite munchies.

But there's a face she wears when she thinks nobody is looking. It's her walking-up-the-stairs face, her sorting-the-laundry face. When she does the things everyone does alone she feels most lonely. Her smile disappears and her jowls loosen up. Fat Annie talks about killing herself with a tablespoon and everyone thinks it's the funniest thing.

THE CONGRESS OF UNTALENTED COMPOSERS

by Clark Dissmeyer

The first (and, as we shall see, the last) Congress of Untalented Composers was held at the Platypus Memorial Convention Hall in Polymorphous, Indiana. There, five of the most abysmally talentless ear-torturers in the world assembled to discuss the problem of their non-existent popularity.

The gentlemen—Messrs. Skilletwong, Cricketcoffer, Bowlstück, Burpensky and Frogswaddle by name—spent a half hour getting acquainted, listening to their chairs squeak, while a tape (the work of the notorious Burpensky) of "Cows Climbing Out of A Ditch, Parts One and Two" played in the background. Then they ate, and when one of their party succumbed to gas (Frogswaddle is suspected), all the rest joined in, creating a scintillant piece of avant-garde improvisation (and a noxious odor) that was fortunately captured on tape and later made available in a limited edition pressing, costing \$79.88 apiece.

When the meal was finished and the composers had explored the tonal possibilities of china plates hurled at the papered walls, Skilletwong brought the meeting to attention. "It is well known to all of you," he said, "just how badly the public performances of our respective compositions have been received. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the problem of communication and how we might rectify it. Mr. Cricketcoffer, you may have the floor."

Cricketcoffer: "Thank you. As you know, in the course of my career as a composer, the main distinguishing aspect of my work is that, while I utilize conventional instruments" (here Burpensky let forth with a sustained raspberry) "those instruments are always in 'discord' from the first note to the last. There is not a sweeter sound on earth to my ears, but others seem inexplicably more than a little annoyed by it. From this, after much speculation, I have concluded that I am the next step in human evolution, in that my eardrums were turned inside out at birth. Therefore, it seems likely that I hear everything in absolutely the opposite way that everyone else does, so that what is annoying to my ears—that horrid Beethoven, for example—is divine to others, and vice versa. In conclusion, I can only recommend that everyone have their ears turned inside out, so that they may give my work proper consideration."

"Thank you, Mr. Cricketcoffer. Mr. Bowlstück, you may have the floor."

Bowlstück: "Marrumph. I'm sure you're all familiar with my 36-hour-long composition, 'The Oneness of Mankind', which consists of three notes played in the same sequence seven hundred and twenty times, each note lasting exactly one minute, which has not been met with favor by that same mankind upon hearing it—or rather, that small portion which has had that good fortune to have heard it. I submit that because this work deals with the oneness of mankind, it cannot be appreciated unless every human being in the world hears it in its entirety all at the exact same instant, and therefore I propose that a vast system of millions of loudspeakers be spread to each and every nook and cranny of the globe, so that every living human being—and every dead one as well—will hear it in unison when played over these speakers, thus feeling that Oneness of Mankind which I have postulated and recognizing my Genius."

"All right, it's your turn, Mr. Burpensky."

Burpensky: "Ahem, thank you, Mr. Skilletwong. As with you gentlemen, my work, in particular my most recent composition, 'The Flying Mudball Concerto', has not been received at all favorably by the public. In the case of the 'Mudball' especially I am very chagrined, as it was the product of extensive research and coordination. In exploring the Pookatuckee Mountains of Brazil, I stumbled upon a degenerated race of jungle Indians. These Pookies, as they're called, lived in vast pyramids and temples covered with hieroglyphics whose meanings they had long ago forgotten. But I managed to decipher some of them, and found the musical score of an ancient war song that relied entirely on percussions; specifically, the scale consisted of different sounds made by mudballs filled with rocks hitting the natives of a rival tribe. You may remember reading in the paper how, at the first performance of this work, I assembled a group of natives and instructed them in the arrangement of throwing mudballs at the audience. Unfortunately, the performance culminated in the deaths, due to concussions, of several members of the audience, not to mention not a few soiled suits and dresses, and besides being banned from public performance, my ball was excessive. Therefore, I deem it wise to—"

But at this point a strange occurrence put an end to the words of Burpensky, and to the Congress itself. The ghost of Wha-noups, the inventor of the first flute thousands of years in the past, was floating through the area. He had been searching since the death of Wagner for a song worth hearing, and was outraged by the speeches he heard in the Platypus Memorial Convention Hall.

He swooped into the room and, animating a knife, slashed the throats of four of those assembled, and tore out their tongues. But he paused in this ferocious demonstration of Deus ex Machina before the cowering form of the fifth, Mr. Frogswaddle, and with a sudden feeling of pity, decided to be eminently merciful, and only gauged out his ears with a spoon. Then he bade the mutilated Frogswaddle a cheery farewell and was gone.

The Congress of Untalented Composers ended there; but not our story. There remains to be told how Frogswaddle did, in the end, become quite popular. For he had never learned to read music, and had only been able to play the cello by ear. Now that he could no longer hear what he was playing and thus no longer was able to deliberately diverge from the standards of traditional aesthetics, he quite often accidentally came up with some outstanding tunes. It is fortunate that he couldn't hear what he played—for the beauty of some of his own melodies would no doubt have killed him had he been able to.

I CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF DUNGEON 13 (Or, A Look At Horror Film Fanzines)

by Robert Hale

If you are familiar with the horror film publication DUNGEON 13, I'm sure you feel, as I do, that this fanzine is a good filler between the time the latest edition of FANGORIA comes out. However, did you know that there are other horror film newsletters? Yes! DUNGEON 13 does not have a monopoly in this field. First in this review, I will discuss, in capsule form, the four major horror film newsletters (yes, there are others with bigger circulations than DUNGEON 13):

SLEAZOID EXPRESS: Perhaps the best of the horror film newsletters. This fanzine also covers low-budget sleaze films. And the editor, Bill Landis, has all of New York City to look for these films. The SE has been around for some time. Has decent photos; it is usually four pages long; at least two pages are devoted to a special subject on low-budget sleaze films. This newsletter set the example for many newsletters and fanzines in this field. Address: P.O. Box 799, Peter Stuyvesant Station, NY, NY 10009. Subscriptions: \$8.00 a year. Comes out monthly.

GORE GAZETTE: With a title like this, you gotta check it out. This fanzine looks at the violent sleaze films that come out. Usually has good photos. Good format. But because of publishing difficulties, the subscription price has skyrocketed to \$13.00 a year. It comes out every two weeks. Usually two pages, but there have been many double issues. I don't know if it is worth the price, but you'll have to be the judge of that. A favorite of mine. And they don't always recommend movies just because they are gory. They really go after many foreign dubbed turkeys passing off as American films. Check them out! Address: c/o Rick Sullivan, 73 N. Fullerton Ave., Montclair, NJ 07402.

CONFESSIONS OF A TRASH FIEND: From a distance, it looks like the GORE GAZETTE because it has the same format. But the editor, Richard Green, just doesn't go after violent low-budget sleaze, but after all low-budget sleaze. From cable to the grindhouses on 42nd St. to drive-ins, etc., he covers films most horror film fanzines cover (like THE EVIL DEAD and MIDNIGHT) and other films not covered in horror fanzines (like SPRING FEVER, SPRING BREAK, LOSIN' IT, etc.—SLEAZOID EXPRESS sometimes covers these films). Rich is very good at answering mail. Usually two pages; sometimes a double issue. Subscriptions: \$7.00 a year. Comes out every two weeks. A must-see!

TRASHOLA: If you're short on cash, this is the best fanzine to subscribe to! Jim Morton, the editor, does a fantastic job for putting out a fanzine with only one page! He has his own rating system of skulls! Comes out every three weeks. Subscriptions: \$3.50 a year. Every Halloween, there is a four-page edition. Address: Suite 583, 109 Minna St., San Francisco, CA 94105. Only fanzine I know from the west coast. A must buy! Jim is good at answering mail. Reviews books also.

CHICAGO SHIVERS: Covers the low-budget horror sleaze of Chicago. This is one of the few fanzines from the midwest. Format is like the GORE GAZETTE or TRASH FIEND. Usually two pages, but length varies. It has improved from the first issue. Address: Ron Carlson, 4443 Grace St., Schiller Park, IL 60176. Subscriptions: \$6.00 a year; comes out every three weeks. Pretty good.

SCAREAPHANALIA: Catchy title, huh? Covers low budget horror and some sleaze. A good fanzine. Its strongest point is a fantastic MOVIE NEWS section. Lets you know what's going to be released, etc. Usually two pages, some double issues. Address: Michael Gingold, 55 Nordica Dr., Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Comes out once a month.

LOMBROW CINEMA: This publication looks at some unusual cinema. Not the most exciting fanzine. Issue #2 had some stories on Godzilla, 3D, etc. But it had a fantastic story on Vic Morrow, a tribute which he deserved. I hope it improves. Write: Brian Camp, P.O. Box 310, Cornell Station, Bronx, NY 10473. Subscriptions: \$7.00 a year. Three to four issues made a year. Looks like a little magazine, but it is a newsletter.

SPLATTER TIMES: If you're into violent, gross films, here is a fanzine for you. I have only seen one issue and I'm hooked. This fanzine, of course, looks at violent films with an objective view. About 12 pages, but the paper is big! Write: Donald Farmer, P.O. Box 2733, Cookeville, TN 38501. Subscriptions: \$6.00 a year. Printed quarterly. If you don't like P.O. boxes, then write Donald at 154 Big Spring Circle, Cookeville, TN 38501. A must see!

YEEEC! This is the funnies fanzine for it only covers bad horror films. Usually 40 pages long. However, in 1983, it has had some problems. It would be wise to drop a postcard to see what it is about. Write: John Schuermann, 1322 6650 Road, Montrose, CO 81401. This is the newsletter of THE CREEPING TERROR FAN CLUB.

FEAR OF DARKNESS: Magazine type format. Covers low-budget horror sleaze. However, they will be changing to a newspaper format so we will have to wait to see what that is like. Write a postcard to: Tim Mayer, P.O. Box 3194, Lodi, NJ 07664.

Well, these are the major horror film newsletters in the country right now. There are a few others I know of, like ZONTAR (\$3.00 to Brian Curran, 29 Darling St., Apt. 2, Roxbury, MA 02120) and MIDNIGHT MARQUEE, but I have not seen them. If you write to any of these fanzines for a sample copy, it is wise to send \$1 to cover postage and get a few extra samples. If you have any questions or if you need any information on these fanzines, drop me a note at: Robert Hale, 99 Glenview Ave., Greensburg, PA 15601 (drop a note also if you are into the POW/MIA movement, war movies, Bonnie Franklin/Val Bertinelli, or Sam Peckinpah films).

(ED: Naturally, since all I can vouch for are TRASH FIEND and TRASHOLA, whose editors are both LJ readers and therefore in contact with me, I'd like to put a 'caveat emptor' on all of the above—send at own risk!)

FREEZE A NUKE and starve a fervor. Quoth the hippie: "Livermore." No Nukes is not enough.

The KERMIT THE MARINE Show!

EPISODE 2: "Death Gets Stiffed" by Rodny Dioxin

Hi kids, welcome back. As you know, last week we met Kermit the Marine and his buddy Officer Friendly and discovered the possibilities therein. We also learned of the threat of the giant sewer rabbit. Coming up tonight we'll see meaningless violence, bad language, cheap and sleazy sex...all the things that make America the greatest country on the surface of the planet.

But first, a word from our sponsors—

Hello, I'm Orson Welles. History is, of course, very important. That is why the good people at KermitCo. have developed this new series of "Real Men Thru the Ages" Action Toys. And it is with the greatest of pleasures that I present to you set #1, the Macbeth: Regicide Playset. It's all here. All the characters plus a replica of Inverness Castle to stage the gory deeds in. Learn history by re-creating it. Send Duncan to an early grave as the blood spurts dramatically all over Macbeth and his wife. See Lady Macbeth topple from the castle and go splat on the parapets. Then stuff her back in and do it again. Or top it all off with the beheading of Macbeth, complete with realistic protruding arteries.

The Macbeth playset comes with lots of extra blood, all the figures, and a Macbeth comic book which includes ideas for when history gets dull, like "Macbeth vs. the Slime People" or "Mutant Macbeths from Mars". Castle sold separately.

So when you're looking for fun, fun, fun, look no further than Real Men Thru the Ages by KermitCo., where we will kill no king before his time. Coming soon: the Vlad the Impaler Fun Kit.

Now, back to our program—

(In a NYC sewer. Kermit the Marine, cradling a smoking bazooka, stands over a dead, giant sewer rabbit. He is wearing full Army jungle gear. Behind him, smoking a cigarette, is Officer Friendly, everyone's favorite defrocked cop. He is dressed in a red leather jumpsuit, black leather jacket and purple snakeskin boots. Sewer walls are caked in green slime.)

K the M: Another pinko bunny bites sludge. C'mon Friendly, let's cut. I've got this strange craving for lime jello.

OF: Super. There's this boss new bar on Bleeker. Got ferns to die. And the bartender gives great daquiri. I think tonight is flavor-of-your-choice jello wrestling night.

A brilliantly pointless digression on astronautic slime creatures was to have appeared here. But a miniature demon calling itself "Elayne" has just materialized from my typewriter saying that I must cut or risk that fate worse than death, breaking the verbosity barrier. Don't worry, she said. We can edit out the huge dead space. Who am I to argue? (Meanwhile, back in the sewer)

K the M: Not another bloody fern bar. I hate ferns!! Can't we go over to the piers and rough up some drag queens? Dammit, let's get out of this sewer.

(cut to KTM and OF on the street, staring at blank pavement)

K the M: Sh*t! Someone stole the car. I knew I shoulda parked the Ram Rod in a garage. But you said "why spend the money? there's a sale on those new Anastasio Somoza Memorial manacles. Sh*t sh*t sh*t."

OF: How do you do that?

K the M: What?

OF: Talk in asterisks.

K the M: Oh, f*ck off and die.

OF: Did you hear that? He told me to f*ck off and die. Me!! After all we've been through together. I remember when this show started back in the fifties and we had to film in a closet...

K the M: Hey, if I wanted the world to know I'd have had it tattooed on your face. I wanna bust some heads.

it is for just such occasions as this that the Federal Eel Anthologizing Rampage was set up. please note that FEAR is in no way related to GERMS (the General Extermination of Rabbits in Manhattan Sewers corps). to save the heads of passing nuns, orphans, members of parliament, trotsky-ite stevedores, guardian angels, hell's angels, wombats from hell, and grave robbers from outer space...where was I?...yes, to save any heads from being bashed in, we here at FEAR provide a toll-free number which rightwing types undergoing anxiety attacks can call. we then rush over in our lockheed starfighter (with full bar) and transport them to the underprivileged thirdworld nation of their choice. there they can napalm the population into a submissive respect for american firepower. for only a small extra fee, they can be parachuted into the country. once on the ground they can demonstrate yanqui sexual prowess to the native men, women, children and/or livestock. however, FEAR's services will not be needed tonight

OF: Oh, there's the car. We parked it on the other side of the street.

K the M: (in the process of threatening to nuke a passing executive when OF spots the car) Okay, I'll letcha go this time pinko. But remember, I know where ya live. And I know where your son goes to kindergarten.

(cut to KTM and OF in car headed downtown)

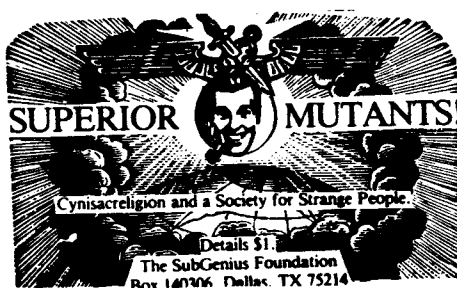
K the M: Did I ever tell you how I once strangled a man with his own spaghetti?

OF: You're just too macho.

K the M: It was in South Africa during the Boer War. I remember being confused because the Boers hate spaghetti...

More in a moment, but first this message.

Do you know me? Of course you do. I'm Generalissimo Al Haig and I'm here to tell you about the investment opportunity of a lifetime. For a limited time only you can get in on the ground floor of "Right-Wing Death Squad Resort Condominiums". That's correct. Act now and you can be the proud owner of one of these gorgeous units, most with running water. Some of the more top-flight residences even have in-



EVERYONE WANTS TO BE A WINNER in the game of life except the soldier he just wants to survive. Such an attitude could destroy all of us. Shoot a SASE to WAR - ENDING WIN LOSE Box 2138 Youngstown, Ohio 44504

door toilets. Exchange rates have never been better here in sunny El Salvador, where the woman are willing because their husbands have disappeared by the government. It's truly a propitious time to consider domiciling here in the garden spot of US-dominated Central America. This kind of deal won't last long. Someone is bound to catch on so I would advise engaging your person in the operational mode quite as post haste as is facilitous.

Experience the sun-drenched splendor, the lush foliage and the counter-revolutionary terror firsthand-wise. See US imperialism in action. Castro would love to get one of these, but we won't let him. Vigilance is our watchword. Vigilance and profits. And remember, we can't send you to El Salvador if you already live there.

To reserve your space, call toll free: 1-800-666-CASH. Or, for a more complete informationing, write to:

Generalissimo Alejandro Haig
c/o Armed Advice Industries
1200 Commie Terrorist Nuns Blvd.
Abuse-the-Peasants, El Salvador
and now, back to the show.

(KTM and OF get out of car, walk towards their apartment building, "the Nuclear Arms")

OF: ...of course we don't have to go there. How 'bout Studio 54? Or the Mudd? Maybe the Anvil?

K the M: Nah. What I wanna do is go over to Washington Square, find a TV queen, drag him back here, tie him to the ceiling and run a large plastic...

OF: Ah, the window of vulnerability game. I love it! Can I be Attila the Hun this time? I'm sick of being Genevieve, Abbess of Pain.

K the M: Let's cruise.

(fade to KTM and OF under the arch at Washington Square)

OF: What about that one?

K the M: Looks too much like Richard Simmons...

We interrupt this program to being you the following bulletin.

Good evening, this is Bif van der Biffe with exciting news. A small starcruiser has crash-landed at the White House. And the pilot, tentatively identified as Alix Bishof, Intergalactic Agent, is presently in negotiations with Ed Meese and several other high government officials. No word yet as to whether the President has been awakened from his afternoon "meditation-on-world-events".

You can see the flying saucer over my right shoulder. Of interest is that the ship is actually shaped somewhat like a jerusalem artichoke...wait, something's happening. The alien has come out into the rose garden and...yes, Meese is with her. Apparently a statement will be issued. The next voice you hear will be that of the alien.

"Good evening, my fellow Americans. Ed Meese here. With me, as you can see, is Alix Bishof: Intergalactic Agent. She has come here with startling news. After conferring with Cap, and Jim Watt, and Chuck Heston, I've decided that we've decided that Bishof's information is accurate. I'll let her finish. I've got to call Tip."

"Thank you, Advisor Meese. People of USA, boy are you lucky I got here in time. I'm sure most of you never suspected that an unearthly menace walked among you. But I have come all the way from the Vegan system to tell you that the man you know as Ronald Wilson Reagan is, in fact, a Neutroid Zombie from the Mindwaste Zones. Please, no applause. I'll just pop out now and shoot him. Good luck picking a new leader. I'd suggest Rich Butler from the Furs. So long."

"Gosh, are we embarrassed. Thanks for the help. Drop in any time. Well...I guess that's all for now. Anyon know Richie's phone number? Okay, this is Acting President Meese saying good night, god bless America, and don't forget to brush your teeth kids."

And now, some scenes from next week's episode.

(KTM and OF in a darkened room. KTM wears a horned helmet and fur loincloth. OF is badly bruised and wears a shredded nun's habit)

OF: I'm sorry but I have to leave you. First you make me play Genevieve again. Then you beat me silly. I just can't handle it anymore. Bye. (he walks out the door)

K the M: Piss on ice. I'd better call FEAR.

(cut to OF sitting on park bench. Next to him is distinguished man with grey hair and beard, wearing a white suit. OF is wearing magenta trousers and a hawaiian shirt. KTM runs up. He's in black flight suit with camouflage paint on his face, carrying a machete.)

K the M: Who the hell are you? (pointing machete at OF's companion)

(cut to OF and KTM seated in bar)

OF: I'll tell you. Why not? His name is Jerome and we've been having a grant time. Look, it's been lovely seeing you but I must run. I've got to meet J. We're going to do "Torch Song" again. Have fun in Angola or wherever.

K the M: That's Boputhatswana! A lot you care you bloody wimp!

(cut to KTM alone, in his apt., on the phone)

K the M: That's too damn bad. Yer gonna have to cancel the Starfighter; I can't make it this time. I don't care if they got 5000 pinko bunnies in Bop-bloody-thotswana. I got bigger things to do...I gotta kill St. Jerome. (he takes phone and throws it through window)

That's all for now, kids. Be sure to tune in next week for episode 3: Industrial Strength Hell. And stay tuned to Alternative Prime Time for tonight's movie, "The Slime Vole Who Underestimated Earth".

SONNET 13

by John R. Soldo
In the sofa of my love's arms
My thighs and I let my body rest.
There, with my head thrown back upon
Her breasts, pillowing the beat of blood
Streaming from her heart into my rocking
Brain and torso, and then locking
Around my ears, I felt the dud
Sorrow of tomorrow when gone
From me would be these lonely breasts
Where I was safe from the world's alarms.
On this couch of care my repose was here,
Softly swung away from those who betray
The ease man needs, such as the treats
You fed to me on your love seat.

WATERGATE REVISITED

by Keith Jones
Thousands of letters every day
It used to be on TV
the cop on the beat
the wire man who tapped telephones
the bag man who botched burglaries
He should have known better.

I keep hearing voices in the night,
So caught up within my fright.
Voices with no sources I can find,
I wonder if it's all in my mind.

Stuffing cotton in my ears,
Try to deny my inner fears.
There is no reason, is no rhyme,
They keep getting louder all the time.

Could it be hidden guilt
Causing my sanity to tilt?
Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide,
From the voices deep inside.

Becoming more and more frantic,
Closer and closer to panic.
All this happened when
I left the TV on again!

- Andy Kamm

Poetry!

robot sex

by John Levin
we walk back to my place
I take off my shades & hat
I start clearing off the bed
it's a fine blud & cloudy afternoon
I pull open the brown bag
& start removing the plastic
it's starting to yield to my touch
I enter with two fingers
& feel something round & stiff
I pull it out & take it
over to the turntable & put it on

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by Deborah Benedict
I ain't no Lizzie Borden
I ain't no Joan of Arc.
I'm just a dame
without a name
and I live here
in the dark.

MYSTERY

by Luke McGuff
The small town streetlight of your soul
Brightens the abandoned corner of my heart.
Curbless, no sidewalk,
Not even a garbage can.
Shine on, sodium vapor.
Shine on me.

A PORTRAIT

by Tony Renner
From the far wall
A portrait of Goethe
Faces me.
I stare him down.

GREEN LIKE A BANDAGE

by Lyn Lifshin
even a green
spread the
longer it rains
the deeper the
green becomes
leaves pressing
against the barn
pressing us close
in rooms thin as
papery combs in honey
I hear someone
clear his throat
green wind bangs
the doors around
green hides the
foxes eye this
green is not jealousy
the pine tree bends
into mud a green
to go without
clothes in with
your hair tangling
as the wind picks
up and a woman
unwraps 2 bullets
as gently as if
they were eggs or
nitroglycerin red
creeps into the edges
of the landscape
the beginning of a
glow fierce as the
cricket's wild
thrashing to swim
in the water as
he dies

FOG MADONNA

by Lyn Lifshin
eats your leaves
all your edges
blur in her

EARTHQUAKE MADONNA

by Lyn Lifshin
rattles yr shutters
Nothing in you
stays a slow
Erie Lackawanna



ONE OF THE FAMILY

by Millea Kenin
My computer's such a yenta.
I should never have gotten it that modem.
Now it's all the time calling up other computers,
urging them to have just one more byte.
And complaints!
Now it wants me to take it to the chiropractor.
It says it has a slipped disk drive.
But it really works as hard
as it says it does.
Computers, like mothers-in-law,
don't deserve their bad press.
Nobody needs to be afraid of them—
all in all,
they're just plain folks.

SNIFFIN' SEATS OFF BICYCLES

by Rama Lama
Every night those steel doors shut
And I hear the bolts lock tight
And even though I'm supposed to be
Rock hard I start to cry
You know they got me here in leavenworth
and buddy I ain't gettin' out
So listen up close, I'm gonna tell ya my friend
What the crime was all about:

Sniffin' the seats off bicycles
They gave me ten to life
It happened to be Sunday
So they piled on about 99 more big ones
And just because I told the judge
There hadn't oughta be a law
I'm gonna spend my life in solitaire
I'm gonna be singing to these walls

Well it was just a passin' notion
to go and smell those steam'in' seats
You know the day was hot
And they kindly brought to mind
My ma's grease-fried okie pie beets
The po-lice's car was on me
For I had a chance to bend my nose
They laid a shotgun to my neck
That's where my olfactory froze

I wuz just sniffin' the seats off bicycles
But they gave me ten to life
It happened to be Sunday
So they just piled on about 99 more big ones
And just because I told the judge
"Yer honor, I don't think there oughta be any
such of a law"
"Sssshhaadap you..."
I'm gonna spend my life in solitaire
I'm gonna be singing to these walls
These walls...

IS THIS A POEM OR A JOKE?

by Deborah Benedict
My Rival—
I don't want to say
that the woman has sexual problems—
but,
she douches with anti-freeze.

PULL UP YOUR SHIRT, LADY

by Maiden Jappan

By now you've all seen the after-effects
of the dread Movie Fashion disease
As if we hadn't learned our lessons
from Urbane Cowboy, or even from
Gone with the Windowshades
Now it's "in" to wear sweatshirts
ripped in the neck or off the shoulders,
as if they were falling off
provocatively, perhaps they think?
Tell me two things: number one,
was the fashion designer for Flashdance
male or female?; and number two,
as a wise observer once noted,
if fashion's so damn terrific,
why do they change it every two years?

VIDEO VAMP

by Deborah Benedict

Let me just crawl in the tube
and live with the Brady Bunch.
Let me just creep on in
and join Lucy and Viv for lunch.
I want to be a television set.
I want all the love I can get.
I want America breathing down my neck.

OH NO! THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG!

by Dana A. Snow

Oh no! They're playing our song! I'd like to meet its writer
I'd douse him in gasoline & then take out my lighter.
It played when we first made love on our ignored TV
It was playing on the Muzak when I was treated for VD.
& on the night we broke up, I still heard that tune
& now it has gone Platinum so it's on morning to noon!
I heard it when we broke up. It's made me a nervous wreck!
She said to me "Let's just be friends" then stuck me with the check.
I travelled this world over, kept sane, but don't know how.
Got back & turned on the radio—it's a golden oldie now.

(FOR ROLDO) by Keith Jones

We're still there
(talkin bout my ggeneration)
Though a calm is on us now.
We're watchin the kids we once were
and thinkin of the times that a'changed—
Is punk
a principle
Or principles
just punk?
With the Movement just quivers in our brain,
the fires just embers in the morning
We ask, to no one in particular
Is idealism dead?
Well, it's
back to basics now
with rock, rock, rock.

DEPRESSION

by Lyn Lifshin
something leaking
from you staining
whatever comes
near it a nuisance
more than anything
not that it couldn't
lead to something
worse. you camouflage
it with certain
take hot baths see
no one who you'd
have to let see

WHILE YOU WEREN'T WATCHING

by Jack Howard Lechner

In darkness once I held my nose
(As you would do if I were you)
I held my nose for ransom
And I held it to my heart
The reason that I chose my nose
(As you would see if you were me)
I picked him as my victim
Merely as a place to start

I soon commenced to shut my eyes
(As you would try if you were I)
I shut my eyes and locked them
And I threw away the key
My senses one by one I checked
(As you'd have done if we were one)
I checked them at the door
Before I reached divinity

My body from my soul was stripped
(As yours would be if I were thee)
An egoless ecadyst
I plummeted through space
I hurtled through the Cosmic All
(As you'd avow if I were thou)
I think I would have liked it,
But I didn't have a face.

MEN

by Deborah Benedict

They die first.
Remember that.
Don't go clawing
the dirt round their graves
trying to get them back.
You'll ruin your manicure.

THERE IS NO BADMINTON IN HEAVEN

by Tony Renner

They had a league once
But they had to disband it
Because all of the matches
Would degenerate into shouting matches
And the gambling was something to see.

Now everyone in heaven
Swims in a vat of Lipton's Tea
Being careful not to swim into the ice
So far it's worked out o.k.
No fights or squabbles, yet
And the betting has been minimal.

PARADISE

by Tony Renner

Tell Him "Hey" (for Mr. Granerford)
the children yell
as I pass by the window of
the tenement on my way to
paradise

BURN OUT MADONNA

by Lyn Lifshin
words are raw
numb as skin that's
been a landing
strip for nights of
indoor surfing
late indian summer

Song!

What to do when you get to Heaven:

Just act natural
Don't be scared
Jesus Christ
is the one with the beard.
- Deborah Benedict

THE PEN-EATER

by Millea Kenin

The pen-eater's natural habitat
is the handbag, or sometimes the desk top.
Though invisible and intangible,
it can sometimes be heard
making faint munching sounds.
One day last week
my pen-eater got loose in the office
and devoured a dozen pens, seven pencils
and a jar of typing correction fluid.
It may recover, but so far since then
all it does is hiccup occasionally
and suck all the ink out o f m y p

A FRIGGING WORK SONG

by Kerry Wendell Thornley
Write thee frigging reggae song
So we may sing it all night long.
Write thee frigging reggae song
Calypso Mama won't be long.
Write? Write!
Quite write!
Write? Right! (CHORUS)
Quite right!
Write thee frigging
Reggae song!
Puff, puff—on my cigar.
Puff, puff—on my cigar.
Scratch my brain with my guitar.
Write thee frigging reggae song.

Brothers singing, sisters yawn:
Write thee frigging reggae song.

Puff, puff—sit on my duff.
Puff, puff—smoke a good stuff.
Write thee frigging reggae song.

Day! Is a day! Is a day! Is a day-e-o!

Daylight come and me—

write thee frigging reggae song.

(CHORUS)

Everybody! Sing with me and write along.
Write thee frigging reggae song.

Election day I find thee booth
Grab thee ballot and search for truth.
Ask zombie captain how I should vote
Of thee Styx River ferry boat.
This is what he say to me
In words of great ferocity:
(CHORUS)

Sayz-U! (Letters)

Dear Elayne—

Thank for the latest IJ—sorry I haven't written sooner, things are quite hectic (as always)...Now then, your boys missed a couple of August dates—to wit:

- 4 - Lizzie Borden Axe Murders - 1892
- 5 - Marilyn Monroe - d. 1962 (sob)
- 12 - Henry Fonda - d. 1982
- 15 - Victory in Japan - 1945; Elvis Presley d. 1978
- 18 - Ringo Starr joins the Beatles - 1962
- 20 - First slaves arrive in Virginia - 1619
- 29 - Ingrid Bergman b. 1915 and d. 1982 (!);
- Last Beatles concert in U.S. (Candlestick Park) - 1966

Write 'em down on yer calendars.

As for September, here's a few for ya (lotsa deaths)—

- 2 - Marc Bolland - d. 1977
- 5 - Labor Day; Voyager I launched - 1977
- 7 - Keith Moon - d. 1978
- 8 - Rosh Hashana
- 11 - Beatles record first single ("Love Me Do") - 1962
- 14 - Grace Kelly - d. 1982
- 17 - Yom Kippur
- 19 - Gram Parsons - d. 1973
- 20 - Jim Croce - d. 1973
- 22 - Nathan Hale - d. 1776
- 23 - American Indian Day
- 24 - F. Scott Fitzgerald - b. ?
- 25 - John Bonham - d. 1980
- 30 - James Dean - d. 1955

VALENTINO
Garden Grove, CA

(In all fairness to John Levin and Jed Martinez, they did supply me w/ some of the same dates you mention above, Valentino, but as there are always so many, I tend to choose the ones that strike my fancy most. Yeah, Sept. is a big death month, as I recall from last year's calendar, when I noted the same thing to myself. But it's nice to see the American Indian get one whole day...)

Dear Elayne,

My tongue is, at the moment, sticking to the roof of my mouth, since I have just spent the better part of the afternoon licking stamps and envelopes in further pursuit of enlightenment. I solved the problem of what pubs to send away for by sending away for all of them, good solution, n'est-ce pas? Trouble is, I won't be able to talk for three or four days—no great loss.

I received the two IJ's you sent me with delight, read them with greedy abandon (when I ought to have been doing something else, which only served to add to my enjoyment), and am now prepared to render an opinion: more excellent work. Kudos to Ms. Ackner, for (what I have come to recognize is) her usual collection of droll and amusing conceits, to Jill Dearman, an enviably precocious child, Julie Logan (pant pant), Gunnar Larson, the Rev. Propagandhi, whoever she is (ED: Er, "she" is a "he", actually—aka Bob Black), and, well, heck, the whole wild and crazy bunch, especially you, for pulling it all together with such editorial aplomb...

MICHAEL CALVERT
11 Phillene Dr.
Norwalk, CT 06851

(..."she stuck in her thumb, and pulled out aplomb...")

Dear Elayne,

...And now for the Cheers & Jeers Department:

CHEERS...The nomination of Chuck E. Cheese as George Papoon's running mate. He appeals both to connoisseurs of cute (like me) and backers of bag-your-face. Where does he stand on issues like the space program?

(ED: Oh, Chuck definitely agrees with GGP that we all need more space.)

JEERS...Gunnar Larson's "The Sheep on the Shelf". It violates No. 2 of the 738 Rules for Young Writers to Live By. No preaching allowed.

CHEERS...Jed Martinez' review of "An Evening of Dementia". It's about time somebody talked about the only radio personality who gives me the courage to face Mondays.

CHEERS...The return of Steven Scharff to cartooning. Don't let that bighorned sheep go!

Every once in awhile, I have a tendency to mindfly to other planets. Mindflight is not astral travel in any sense of the word, merely an exercise in advanced imagination helped along by self-hypnosis. Vivid, organized daydreaming is all it is. Maybe I should write about it.

(ED: Please do! It sounds fascinating.)

I hear Anni dislikes Smurfs. How does she feel about the Care Bears?

With that thought in mind, I take my leave.

Stay demented,

GEORGE R. EDDY

1156 Panama Rd. SE

Carrollton, OH 44615

(The letter below was on the letterhead of the Polo Club of Chicago, located at 234 E. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60611.)

Dear Editor,

Candi Strecker's comments in the July IJ regarding male fashion can only have been meant to provoke...perhaps to test male sensitivity/vaninity...and were certainly not meant as a truthful observation on the clothing tastes of gays and straight males.

It is often true that some straights can't be bothered with shopping, or with the prices of the latest fab gear. But her statement that only gays wear stylish clothes only serves to reinforce the stereotype...beyond that, those Nikes aren't bad shoes...even if Candi says only straights wear them.

All I can say is Candi should take whatever male she has picked up in some sleazy singles meat market shopping with her...although, it hardly seems worth it, considering her typical relationship probably lasts...maybe twenty minutes, maybe more depending upon how much Richard's Irish Rose she and her monkey man have rudely flushed down

their throats...and if she did take him shopping and get him dressed to her specs, she'd probably never get him home, he probably realizing that either a) by then he was getting sober or b) that his new clothing made him feel less attracted to Candi than to the stockboy with the nice tie.

Seriously. Candi's own wardrobe hardly leaves one agasp with wonder, although she has an example of every kind of tacky accessory item that greedy manufacturers have pushed in cycles since 1947...I, for one, only very rarely ask to borrow any of Candi's clothing, and only then when it is only absolutely necessary.

Signed,

A Straight Male Animal

P.S. I second the nomination of Candi Strecker as fashion editor of INSIDE JOKE. I hope this clothes the whole matter. A.S.M.A.

Dear Elayne:

This letter may well come out sounding odd to those who are thoroughly familiar with my writing style. On the one hand, I am writing it at work (though the term "work" may be a misnomer considering the amount of spare time I have); on the other hand, it is being written with implements almost as primitive as stylus and box of clay, at least compared with my usual word processor; and on the third tentacle, I'm going to hand it to you in person and save myself the staggering cost and bother (not to mention the implicit betrayal of my anarchist ideals) of using the U.S. postal system.

The "self-parody" issue of IJ came off well, the writers dealing with the concept of a theme issue in what was perhaps a parody of normal IJ operations: some doing their best to be exaggerated, some trying hard but falling short, and some ignoring the wishes of the editor entirely. This leads to a slight problem for the critical reader intent upon awarding kudos (or raspberries, as the case may be). When settling on the best bit of writing, does one look for excellence in quality or in self-parody, or in some weighted average of the two? Being the wishy-washy sort, I shall elect to pick two "best" articles, and they may fight it out among themselves (with thesauri at twenty paces) if they are so inclined.

Without a doubt, the best bit of self-parody in the entire issue was Quent Wimple's "Kerry Thornley Notes". Sorry, Anni and Gerry (tied for runner-up), but the prince of paranoia has done it again. Those few paragraphs alone were enough to vindicate the whole idea of a self-parody issue. Oh, and a big "honorable mention" to the letter column. All that bickering and arguing was just a self-parody by your clique of contentious correspondents, right? I mean, your mail isn't really full of this stuff, is it? (ED: Shucks, you got me on this one...)

But as for writing, as opposed to parodizing, my nod goes to Roldo's The Bicycle Ride. It may, for all I know, have been self-parody, but with his writing it's tough to tell. This piece set my brain to flopping over and over within its bony cage, spewing stray neurons out of my ears. In other words, I liked it. (By the way, I think the correct answer is: D) He wrote it while skydiving somewhere over Left Flank, Missouri.)

Boy, that sure is one argumentative bunch of letter writers you've got there. Well, as "Bob" says, "Moral Majority means zero freedom for mutants", and I begin to suspect that many mutants mean the same. (This must be my letter for alliteration. Perhaps I'll apply for the 'Spiro Agnew of the Year' award. Hmm, nattering nabobs of negativism indeed.)

Now, not to add my own gripes to these pages or anything (after all, I'm a laid-back, easygoing type), but I think your readers should know that anything Marty Cantor says should be taken with a ton of salt. Marty is a nice guy, but a trifle opinionated (some might say pigheaded but I'm a laid-back, etc.) when it comes to fandom (or most anything else). Suffice it to say that both Marty and Lee have been around fandom for a while and both may be right about its social structure.

Well, I suspect my boss may come along like a cloud on the horizon any month now, so I think I'll end this here. Stay deranged,

MIKE GUNDERLOY
41 Lawrence St.
Medford, MA 02155

TO: The Readers of INSIDE JOKE

FROM: Sol-Sirius Charter Co., Tannecorn Branch/Science Division

Clone File: Master Copy - Quent Wimple #1

Good & kind Terrans,

We, at the Science Division of the S.S.C.C., wish to express our sincere apologies for the confusing and conflicting development of Terran mythology. It has come time to lay the truth out before you and to stop the petty bickering that lead to such catastrophies as the Holy Wars and Rev. Buck Naked's bounty on St. Samaj's beard.

After a meeting of the secret chiefs, the following data is now available for your assimilation:

1. The Great God Horus is no longer taking personal calls. No one can speak to a Horus, of course.
2. Eris was a hologram that accidentally, and prematurely, got imaged on a bowling score overhead projector.
3. Jehova I was a test-tube prototype of the now-famous Leviathan. Unfortunately, Jehova I got loose in the lab and after ingesting several flasks of L.S.D. and five tons of silicon chips (Sirius version of flaxscript), made its escape into our time tunnel. It is believed dead by now.

4. There are false prophets among you who claim divine inspiration. Listen to them; they are better adjusted than the members of the Reagan Administration.

5. Mind control experiments were banned in the year 3150. It was in this year that a certain Terran fell while hitch-hiking and dislodged his chip receiver. When discovered on a chiropractic X-ray, the jig was up for the cover operations team of the C.I.D. and the Terran hitch-hiker went on to write novels of political intrigue.

We sincerely hope this will bring a little light onto the subject and remove from us all blame of socio-political tampering.

Plainly,

QUENT, I
Chief Science Officer,
Sol-Sirius Charter Co.

Dear Elaine,

Thanks for the last two issues of IJ. I really liked the theme issue. Clever idea, that...To make a couple of comments:

To Brian Pearce - but, but, you said you'd love me forever, or until Tuesday, when the world was going to blow up, and now you are running off with that Anni Ackner! Men - they're all alike!

By the by, I'm sure Anni's too modest to mention it but she has an article on those Swedish meatballs—err, excuse me, ABBA, in the new issue of Ffanzeeen, available in record stores (be sure to check your switch-blades) all over downtown Manhattan. And she's gotten a promotion and is an exec now, too. And she wears business suits every day to work, and on weekends, too.

Watch for Ben Murphy, coming this fall on ABC in a series called The Lottery. I am still waiting for that phone call and dinner date, Ben.

All the best.

The Ever-Popular
CAROLYN LEE BOYD
306 E. 6th St., #13
New York, NY 10003

Dear Elaine,

[ED: About a paragraph's worth of personal stuff took up this space I'm so pretentiously taking up two lines to tell you...]

Oh, yes...the July issue. Well, it looks like the theme issue was a smashing success...People seem to grasp the self-parody idea rather well. I don't think I did quite as good with it as I could've; but I'm still trying to figure out what my column is all about, anyhow. I'm glad you so enjoyed the Whozits thing...I kinda figured you would...Any ideas for a next ~~\$\$\$~~ theme issue? (ED: Oh, heavens, no, we just got over this one, gimme a break...)

I'm hoping this was the last of the VV war and also the last of the great Anni-Ackner-takes-on-everybody thing. Not only do high explosives in letterboxes worry me—they can spoil my whole day! Why is it that, even though he has something valid to say, Ace Backwords insists on asserting his lack of intelligence? (Big chunks of...ecch!) Let's be nice, people. This is supposed to be fun, y'know.

Ahh, well...have some fun and do try to take a kitchen faucet to lunch.

Love,
BRIAN PEARCE
Box 366
Guilderland Center, NY 12085

(No, it's not really "here we go again" time, since we haven't really heard from this county yet, and it's only fair—after this, though, let's just work it out in private letters from now on, okay?)

An Open Letter to I.J. Readers—

Since this 'Backwords' bozo has chosen to insult me publically, publically I shall reply:

Ahem:

1) Threat? What threat? Only a typical 80's paranoid would assume my offer of a Free Dancing Lesson was a THREAT!

2) Actually, I was writing in defense of the OTHER I.J. writers. Considering the amount of compliments I get from talented people, I could give a Philadelphia Cream Fuck what you say.

3) "Alleged artwork"—Uh...I've seen your cartoons and I thought you drew with a pencil stuck in your left nostril 'til I realized you didn't have that much imagination.

There ya go—now I can keep this up indefinitely—I enjoy it. So, respond at your peril.

However, I wish it known that I have no intention or inclination to battle other than verbally. True, I'm a 300-lb. ex-biker whose mind, betimes, recalls the jolly crunch of bone, and the way street lamps beam off pools of guttered blood, but those days are past and I practise Ahimsa now.

Love & Peace—

ROLDO
1232 Downing St.
Winnipeg, Man. R3E 2R7
CANADA

P.S. Now, remember—I said 'practise' Ahimsa. I haven't got it perfect yet...

Dear Elaine,

This being the tail end of Labour Day (or, in actual fact, the day after Labour Day; however, to avoid confusion, at least to myself, a couple of weeks ago I formulated what I call Anni's Seventh Rule of Time Coordination—for a transcript of the six preceding rules, send \$1 to the usual address—which states: It isn't the next day until you've gone to sleep and woken up again), and having spent Labour Day in my usual pattern for fending off the encroachment of annoying summer holidays—locked in my room with the air-conditioner on, staring blindly at Home Box Office—I am, as I write this, on my second viewing of a little Canadian gem called TICKET TO HEAVEN today. As a matter of fact, it's a rather silly little movie—one of those concerning some poor soul brainwashed by a religious cult and then re-brainwashed by a professional cerebral dry-cleaner, so that you're never quite sure just whose side you're supposed to be on—but there's one colossal scene in which the dry-cleaner strides into the house in which the poor soul is being held prisoner by his kidnapping friends, and he just stands there, the dry cleaner does, and he's about eight feet tall, you see, so that he towers over everybody, all dressed in denim, he does this for a full 20 seconds, simply stands there being tall, and he just looks SENSATIONAL. Honestly, it's worth sitting through nearly two hours of drivel to see again. That's the thing about even bad movies—which this doesn't happen to be, by the way. It's only sort of morally ambiguous and, as I said, silly—you know. Even the worst of them sometimes have one absolutely devastating scene, something so gorgeous that you seriously believe it's been slipped in there behind the backs of the writers, the producer and the director, and you have to be alert for them. One of these days I'd like to see someone bankroll, perhaps as a film school project, a compilation of some of these Great 20 Second Interludes in Bad Movies, to be called, perhaps, Great 20 Second Interludes in Bad Movies. Ought to be quite a thing at the film festivals...

In any event, Home Box Office being what it is, and me having

watched it since 10 o'clock this morning—taking only two breaks, once to watch the Yankees lose to Milwaukee, and once to watch the President turn the death of 269 civilians into a plea for more MX missiles—I have, in a relatively short space of time, witnessed two showings of ON GOLDEN POND, two showings of a fairly pointless SIXTY MINUTES satire, one showing of something starring Laurence Olivier and Jackie Gleason (a matching that conjures up visions of future harmonious pairings, say, Richard Burton and Jerry Lewis), which seemed to take place entirely within the confines of several upper-class bars, the two showings of this, several VIDEO JUKEBOX numbers and dozens of promos for future films. Consequently, my head is a bit off-center and my judgement is perhaps a touch impaired. Luckily, I have the faithful Eileen back with me again, all fixed up (\$32 worth) and cleaned within an inch of her life, looking spiffier than she has in a long time, and able to get me through the long paragraphs ahead, a job much too delicate and exacting for the ponderous Alien, grateful as I am to it for the fill-in job it did during her absence. As far as I know, it is now reposing back upstairs in its case—the sister to whom I do not speak not having much interest in it, since her acquisition of a mysterious electric which she will allow no one to see and on which, judging from the sounds nightly emanating from her room, she is composing a manuscript roughly the length of the combined New and Old Testament, with the Koran and the Bhagavad-Gita thrown in for makeweight—taking a well-deserved rest.

But I digress, which of course is nothing out of the ordinary, but I have so very much to say about the last IJ that I did hope to keep it at as much of a minimum as possible this time, and will even forego my usual comments about the holiday in question and how it relates to me and so forth, even though I personally think that any country that treats its working class the way this one does for 364 days of the year ought not to believe it can buy us off with a parade and a couple of speeches on the 365th, however nice a day off from the very occupations that make us workers in the first place may be. I mean, far be it for me to say anything about that, especially as I have so much to say about the last IJ. I simply wouldn't dream of it. Not me.

Speaking of the last IJ (honestly, I do think I'm getting better at these segues, don't you?), do agree that the Ever-Popular Carolyn Lee Boyd deserves some sort of tip of the marginal for being the first—to the best of my knowledge, anyway—to come up with the idea of a theme issue. Given the way #23 worked out, it really does seem that she ought to receive some sort of kudo or another, perhaps a piece of the poetry page or a Whozits to call her very own? (ED: Great idea. See WHOZITS, E-P!) The least we could do, I think, would be to give her a good, rousing, IJ cheer. Come on now, troops—One, two, three—Yaay, Ever-Popular!

And Issue #23 WAS a splendid thing to behold, I must say. My absolute most favourite thing (and it isn't because of the most obvious fact, or because I am a fugitive from Doctor Who fandom, or even because I'm just fond of the regular strip in the first place) was Brian Pearce's Doctor Whozits masterwork, which managed to parody two separate things at once, without being offensive about either one of them, quite a dicey feat, all things considered. As it happens, once again the cartoons in general impressed me more than the prose in general—Roldo's STRAIGHT AGAIN was very nearly perfect (so much so that I had to look twice to make sure it wasn't Crumb himself getting into the self-parody swing), the PREPPIE PAGANS were wonderful (I know you once told me who was responsible for this little marvel, but I've forgotten, so do tell me again! It was *fan David Rosenbaum*), and the front cover art was exquisite (oh God, was that Roldo again? How do I always wind up praising him twice in the same paragraph? It doesn't seem fair somehow, but I don't see any way round it)—which is not at all to say that there was anything wrong with the prose. KERRY THORNLEY NOTES probably deserves the prize for sticking to the spirit of the theme while still maintaining a sense of its own style (it's also the first of Mr. Thornley's pieces that I've ever understood, and I hand out points for that, though Tom Sanders runs him a reasonably close second), but the thing I most enjoyed reading, self-parody completely aside, was Coop's RANDOM ARTICLE #1, although I'm forced to confess that, even after several dozen readings, even after making an utter fool of myself by repeating the damned thing out loud over and over during quiet moments in my office, even after Coop herself undertook to explain it to me, I still do not understand the joke at the end of the piece. It's dreadfully embarrassing, needless to say, and I am surprised that I can bring myself to admit it at all, but there it is, with no getting away from it. We're all deficient in something, I expect—this would appear to be mine.

I was pleased to see a whole, real, entire article by Mike Gunderloy, pleased to read Jill Dearman's ROUGH DRAFT, though I have violated every single one of her rules at one time or another, and sometimes all of them simultaneously (it's nice to run across another Irving fan as well. Did you know that they're planning a film of HOTEL NEW HAMPSHIRE with Jodie Foster as Franny and Nastassia Kinski as Suzie the Bear? What's left of the mind boggles), and though I must take issue with her recipe for egg creams (you make them with Fox's U-Bet or you don't make them at all. If you're going to do a job, do a job), and pleased that all those nice people (in the letters column and the questionnaire) were pleased with me, but, naturally, there was a mild negative side to Issue #23—well, there would be, wouldn't there? How else would you know I had written this letter? I'm afraid, for instance, that I'm back to missing the point of GALEN THE SAINTLY entirely—George, sweetie, self-parody involves the ability to laugh at oneself, an ability you would do well, I think, to cultivate. Now if I was going to tease your mouse-angel, I would have dressed him in a black leather jacket and given him a motorcycle and...well, never mind. That's parody, not self-parody, and quite a different thing altogether. I also wonder if Clay Geerdes and I saw the same movie. It doesn't really make any difference—he's still, overall, my favourite IJ contributor, and I don't have to agree with him all the time for him to remain so—but I thought RETURN OF THE JEDI was lovely. I don't know if this has anything to do with the fact that I own an Ewok glass or not, but I don't actually care. I got two hours (more or less) of pure, mindless en-

joyment out of the thing and sometimes that's all I ask of a film. It was nice to see Jumpin' Jack Flash's name invoked once more, however—are we the last two people in America who remember him?

But enough picking at nits. I'm taking a vacation from starting nasty little wars for one issue, at least—I do hope we've heard the last of the Ace Backwards brouhaha. Even I'm beginning to find it tedious. Don't suppose I'll give it up forever, or even for very long—it isn't in my nature—but just for this once I find it peaceful to think that my pen contains more ink than poison. Besides, the Tall Dry-Cleaner has come and gone, and I am just not up to THE LAST AMERICAN VIRGIN right now, so I am going to bed. Do be pleased.

Video killed the radio star,
ANNI ACKNER
10 Hillside Ave., #8
Englewood, NJ 07631

Dear Elayne,

As you may know, I was named Pootmaster General by Resident Rappoon in nineteen seventy sixty seven six it was, nineteen seventy seven I think and as such I've had a few opportunities to observe a few things I'd like to mention. But before I do I'd really like to say something about some things I've been seeing in IJ lately. First of all, I have noticed a couple of references to one Robert Rabbit, and I'd like to clarify the fact that there is no such person: that is a fictional character of mine, but he's not one that I can exactly contain in any particular literary form because he keeps escaping between the words. But he is mine, he is not real, and besides I have him locked in a cage right here on the farm, and let it be clearly understood that I am NOT RESPONSIBLE for anything he might say or do, nor are you, right? As for the "Willard" character, well, let's put that to rest, OK? In some obscure piece of writing now probably all but lost in the dust of time and lucky if not entirely swept away, he must have referred to himself as "Robt. Rabbt." which some mischievous scribe with devils in his head must have mistranslated as "Robert Rat" probably over the phone. Now you must be careful of these sorts of messages Elayne, for as you must know, the meticulous accountability of someone in your position could be easily satirized...or even self-satirized!

And let me add, by the way, that Robert Rabbit has never been called "Bob" (I don't mean "Bob", I mean just plain "Bob": "Bob" means nothing, it could be anyone's name: I know at least 2 people called "Bob", one of whom is the most fervent no-nuker you'll ever want to meet and the other of whom is a reactor operator, and yet they seem to have a lot more in common than just their names. Well, I don't know really, they've never met each other, but you can bet they'll both be in back of Pappoon this years. Which brings us to the point at hand.)

You know, I want to add something to the party platform concerning the Post Office (which often has at least a loading platform of its own). You know, I've inspected quite a few post offices of all manner of descriptions from the inside out, and I have noticed that whatever their differences, they all have one fault in common: they have no really professional word for "mail". It's always so embarrassing to hear someone say, "Hey where the fuck's all this mail comin from?" Up here in the wine country bottlers don't call bottles "bottles", they call them "glass". So here we have this business which is one of the few legitimate businesses our government has, and the poor workers are stuck with talking about the bleeding "mail" as if it don't take no more imagination than that to work in one! Oh sure, first class is called "hot", third class is "garbage" etc., parcels are called "p". But come on gang, it's just not right for this popularly intimate agency of the U.S. Govt. to call something by its own name, the same name everyone else uses for it! It is as if it were accorded no more elevation than that.

And while we're at it, I'd like to add a few more classes of mail. You know first class mail gets forwarded free, and second class you have to pay for and third class gets thrown away if you try to forward it (and special fourth class the person who sent it usually pays to get it back). Well, 5th class is where you work as much of it as you can in a day, then throw the rest of it away, 6th class is thrown away as soon as it hits the P.O., and 7th class is thrown away by the customer. And a special class, zero class, should be shuffled in there to accommodate employees' paychecks.

Well, y'know, that's really about all I can say right now that I guess really ought to be printed, or that I guess really ought to be printed. For now anyway. Well, see ya later (Haw! Haw! Haw!).

RED WOOF, Pootmaster General
Poons Farm, California

(The following was originally written as an addendum to a column found herein, but actually serves more appropriately inserted here.)

I'd like to answer Marty Cantor's letter in the last IJ. Marty indicated disagreement with what he perceived to be my last column's message. Well, Marty, we, as always, fail to communicate. Far from intending to state that all of fandom wishes to become pros, I was merely trying to delineate the social pecking order within fandom. Although you, personally, may view pros as just folks (I do, too. Some pretty damn irritating folks, but still just folks), by and large most of fandom does not, and my column was a general one for the uninitiated. At least it's nice to see we still get along just like we did in the old days, eh? Some things never change...

LEE PELTON
Box 3145, Traffic Sta.
Minneapolis, MN 55403

ME, HEH, HEH! I fixed my herpes virus, all right. I died and had myself cremated! Heh, heh, heh.

LEFT BEHIND? As usual. Isn't a demonstration just a video game? The Spectacle doesn't sit well with us. Sitcommunists.

"Why not whip the teacher when the student misbehaves?" (Diogenes) 55 Sutter #487, S.F. 94104.

The Firesign Theatre & The Goons (Or Something Like It)

by Phil Proctor

(The following has been reprinted with permission from Phil Proctor.)

The Firesign Theatre, so named because coincidentally the four members (Phil Austin, Peter Bergman, David Ossman and Phil Proctor) were all born under the sign of FIRE—or under fire, as the case may be—had another trait in common when they first got together around that omnipresent microphone back in 1965 at Pacifica's KPFK radio. We—I refuse to continue to refer to "us" as "them"—were all dyed-in-the-wool blood-of-the-lamb, gonzo whacko GOON fans! And just like the complex comedy we created for our countrymen (and co-creatures), our cross relationships with the irrepressible goon-things were equally convoluted—like this sentence.

I hereby sentence YOU to continue reading!!

Where was I? Where am I? How do I make my voice DO that? Anyway, Peter Bergman, whose call-in talk show RADIO FREE OZ was the meeting place and funny forum for the group, had (gasp!) met and "worked" with the grate SPIKE MILLIGAN, O.D., back in the Fall of 1964 (and what a fall was that, oh gentle readers...) when Pete was in London writing for a BBC TV show called, "Not So Much A Program, More A Way Of Life."

While there, he saw, through the fog, dimly, I'm sure, a play called Oblomov, based on the celebrated ("Hoorah!") Russian ("BOO!!") novel of the same name (well, kind of. In Russian they spell it: "Oblomov" and pronounce it, "O-BAD-MOB"). And the play starred, of all people, etc., SPIKE the M. Are you following me so far? Good. Move to the head of the page, and start over.

According to Bergman, Spike was "gooning" the show so savagely that the author of the adaptation withdrew his athletic support in the production, and Milligan promptly opened his own version of the show, called Son Of Oblomov, which proceeded to enjoy a long run for its money in a little theatre somewhere in the city.

Peter, who at this point, mind you, knew NOTHING of the Goons(!), ran backstage to meet Milligan; and the two loonies became fast friends, vowing to write an article together for Queen Magazine. So, they settled in for a week of work at Spike's offices at No. 9, Orm Court, had an absolute ball and came up with a nothing! So ended a great partnership. And so began some great remembrances...

One afternoon, Peter recalls fondly, while strolling with the great goon himself, they chanced to pass a funeral parlor. Spike suddenly strode through the door, clambered up onto the counter, crossed his arms, and assuming the aspect of a "customer", loudly cried out, "Shop!" The proprietor of the shop promptly appeared and apparently recognized his celebrated "stiff".

On another occasion, while dining together, Milligan ordered a bottle of wine and after having it decanted, suddenly yelled out, "Waiter, come back! There's no ship in this bottle!"

Peter also tells me that Spike had developed a unique manner of communicating with his children. They believed that Leprechauns inhabited their back garden, so Spike told them to write notes to the wee little things and leave them on flowers and such for them to read. He would then scour the garden by night, gather up the writings and prepare answers left as teeny-weeny little notes in itty-bitty tiny envelopes with itty bitty stamps. Can you imagine what an influence those leprechauns must have had on the kids?

While all this was going on, Dave Ossman was in LA playing a weekly series of GOON SHOW transcriptions on KPFK. There he befriended Phil Austin and in fact introduced him to the Goons as well. Phil, meet Neddy...I, on the other hand—where is it!? Oh, there it is, on the end of my wrist. I had caught Goon-mania in GB in 1956, when I spent a summer with an English schoolmate and his family just outside of London and became infected with great respect for British comedy and eccentricities.

Peter and I had met later at Yale University, working together in the Dramat; but it wasn't til many years after that, when I first came to the Coast with a musical comedy called The Amorous Flea that our paths crossed again. I had heard about this guy who called himself "the Wizard" and hosted this endless counter culture talk show called Radio Free Oz, but I didn't connect it to Bergman until one afternoon I sat on a picture of his face in the Free Press. This led to several appearances on his show, primarily in outlandish put-ons, which ultimately concluded in an evening's improv called the Oz Film Festival starring the as then still unnamed "Firesign Theatre"! In fact, that routine became the inspiration for our first album, "Waiting for the Electrician or Someone Like Him," on Columbia.

Our intention on disc has always been to create radio-like experiences in the state-of-the-art studios of our age, multi-layered and surreal. And much of our early experimentation in this genre was perpetuated in a series of live half-hour radio shows, performed before an audience and almost shamelessly patterned after the Goon Shows—at least in spirit. In 1967 and 68, we produced the following for Radio Free Oz, live at the Magic Mushroom, Sunday nights in the valley: Exorcism in Your Daily Life, Last Tunnel to Fresno, Twenty Years Behind the Whale, The Giant Rat of Sumatra, The Sword and the Stoned, Sesame Much, The Armenian's Paw, Title It Like It Is, Freak for a Week, A Life in the Day, and Nick Danger, Third Eye.

Those readers familiar with our body of work (naughty things!) will recognize various catch phrases that represent a sincere homage to the United Goondom: "She's no fun, she fell right over," "How does he make his voice do that?", etc. We also share a strong social sense (What did happen to that crispy bacon they had before the war?), and their inventive use of sound effects and dramatic transitions, and the use of live music throughout for comic effect.

(In this paragraph, Phil described what the members of the group were doing at the time of his writing of the article. As we do that anyway, and this stuff is a bit outdated now, I left this one out.)

Til then, this is Horn Horn of Horn Horn Horn Horn, saying "Keep that finger in your ear and keep listening!" Cheerio!

Philip Proctor, March Forward, 1982



IT'S GONE TO MY ATTENTION THAT SOME OF YOU
DON'T REALIZE HOW THE RUBICS MEDIA-FED FEAR
OF DRUG-GRAZED DOERS CAN OPEN WORK TO
YOUR ADVANTAGE... SO HERE'S A HANDY HINT
TO USE:



YOU ARRIVE EARLY
GET YOURSELF A
GOOD SEAT. THIS
IS GONNA BE GREAT.

[illegible]

NO SEE, MY DEAR, A DIRECTOR USES ALL THE ELEMENTS OF HIS...WHICH SHALL I SAY IT FIRST TO VISUALLY TALK ABOUT GREEKS AND CRISIS...BUT NEVER FEAR, I'LL EXPLAIN THEM ALL DURING THE FILM!

WANDA: I WANNA CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM!

BOBBY: I WANNA MELT YOU!

WANDA: BOBBY, I DON'T WANT TO MELT!

BOBBY: I WANNA SIT NEXT TO YOU! I'M MELTING HERE!

"SO, BY SARKIN' TIME, YOU GOT A TOBACCO-FRANCHISE ON YOUR RIGHT, A GUN-FRIEND-THAT'S SET ON YOUR LEFT, & THE THUNDER OF A HOWLING BLOOD, (WHO THINKS THIS IS A MOVIE ABOUT A CUTE ITALIAN GHOUSE) IN FRONT..."

HAAAAHAAA SHIT?
THIS ACID'S REALLY TWISTIN'
MY HEAD! HERE I BEAK DURING
THE RACE! LIKE THE
CARTOON!

THE

Yes, a never-ending, never-again 32 pages!
But was it worth the wait? Let's ask
Contestant #1...and your name?

BOTTOM SECRET