MILLENIUM

A JOURNAL FOR TOMORROWLAND

FICTION • ARTICLES • REVIEWS
ART • CARTOONS • AND MORE

m

STORIES FROM THE WPA FEDERAL WRITER'S PROJECT 1936 - 1940

DUCK SOUP PRODUCTIONS

ISSUE 3.0 • FALL NINETEEN NINETY EIGHT

work

as if
you lived
in the early days
of

a better nation.

— Alasdair Gray

Life never waits. You are no more likely to die at the age of eighty than you are at the age of twenty. We are all five minutes away from death. So what are you going to do to make your life count for something?

m fiction

truth

CLICK on the content that interests you to go there.

NECROLOGIE

A world without BUFFALO BOB SMITH and SHARI LEWIS hardly bears thinking about.

FILM- FLAM

Fields and GODSPELL available again at last; Zorro suffers hero abuse; computer effects sink in a big way.

SLINGS & ARROWS

Letters, Opinions and Grouchy Grousings from the elusive Mr. Richard Ainley.

As always, MILLENNIUM is absolutely FREE. We encourage you to make as many copies as you like, and to distribute them as widely as possible. Please do not alter the contents in any way, or distribute in an incomplete form.

FROM THE EDITORS

MRS. PROTHEROE

Fiction by BOOTH TARKINGTON.

FEDERAL WRITER'S PROJECT

Fiction and nonfiction, legendry and lore from Roosevelt's Work Projects Administration.

THE BOX

Reconstructing England's Freemason Time Lord

PAGES

Michael Palin, Nuala O'Faolain, The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales, Applewood Books and more...

COMICS

part two of KNIGHT'S GAMBIT starring Quirk

email
DUCK SOUP PRODUCTIONS:
thornsjo@uninets.net
VISIT OUR WEBSITE at:
http://www.ctel.net/~thornsjo

MILLENNIUM Volume 3, number 1, Fall 1998 issue.

from the editors

To some extent, I'm still playing with toys. When I was in sixth grade, the biggest thing in home technology was a personal cassette recorder. I spent hours making up audio dramas (usually really bad emulations of ***Dark Shadows***) and playing them back to myself. I drew hand-made comic books and left them lying around the house for people to find. In my early teens a favorite cousin and I produced monster magazines and mailed them to each other. By then, the electric typewriter was about as good a tool as we had: huge heavy things that whirred and clacked and needed new ribbons every other week.

If I could have had, then, this computer sitting on my desk, my O my what I could have done. Perhaps I wouldn't have done anything differently — but it all would have looked and sounded better.

Anyhow, here I am, middle-aged, still banging this stuff out and basically leaving it lying around the house for people to find. Only now the "house" is the internet, and it isn't only my immediate family who could stumble across it, but anyone at all, anyone in the world with a computer and an internet connection. The odds of anyone actually coming to my website and finding this material, much less downloading and reading it, remain small — it's very likely that my "audience" has not grown one bit from my childhood days, when it consisted of my parents, my sister, a couple of friends and a cat. But the possibility is there. And, I suppose, that has to count for something.

Now as then, I'm just doing the best I can, trying to make it interesting for myself and others, basically pretending to be a professional person.

Only now, the toys are so much better...

look ahead into the past

Mrs. Protheroe

Booth Tarkington

When Alonzo Rawson took his seat as the Senator from Stackpole in the upper branch of the General Assembly of the State, an expression of pleasure and of greatness appeared to be permanently imprinted upon his countenance. He felt that if he had not quite arrived at all which he meant to make his own, at least he had emerged upon the arena where he was to win it, and he looked about him for a few other strong spirits with whom to construct a focus of power which should control the Senate. The young man had not long to look, for within a

week after the beginning of the session these others showed themselves to his view, rising above the general level of mediocrity and timidity, party leaders and chiefs of factions, men who were on their feet continually, speaking half a dozen times a day, freely and loudly. To these, and that house at large, he felt it necessary to introduce himself by a speech which must prove him one of the elect, and he awaited impatiently an opening.

Alonzo had no timidity himself. He was not one of those who first try their voices on motions to adjourn, written in form and handed out to novices by presiding officers and leaders. He was too consious of his own gifts, and he had been "accustomed to speaking" ever since his days in the Stackpole City Seminary. He was under the impression, also, that his appearance alone would command attention from his colleagues and the gallery. He was tall; his hair was long, with a rich waviness, rippling over both brow and collar, and he had, by years of endeavor, succeeded in molding his features to present an aspect of stern and thoughtful majesty whenever he "spoke."

The opportunity to show his fellows that new greatness was among them was delayed not overlong, and Senator Rawson arose, long and bony in his best clothes, to address the Senate with a huge voice in denunciation of the "Sunday Baseball Bill," then upon second reading. The classical references, which, as a born orator, he felt it necessary to introduce, were received with acclamations which the gavel of the Lieutenant-Governor had no power to still.

"What led to the De-cline and Fall of the Roman Empire?" he exclaimed. "I await an answer from the advocates of this de-generate measure! I demand an answer from them! Let me hear from them on that subject! Why don't they speak up? They can't give one. Not because they ain't familiar with history — no, sir! That's not the reason! It's because they daren't, because their answer would have to go on record against 'em! Don't any of you try to raise it against me that I ain't speaking to the point, for I tell you that when you encourage

Sunday Baseball, or any kind of Sabbath-breakin' on Sunday you're tryin' to start the State on the downward path that beset Rome! I'll tell you what ruined it. The Roman Empire started out to be the greatest nation on earth, and they had a good start, too, just like the United States has got to-day. Then what happened to 'em? Why, them old ancient fellers got more interested in athletic games and gladiatorial combats and racing and all kinds of outdoor sports, and bettin' on 'em, than they were in oratory, or literature, or charitable institutions and good works of all kinds. At first they were moderate and the country was prosperous. But six days in the week wouldn't content 'em, and they went at it all the time, so that at last they gave up the seventh day to their sports, the way this bill wants us to do, and from that time on the result was de-generacy and de-gradation! You better remember that lesson, my friends, and don't try to sink this State to the level of Rome!"

When Alonzo.Rawson wiped his dampened brow, and dropped into his chair, he was satisfied to the core of his heart with the effect of his maiden effort. There was not one eye in the place that was not fixed upon him and shining with surprise and delight, while the kindly Lieutenant-Governor, his face very red, rapped for order. The young Senator across the aisle leaned over and shook Alonzo's hand excitedly.

"That was beautiful, Senator Rawson!" he whispered. "I'm for the bill, but I can respect a masterly opponent."

"I thank you, Senator Truslow," Alonzo returned graciously. "I am glad to have your good opinion, Senator."

"You have it, Senator," said Truslow enthusiastically. "I hope you intend to speak often."

"I do, Senator. I intend to make myself heard," the other answered gravely, "upon all questions of moment."

"You will fill a great place among us, Senator!"

Then Alonzo Rawson wondered if he had not underestimated his neighbor across the aisle; he had formed an opinion of Truslow as

one of small account and no power, for he had observed that, although this was Truslow's second term, he had not once demanded recognition nor attempted to take part in a debate. Instead, he seemed to spend most of his time frittering over some desk work, though now and then he walked up and down the aisles talking in a low voice to various Senators. How such a man could have been elected at all, Alonzo failed to understand. Also, Truslow was physically inconsequent, in his colleague's estimation — "a little, insignificant, dudish kind of a man," he had thought; one whom he would have darkly suspected of cigarettes had he not been dumfounded to behold Truslow smoking an old black pipe in tbe lobby. The Senator from Stackpole had looked over the other's clothes with a disapproval that amounted to bitterness. Truslow's attire reminded him of pictures in New York magazines, or the dress of boys newly home from college, he didn't know which, but he did know that it was contemptible. Consequently, after receiving the young man's congratulations, Alonzo was conscious of the keenest surprise at his own feeling that there might be something in him after all.

He decided to look him over again, more carefully to take the measure of one who had shown himself so frankly an admirer. Waiting, therefore, a few moments until he felt sure that Truslow's gaze had ceased to rest upon himself, he turned to bend a surreptitious but piercing scrutiny upon his neighbor. His glance, however, sweeping across Truslow's shoulder toward the face, suddenly encountered another pair of eyes beyond, so intently fixed upon himself that he started. The clash was like two searchlights meeting — and the glorious brown eyes that shot into Alonzo's were not the eyes of Truslow.

Truslow's desk was upon the outer aisle, and along the wall were placed comfortable leather chairs and settees, originally intended for the use of members of the upper house, but nearly always occupied by their wives and daughters, or "lady-lobbyists," or other women spectators.

Leaning back with extraordinary grace, in the chair nearest Truslow, sat the handsomest woman Alonzo had ever seen in his life. Her long coat of soft gray fur was unrecognizable to him in connection with any familiar breed of squirrel; her broad flat hat of the same fur was wound with a gray veil, underneath which her heavy brown hair seemed to exhale a mysterious glow, and never, not even in a lithograph, had he seen features so regular or a skin so clear! And to look into her eyes seemed to Alonzo like diving deep into clear water and turning to stare up at the light.

His own eyes fell first. In the breathless awkwardness that beset him they seemed to stumble shamefully down to his desk, like a country boy getting back to his seat after a thrashing on the teacher's platform. For the lady's gaze, profoundly liquid as it was, had not been friendly.

Alonzo Rawson had neither the habit of petty analysis, nor the inclination toward it; yet there arose within him a wonder at his own emotion, at its strangeness and the violent reaction of it. A moment ago his soul had been steeped in satisfaction over the figure he had cut with his speech and the extreme enthusiasm which had been accorded it — an extraordinarily pleasant feeling: suddenly this was gone, and in its place he found himself almost choking with a dazed sense of having been scathed, and at the same time understood in a way in which he did not understand himself. And yet — he and this most unusual lady had been so mutually conscious of each other in their mysterious interchange that he felt almost acquainted with her. Why, then, should his head be hot with resentment? Nobody had said anything to him!

He seized upon the fattest of the expensive books supplied to him by the State, opened it with emphasis and began not to read it, with abysmal abstraction, tinglingly alert to the circumstance that Truslow was holding a low-toned but lively conversation with the unknown. Her laugh came to him, at once musical, quiet, and of a quality which irritated him into saying bitterly to himself that he

guessed there was just as much refinement in Stackpole as there was in the Capital City, and just as many old families! The clerk calling his vote upon the "Baseball Bill" at that moment, he roared "No!" in a tone which was profane. It seemed to him that he was avenging himself upon somebody for something and it gave him a great deal of satisfaction.

He returned immediately to his imitation of Archimedes, only relaxing the intensity of his attention to the text (which blurred into jargon before his fixed gaze) when he heard that light laugh again. He pursed his lips, looked up at the ceiling as if slightly puzzled by some profound question beyond the reach of womankind; solved it almost immediately, and, setting his hand to pen and paper, wrote the capital letter "O" several hundred times on note paper furnished by the State. So oblivious was he, apparently, to everything but the question of statecraft which occupied him that he did not even look up when the morning's session was adjourned and the law-makers began to pass noisily out, until Truslow stretched an arm across the aisle and touched him upon the shoulder.

"In a moment, Senator!" answered Alonzo in his deepest chest tones. He made it a very short moment, in deed, for he had a wild, breath-taking suspicion of what was coming.

"I want you to meet Mrs. Protheroe, Senator," said Truslow, rising, as Rawson, after folding his writings with infinite care, placed them in his breast pocket.

"I am pleased to make your acquaintance, ma'am," Alonzo said in a loud, firm voice, as he got to his feet, though the place grew vague about him when the lady stretched a charming, slender, gloved hand to him across Truslow's desk. He gave it several solernn shakes.

"We shouldn't have disturbed you, perhaps?" she asked, smiling radiantly upon him. "You were at some important work, I'm afraid."

He met her eyes again, and their beauty and the thoughtful kindliness of them fairly took his breath. "I am the chairman, ma'am," he replied, swallowing, "of the committee on

drains and dikes."

"I knew it was something of great moment," she said gravely, "but I was anxious to tell you that I was interested in your speech."

A few minotes later, without knowing how he bad got his hat and coat from the cloakroom, Alonzo Rawson found himself walking slowly through the marble vistas of the Statehouse to the great outer doors with the lady and Truslow. They were talking inconsequently of the weather, and of various legislators, but Alonzo did not know it. He vaguely formed replies to her questions, and he hardly realized what the questions were; he was too stirringly conscious of the rich quiet of her voice and of the caress of the gray fur of her cloak when the back of his hand touched it — rather accidentally — now and then, as they moved on together.

It was a cold, quick air to which they emerged, and Alonzo, daring to look at her, found that she had pulled the veil down over her face, the color of which, in the keen wind, was like that of June roses seen through morning mists. At the curb a long, low, rakish black automobile was in waiting, the driver a mere indistinguishable cylinder of fur.

Truslow, opening the little door of the tonneau, offered his hand to the lady. "Come over to the club, Senator, and lunch with me," he said. "Mrs. Protheroe won't mind dropping us there on her way."

That was an eerie ride for Alonzo, whose feet were falling upon strange places. His pulses jumped and his eyes swam with the tears of unlawful speed, but his big ungloved hand tingled not with the cold so much as with the touch of that divine gray fur upon his little finger.

"You intend to make many speeches, Mr. Truslow tells me," he heard the rich voice saying.

"Yes ma'am," he summoned himself to answer. "I expect I will. Yes, ma'am." He paused, and then repeated, "Yes, ma'am."

She looked at him for a moment. "But you will do some work, too, won't you?" she asked slowly.

Her intention in this passed by Alonzo at the time. “Yes, ma’am,” he answered. “The committee work interests me greatly, especially drains and dikes.”

“I have heard,” she said, as if searching his opinion, “that almost as much is accomplished in the committee-rooms as on the floor? There — and in the lobby and in the hotels and clubs?”

“I don’t have much to do with that!” he returned quickly. “I guess none of them lobbyists will get much out of me! I even sent back all their railroad tickets. They needn’t come near me!”

After a pause which she may have filled with unexpressed admiration, she ventured, almost timidly: “Do you remember that it was said that Napoleon once attributed the secret of his power over other men to one quality?”

“I am an admirer of Napoleon,” returned the Senator from Stackpole. “I admire all great men.”

“He said that he held men by his reserve.”

“It can be done,” observed Alonzo, and stopped, feeling that it was more reserved to add nothing to the sentence.

“But I suppose that such a policy,” she smiled upon him inquiringly, “wouldn’t have helped him much with women?”

“No,” he agreed immediately. “My opinion is that a man ought to tell a good woman everything. What is more sacred than —”

The car, turning a corner much too quickly, performed a gymnastic squirm about an unexpected streetcar and the speech ended in a gasp, as Alonzo, not of his own volition, half rose and pressed his cheek closely against hers. Instantaneous as it was, his heart leaped violently, but not with fear. Could all the things of his life that had seemed beautiful have been compressed into one instant it would not have brought him even the suggestion of the wild shock of joy of that one, wherein he knew the glamourous perfume of Mrs. Protheroe’s brown hair and felt her cold cheek firm against his, with only the gray veil between.

“I’m afraid this driver of mine will kill me some day,” she said, laughing and composedly

straightening her hat. “Do you care for big machines?”

“Yes, ma’am,” he answered huskily. “I haven’t been in many.”

“Then I’ll take you again,” said Mrs. Protheroe. “If you like I’ll come down to the State-house and take you out for a run in the country.”

“When?” said the lost young man, staring at her with his mouth open. “When?”

“Saturday afternoon if you like. I’ll be there at two.”

They were in front of the club and Truslow had already jumped out. Mrs. Protheroe gave him her hand and they exchanged a glance significant of something more than a friendly good-by. Indeed, one might have hazarded that there was something almost businesslike about it. The confused Senator from Stackpole, climbing out reluctantly, observed it not, nor could he have understood, even if he had seen, that delicate signal which passed betweenhis two companions.

When he was upon the ground, Mrs. Protheroe extended her hand without speaking, but her lips formed the word “Saturday.” Then she was carried away quickly, while Alonzo, his heart hammering, stood looking after her, born into a strange world, the touch of the gray fur upon his little finger, the odor of her hair faintly about him, one side of his face red, the other pale.

“To-day is Wednesday,” he said, half aloud.

“Come on, Senator.” Truslow took his arm and turned him toward the club doors.

The other looked upon his new friend vaguely. “Why! I forgot to thank her for the ride,” he said.

“You’ll have other chances, Senator,” Truslow assured him. “Mrs. Protheroe has a hobby for studying politics and she expects to come down often. She has plenty of time — she’s a widow, you know.”

“I hope you didn’t think,” exclaimed Alonzo indignantly, “that I thought shewas a married woman!”

After lunch they walked back to the State-house together, Truslow regarding his thought-

ful companion with sidelong whimsicalness. Mrs. Protheroe's question, suggestive of a difference between work and speechmaking, had recurred to Alonzo, and he had determined to make himself felt, off the floor as well as upon it. He set to this with a fine energy that afternoon in his committee-room, and the Senator from Stackpole knew his subject. On drains and dikes he had no equal. He spoke convincingly to his colleagues of the committee upon every bill that was before them, and he compelled their humblest respect. He went earnestly at it, indeed, and sat very late that night in his room at a nearby boarding- house, studying bills, trying to keep his mind upon them and not to think of his strange morning and of Saturday. Finally his neighbor in the next room, Senator Ezra Trumbull, long abed, was awakened by his praying and groaned slightly. Trumbull meant to speak to Rawson about his prayers, for Trumbull was an early one to bed and they woke him every night. The partition was flimsy and Alonzo addressed his Maker in the loud voice of those accustomed to talking across wide out-of-door spaces. Trumbull considered it especially unnecessary in the city; though, as a citizen of a county which loved but little his neighbor's district, he felt that in Stackpole there was good reason for a person to shout his prayers at the top of his voice and even then have small chance to carry through the distance. Still, it was a delicate matter to mention, and he put it off from day to day.

Thursday passed slowly for Alonzo Rawson, nor was his voice lifted in debate. There was little but routine; and the main interest of the chamber was in the lobbying that was being done upon the "Sunday Baseball Bill," which had passed to its third reading and would come up for final disposition within a fortnight. This was the measure which Alonzo had set his heart upon defeating. It was a simple enough bill: it provided, in substance, that baseball might be played on Sunday by professionals in the State capital, which was proud of its league team. Naturally, it was denounced by clergymen, and deputations of ministers and committees from women's religious societies

were constantly arriving at the State-house to protest against its passage. The Senator from Stackpole reassured all of these with whom he talked, and was one of their staunchest allies and supporters. He was active in leading the wavering among his colleagues, or even the inimical, out to meet and face the deputations. It was in this occupation that he was engaged, on Friday afternoon, when he received a shock.

A committee of women from a church society was waiting in the corridor, and he had rounded up a reluctant half-dozen senators and led them forth to be interrogated as to their intentions regarding the bill. The committee and the lawmakers soon distributed themselves into little argumentative clumps, and Alonzo found himself in the centre of these, with one of the ladies who had unfortunately — but, in her enthusiasm without misgivings — begun a reproachful appeal to an advocate of the bill whose name was Goldstein.

"Senator Goldstein," she exclaimed, "I could not believe it when I heard that you were in favor of this measure! I have heard my husband speak in the highest terms of your old father. May I ask you what he thinks of it? If you voted for the desecration of Sunday by a low baseball game, could you dare go home and face that good old man?"

"Yes, madam," said Goldstein mildly; "we are both Jews."

A low laugh rippled out from near-by, and Alonzo, turning almost violently, beheld his lady of the furs. She was leaning back against a broad pilaster, her hands sweeping the same big coat behind her, her face turned toward him, but her eyes, sparklingly delighted, resting upon Goldstein. Under the broad fur hat she made a picture as engaging, to Alonzo Rawson, as it was bewitching. She appeared not to see him, to be quite unconscious of him — and he believed it. Truslow and five or six members of both houses were about her, and they all seemed to be bending eagerly toward her. Alonzo was furious with her.

Her laugh lingered upon the air for a moment, then her glance swept round the other way, omitting the Senator from Stackpole,

who, immediately putting into practice a reserve which would have astonished Napoleon, swung about and quitted the deputation without a word of farewell or explanation. He turned into the cloak-room and paced the floor for three minutes with a malevolence which awed the colored attendants into not brushing his coat; but, when he returned to the corridor, cautious inquiries addressed to the tobacconist elicited the information that the handsome lady with Senator Truslow had departed.

Truslow himself had not gone. He was lounging in his seat when Alonzo returned and was genially talkative. The latter refrained from replying in kind, not altogether out of reserve, but more because of a dim suspicion (which rose within him the third time Truslow called him "Senator" in one sentence) that his first opinion of the young man as a lightminded person might have been correct.

There was no session the following afternoon, but Alonzo watched the street from the windows of his committee-room, which overlooked the splendid breadth of stone steps leading down from the great doors to the pavement. There were some big bookcases in the room, whose glass doors served as mirrors in which he more and more sternly regarded the soft image of an entirely new gray satin tie, while the conviction grew within him that (arguing from her behavior of the previous day) she would not come and that the Stackpole girls were nobler by far at heart than many who might wear a king's-ransom's-worth of jewels round their throats at the opera-house in a large city. This sentiment was heartily confirmed by the clock when it marked half-past two. He faced the bookcase doors and struck his breast, his open hand falling across the gray tie with tragic violence; after which, turning for the last time to the windows, be uttered a loud exclamation and, laying hands upon an ulster and a gray felt hat, each as new as the satin tie, ran hurriedly from the room. The black automobile was awaiting.

"I thought it possible you might see me from a window," said Mrs. Protheroe as he

opened the little door.

"I was just coming out," he returned, gasping for breath. "I thought — from yesterday — you'd probably forgotten."

"Why 'from yesterday'?" she asked.

"I thought — I thought —" He faltered to a stop as the full glorious sense of her presence overcame him. She wore the same veil.

"You thought I did not see you yesterday in the corridor?"

"I thought you might have acted more — more —"

"More cordially?"

"Well," he said, looking down at his hands, "more like you knew we'd been introduced."

At that she sat silent, looking away from him, and he, daring a quick glance at her, found that he might let his eyes remain upon her face. That was a dangerous place for eyes to rest, yet Alonzo Rawson was anxious for the risk. The car flew along the even asphalt on its way to the country like a wild goose on a long slant of wind, and, with his foolish fury melted inexplicably into honey, Alonzo looked at her — and looked at her — till he would have given an arm for another quick corner and a streetcar to send his cheek against that veiled, cold cheek of hers again. It was not until they reached the alternate vacant lots and bleak Queen Anne cottages of the city's ragged edge that she broke the silence.

"You were talking to some one else," she said almost inaudibly.

"Yes, ma'am, Goldstein, but —"

"Oh, no!" She tumed toward him, lifting her hand. "You were quite the lion among ladies."

"I don't know what you mean, Mrs. Protheroe," he said, truthfully.

"What were you talking to all those women about?"

"It was about the 'Sunday Baseball Bill.'"

"Ah! The bill you attacked in your speech last Wednesday?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"I hear you haven't made any speeches since then," she said indifferently.

"No, ma'am," he answered gently. "I kind of got the idea that I'd better lay low for a

while, at first, and get in some quiet, hard work."

"I understand. You are a man of intensely reserved nature."

"With men," said Alonzo, "I am. With ladies I am not so much so. I think a good woman ought to be told —"

"But you are interested," she interrupted, "in defeating that bill?"

"Yes, ma'am," he returned. "It is an iniquitous measure."

"Why?"

"Mrs. Protheroe!" he exclaimed, taken aback. "I thought all the ladies were against it. My own mother wrote to me from Stackpole that she'd rather see me in my grave than votin' for such a bill, and I'd rather see myself there!"

"But are you sure that you understand it?"

"I only know it desecrates the Sabbath. That's enough for me!"

She leaned toward him and his breath came quickly.

"No. You're wrong," she said, and rested the tips of her fingers upon his sleeve.

"I don't understand why — why you say that," he faltered. "It sounds kind of — surprising to me —"

"Listen," she said. Perhaps Mr. Truslow told you that I am studying such things. I do not want to be an idle woman; I want to be of use to the world, even if it must be only in small ways."

"I think that is a noble ambition!" he exclaimed. "I think all good women ought —"

"Wait," she interrupted gently. "Now, that bill is a worthy one, though it astonishes you to hear me say so. Perhaps you don't understand the conditions. Sunday is the laboring man's only day of recreation — and what recreation is he offered?"

"He ought to go to church," said Alonzo promptly.

"But the fact is that he doesn't — not often — not at all in the afternoon. Wouldn't it be well to give him some wholesome way of employing his Sunday afternoons? This bill provides for just that, and it keeps him away from drinking, too, for it forbids the sale of

liquor on the grounds."

"Yes, I know," said Alonzo plaintively. "But it ain't right! I was raised to respect the Sabbath and —"

"Ah, that's what you should do! You think I could believe in anything that wouldn't make it better and more sacred?"

"Oh, no, ma'am!" he cried reproachfully. "It's only that I don't see —"

"I am telling you." She lifted her veil and let him have the full dazzle of her beauty. "Do you know that many thousands of laboring people spend their Sundays drinking and carousing about the low country road-houses because the game is played at such places on Sunday? They go there because they never get a chance to see it played in the city. And don't you understand that there would be no Sunday liquor trade, no workingmen poisoning themselves every seventh day in the low groggeries, as hundreds of them do now, if they had something to see that would interest them? — something as wholesome and fine as this sport would be, under the conditions of this bill; something to keep them in the open air, something to bring a little gayety into their dull lives!" Her voice had grown louder and it shook a little, with a rising emotion, though its sweetness was only the more poignant. "Oh, my dear Senator, she cried, "don't you see how wrong you are? Don't you want to help these poor people?"

Her fingers, which had tightened upon his sleeve, relaxed and she leaned back, pulling the veil down over her face as if wishing to conceal from him that her lips trembled slightly; then resting her arm upon the leather cushions, she turned her head away from him, staring fixedly into the gaunt beech woods lining the country road along which they were now coursing. For a time she heard nothing from him, and the only sound was the monotonous chug of the machine.

"I suppose you think it rather shocking to hear a woman talking practically of such commonplace things," she said at last, in a cold voice, just loud enough to be heard.

"No, ma'am," he said huskily.

"Then what do you think?" she cried, turn-

ing toward him again with a quick, imperious gesture.

"I think I'd better go back to Stackpole," he answered very slowly, "and resign my job. I don't see as I've got any business in the Legislature."

"I don't understand you."

He shook his head mournfully. "It's a simple enough matter. I've studied out a good many bills and talked 'em over and I've picked up some influence and—"

"I know you have," she interrupted eagerly. "Mr. Truslow says that the members of your drains-and-dikes committee follow your vote on every bill."

"Yes, ma'am," said Alonzo Rawson meekly, "but I expect they oughtn't to. I've had a lesson this afternoon."

"You mean to say —"

"I mean that I didn't know what I was doing about that baseball bill. I was just pig-headedly goin' ahead against it, not knowing nothing about the conditions, and it took a lady to show me what they were. I would have done a wrong thing if you hadn't stopped me."

"You mean," she cried, her splendid eyes widening with excitement and delight; "you mean that you — that you —"

"I mean that I will vote for the bill!" He struck his clinched fist upon his knee. "I come to the Legislature to do right!"

"You will, ah, you will do right in this!" Mrs. Protheroe thrust up her veil again and her face was flushed and radiant with triumph. "And you'll work, and you'll make a speech for the bill?"

At this the righteous exaltation began rather abruptly to simmer down in the soul of Alonzo Rawson. He saw the consequences of too violently reversing, and knew how difficult they might be to face.

"Well, not — not exactly," he said weakly. "I expect our best plan would be for me to lay kind of low and not say any more about the bill at all. Of course, I'll quit workin' against it; and on the roll-call I'll edge close up to the clerk and say 'Aye' so that only him'll hear me. That's done every day — and I — well, I don't

just exactly like to come out too publicly for it, after my speech and all I've done against it."

She looked at him sharply for a short second, and then offered him her hand and said: "Let's shake hands now on the vote. Think what a triumph it is for me to know that I helped to show you the right."

"Yes, ma'am," he answered confusedly, too much occupied with shaking her hand to know what he said. She spoke one word in an undertone to the driver and the machine took the very shortest way back to the city.

After this excursion several days passed before Mrs. Protheroe came to the State-house again. Rawson was bending over the desk of Senator Josephus Battle, the white-bearded leader of the opposition to the "Sunday Baseball Bill," and was explaining to him the intricacies of a certain drainage measure, when Battle, whose attention had wandered, plucked his sleeve and whispered:

"If you want to see a mighty pretty woman that's doin' no good here, look behind you, over there in the chair by the big fireplace at the back of the room."

Alonzo looked.

It was she whose counterpart had been in his dream's eye every moment of the dragging days which had been vacant of her living presence. A number of his colleagues were hanging over her almost idiotically; her face was gay and her voice came to his ears, as he turned, with the accent of her cadenced laughter running through her talk like a chime of tiny bells flitting through a strain of music.

"This is the third time she's been here," said Battle, rubbing his beard the wrong way. "She's lobbyin' for that infernal Sabbath-Desecration bill, but we'll beat her, my son."

"Have you made her acquaintance, Senator?" asked Alonzo stiffly.

"No, sir, and I don't want to. But I knew her father — the slickest oldbeat and the smoothest talker that ever waltzed up the pike. She married rich; her husband left her a lot of real estate around here, but she spends most of her time away. Whatever struck her to come down and lobby for that bill I don't know — yet —

but I will! Truslow's helping her to help himself; he's got stock in the company that runs the baseball team, but what she's up to — well, I'll bet there's a nigger in the woodpile somewhere!"

"I expect there's a lot of talk like that!" said Alonzo, red with anger, and taking up his papers abruptly.

"Yes, sir!" said Battle emphatically, utterly misunderstanding the other's tone and manner. "Don't you worry, my son. We'll kill that venomous bill right here in this chamber! We'll kill it so dead that it won't make one flop after the axe hits it. You and me and some others'll tend to that! Let her work that pretty face and those eyes of hers all she wants to! I'm keepin' a little lookout, too and I'll —"

He broke off, for the angry and perturbed Alonzo had left him and gone to his own desk. Battle, slightly surprised, rubbed his beard the wrong way and sauntered out to the lobby to muse over a cigar. Alonzo, loathing Battle with a great loathing, formed bitter phrases concerning that vicious-minded old gentleman, while for a moment he affected to be setting his desk in order. Then he walked slowly up the aisle, conscious of a roaring in his ears (though not aware how red they were) as he approached the semicircle about her.

He paused within three feet of her in a sudden panic of timidity, and then, to his consternation, she looked him squarely in the face, over the shoulders of two of the group, and the only sign of recognition that she exhibited was a slight frown of unmistakable repulsion, which appeared between her handsome eyebrows.

It was very swift; only Alonzo saw it; the others had no eyes for anything but her, and were not aware of his presence behind them, for she did not even pause in what she was saying.

Alonzo walked slowly away with the wormwood in his heart. He had not grown up among the young people of Stackpole without similar experiences, but it had been his youthful boast that no girl had ever "stopped speaking" to him without reason, or "cut a dance" with him and

afterward found opportunity to repeat the indignity.

"What have I done to her?" was perhaps the hottest cry of his bruised soul, for the mystery was as great as the sting of it.

It was no balm upon that sting to see her pass him at the top of the outer steps, half an hour later, on the arm of that one of his colleagues who had been called the "best-dressed man in the Legislature." She swept by him without a sign, laughing that same laugh at some sally of her escort, and they got into the black automobile together and were whirled away and out of sight by the impassive bundle of furs who manipulated the wheel.

For the rest of that afternoon and the whole of that night no man, woman, or child heard the voice of Alonzo Rawson, for he spoke to none. He came not to the evening meal, nor was he seen by any who had his acquaintance. He entered his room at about midnight, and Trumbull was awakened by his neighbor's overturning a chair. No match was struck, however, and Trombull was relieved to think that the Senator from Stackpok intended going directly to bed without troubling to light the gas, and that his prayers would soon be over. Such was not the case, for no other sound came from the room, nor were Alonzo's prayers uttered that night, though the unhappy statesman in the next apartment could not get to sleep for several hours on account of his nervous expectancy of them.

After this, as the day approached upon which hung the fate of the bill which Mr. Josephus Battle was fighting, Mrs. Protheroe came to the Senate Chamber nearly every morning and afternoon. Not once did she appear to be conscious of Alonzo Rawson's presence, nor once did he allow his eyes to delay upon her, though it can not be truthfully said that he did not always know when she came, when she left, and with whom she stood or sat or talked. He evaded all mention or discussion of the bill or of Mrs. Protheroe; avoided Truslow (who, strangely enough, was avoiding him) and, spending upon drains and dikes all the energy that he could manage to

concentrate, burned the midnight oil and rubbed salt into his wounds to such marked effect that by the evening of the Governor's Reception — upon the morning following which the mooted bill was to come up — he offered an impression so haggard and worn that an actor might have studied him for a make-up as a young statesman going into a decline.

Nevertheless he dressed with great care and bitterness, and placed the fragrant blossom of a geranium — taken from a plant belonging to his landlady — in the lapel of his long coat before he set out.

And yet, when he came down the Governor's broad stairs, and wandered through the big rooms, with the glare of lights above him and the shouting of the guests ringing in his ears, a sense of emptiness beset him; the crowded place seemed vacant and without meaning. Even the noise sounded hollow and remote — and why had he bothered about the geranium? He hated her and would never look at her again — but why was she not there?

By and by, he found himself standing against a wall, where he had been pushed by the press of people. He was wondering drearily what he was to do with a clean plate and a napkin which a courteous negro had handed him, half an hour earlier, when he felt a quick jerk at his sleeve. It was Truslow, who had worked his way along the wall, and who now, standing on tiptoe, spoke rapidly but cautiously, close to his ear.

"Senator, be quick," he said sharply, at the same time alert to see that they were unobserved. "Mrs. Protheroe wants to speak to you at once. You'll find her near the big palms under the stairway in the hall."

He was gone — he had wormed his way half across the room — before the other, in his simple amazement, could answer. When Alonzo at last found a word, it was only a monosyllable, which, with his accompanying action, left a matron of years, who was at that moment being pressed fondly to his side, in a state of mind almost as dumfounded as his own. "Here!" was all he said as he pressed the plate and napkin into her hand and departed

forcibly for the hall, leaving a spectacular wreckage of trains behind him.

The upward flight of the stairway left a space underneath, upon which, as it was screened (save for a narrow entrance) by a thicket of palms, the crowd had not encroached. Here were placed a divan and a couple of chairs; there was shade from the glare of gas, and the light was dim and cool. Mrs. Protheroe had risen from the divan when Alonzo entered this grotto, and stood waiting for him.

He stopped in the green entrance-way with a quick exclamation.

She did not seem the same woman who had put such slights upon him, this tall, white vision of silk, with the summery scarf falling from her shoulders. His great wrath melted at the sight of her; the pain of his racked pride, which had been so hot in his breast, gave way to a species of fear. She seemed not a human being, but a white spirit of beauty and goodness who stood before him, extending two fine arms to him in long, white gloves.

She left him to his trance for a moment, then seized both his hands in hers and cried to him in her rapturous, low voice: “Ah, Senator, you have come! I knew you understood!”

“Yes ma’am,” he whispered chokily.

She drew him to one of the chairs and sank gracefully down upon the divan near him.

“Mr. Truslow was so afraid you wouldn’t,” she went on rapidly, “but I was sure. You see I didn’t want anybody to suspect that I had any influence with you. I didn’t want them to know, even, that I’d talked to you. It all came to me after the first day that we met. You see I’ve believed in you, in your power and in your reserve, from the first. I want all that you do to seem to come from yourself and not from me or any one else. Oh, I believe in great, strong men who stand upon their own feet and conquer the world for themselves! That’s your way Senator Rawson. So, you see, as they think I’m lobbying for the bill, I wanted them to believe that your speech for it to-morrow comes from your own great, strong mind and heart and your sense of right and not from any suggestion of mine.”

"My speech!" he stammered.

"Oh, I know," she cried; "I know you think I don't believe much in speeches, and I don't ordinarily, but a few simple, straightforward and vigorous words from you, to-morrow, may carry the bill through. You've made such progress, you've been so reserved that you'll carry great weight — and there are three votes of the drains-and-dikes that are against us now, but will follow yours absolutely. Do you think I would have 'cut' you if it hadn't been best?"

"But I —"

"Oh, I know you didn't actually promise me to speak, that day. But I knew you would when the time came! I knew that a man of power goes over all obstacles, once his sense of right is aroused! knew — I never doubted it, that once you felt a thing to be right you would strike for it, with all your great strength — at all costs — at all —"

"I can't — I — I — can't!" he whispered nervously. "Don't you see — don't you see — I —"

She leaned toward him, lifting her face close to his. She was so near him that the faint odor of her hair came to him again, and once more the unfortunate Senator from Stackpole risked a meeting of his eyes with hers, and saw the light shining far down in their depths.

At this moment the shadow of a portly man who was stroking his beard the wrong way projected itself upon them from the narrow, green entrance to the grotto. Neither of them perceived it.

Senator Josephus Battle passed on, but when Alonzo Rawson emerged, a few moments later, he was pledged to utter a few simple, straightforward, and vigorous words in favor of the bill. And — let the shame fall upon the head of the scribe who tells it — he had kissed Mrs. Protheroe!

The fight upon the "Sunday Baseball Bill" the next morning was the warmest of that part of the session, though for a while the reporters were disappointed. They were waiting for Senator Battle, who was famous among them for the vituperative vigor of his attacks and for the kind of personalities which made valuable

copy. And yet, until the debate was almost over, he contented himself with going quietly up and down the aisles, whispering to the occupants of the desks, and writing and sending a multitude of notes to his colleagues. Meanwhile, the orators upon both sides harangued their fellows, the lobby, the unpolitical audience, and the patient presiding officer to no effect, so far as votes went. The general impression was that it would be close.

Alonzo Rawson sat bent over his desk, his eyes fixed with gentle steadiness upon Mrs. Protheroe, who occupied the chair wllerein he had first seen her. A senator of the opposition was finishing his denunciation, when she turned and nodded almost imperceptibly to the young man.

He gave her one last look of pathetic tenderness and rose.

"The Senator from Stackpole!"

"I want," Alonzo began, in his big voice — "I want to say a few simple, straightforward but vigorous words about this bill. You may remember I spoke against it on its second reading —"

"You did that!" shouted Senator Battle suddenly.

"I want to say now," the Senator from Stackpole continued, "that at that time I hadn't studied the subject sufficiently. I didn't know the conditions of the case, nor the facts, but since then a great light has broke in upon me —"

"I should say it had! I saw it break!" was Senator Battle's second violent interruption.

When order was restored, Alonzo, who had become very pale, summoned his voice again. "I think we'd ought to take into consideration that Sunday is the working-man's only day of recreation and not drive him into low groggeries, but give him a chance in the open air to indulge his love of wholesome sport —"

"Such as the ancient Romans enjoyed!" interposed Battle vindictively.

"No, sir!" Alonzo wheeled upon him, stung to the quick. "Such a sport as free-born Americans and only free-born Americans can play in this wide world — the American game

of baseball, in which no other nation of the Earth is our equal!"

This was a point scored and the cheering lasted two minutes. Then the orator resumed:

"I say: 'Give the working-man a chance!' Is his life a happy one? You know it ain't! Give him his one day. Don't spoil it for him with your laws — he's only got one! I'm not goin' to take up any more of your time, but if there's anybody here who thinks my well-considered opinion worth following I say: 'Vote for this bill.' It is right and virtuous and ennobling, and it ought to be passed! I say: 'Vote for it.'"

The reporters decided that the Senator from Stackpole had "wakened things up." The gavel rapped a long time before the chamber quieted down, and when it did, Josephus Battle was on his feet and had obtained the recognition of the chair.

"I wish to say, right here," he began, with a rasping leisureliness, "that I hope no member of this honored body will take my remarks as personal or unparliamentary — but" — he raised a big forefinger and shook it with menace at the presiding officer at the same time suddenly lifting his voice to an unprintable shriek — "I say to you, sir, that the song of the siren has been heard in the land, and the call of Delilah has been answered! When the Senator from Stackpole rose in his chamber, less than three weeks ago, and denounced this iniquitous measure, I heard him with pleasure — we all heard him with pleasure — and respect! In spite of his youth and the poor quality of his expression, we listened to him. We knew he was sincere! What has caused the change in him? What has, I ask? I shall not tell you, upon this floor, but I've taken mighty good care to let most of you know, during the morning, either by word of mouth or by note of hand! Especially those of you of the drains-and-dikes and others who might follow this young Samson, whose locks have been shore! I've told you all about that, and more — I've told you the inside history of some facts about the bill that I will not make public, because I am too confident of our strength to defeat this devilish measure, and prefer to let our vote speak

our opinion of it! Let me not detain you longer. I thank you!"

Long before he had finished, the Senator from Stackpole was being held down in his chair by Truslow and several senators whose seats were adjacent and the vote was taken amid an uproar of shouting and confusion. When the clerk managed to proclaim the result over all other noises, the bill was shown to be defeated and "killed," by a majority of five votes.

A few minutes later, Alonzo Rawson, his neckwear disordered and his face white with rage, stumbled out of the great doors upon the trail of Battle, who had quietly hurried away to his hotel for lunch as soon as he had voted.

The black automobile was vanishing round a corner. Truslow stood upon the edge of the pavement staring after it ruefully:

"Where is Mrs. Protheroe?" gasped the Senator from Stackpole.

"She's gone," said the other.

"Gone where?"

"Gone back to Paris. She sails day after tomorrow. She just had time enoug to catch her train for New York after waiting to hear how the vote went. She told me to tell you good-by, and that she was sorry. Don't stare at me, Rawson! I guess we're in the same boat!—Where are you going?" he finished abruptly.

Alonzo swung by him and started across the street, "To find Battle!" the hoarse answer came back.

The conquering Josephus was leaning meditatively upon the counter of the cigar-stand of his hotel when Alonzo found him. He took one look at the latter's face and backed to the wall, tightening his grasp upon the heavy- headed ebony cane it was his habit to carry, a habit upon which he now congratulated himself.

But his precautions were needless. Alonzo stopped out of reaching distance.

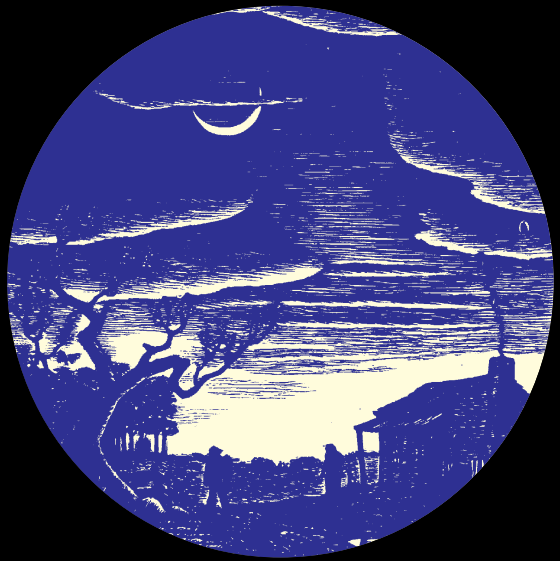
"You tell me," he said in a breaking voice; "you tell me what you meant about Delilah and sirens and Samsons and inside facts! You tell me!"

"You wild ass of the prairies," said Battle, "I saw you last night behind them pa'ms! But

don’t you think I told it — or ever will! I just passed the word around that she’d argued you into her way of thinkin’, same as she had a good many others. And as for the rest of it, I found out where the nigger in the woodpile was, and I handed that out, too. Don’t you take it hard, my son, but I told you her husband left her a good deal of land around here. She owns the ground that they use for the baseball park, and her lease would be worth considerable more if they could have got the right to play on Sundays!”

Senator Trumbull sat up straight, in bed, that night, and, for the first time during his martyrdom, listened with no impatience to the prayer which fell upon his ears.

“O Lord Almighty,” through the flimsy partition came the voice of Alonzo Rawson, quaveringly, but with growing strength: “Aid Thou me to see my way more clear! I find it hard to tell right from wrong, and I find myself beset with tangled wires. O God, I feel that I am ignorant, and fall into many devices. These are strange paths wherein Thou hast set my feet, but I feel that through Thy help, and through great anguish, I am learning!”



STORIES FROM THE WPA FEDERAL WRITER'S PROJECT 1936 - 1940

illustration: “Spring Twilight” (detail) —J.J. Lankes

It was a different world not only because the Depression had caught so many Americans off guard, but because the work of artists, writers, actors and craftsmen was regarded as honest labor by the American government, and, by extension, its people.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the Work Programs Administration to provide employment to a country that was out of work, and, uniquely in American history, no distinction was made between art and other kinds of labor. Painters were commissioned to do murals on public buildings, stage performers were commissioned to mount new and interesting productions -- and writers were commissioned to chart the cultural history of the country in all its myriad flavors. In the pages that follow you'll find a very, very small sampling of the work that WPA writers did between 1936 and 1940.

d u s t

Hilda Polacheck

Jacob Saranoff worked in a rag-shop near Hull-House. He had come to Chicago from Russia in 1902, bringing his wife and two children with him. The family was met at the train by a relative who helped to find a home for them. They rented four rooms in a rear tenement on Halsted Street. After visiting several second hand furniture stores, the Saranoffs bought two second hand beds, a kitchen stove, a kitchen table and four chairs. They unpacked the bedding that they had brought with them from Russia and spent their first night in their

first American home.

The next morning the children were enrolled in the public school. The first great ambition of Jacob and Sarah Saranoff had been realized. Their children were in school.

After paying a month's rent and the price of the furniture and the most necessary household utensils, Jacob had two dollars left. It was necessary for Jacob to take the first job that he could find. The job was sorting rags. His wages were eight dollars a week. The rent was six dollars a month. Jacob and Sarah decided that they could get along.

The rag-shop was located in an abandoned barn. There was a small window in the rear of this barn which had been opened when the horses were housed in it. But since it had become a rag-shop, the window had been nailed up to keep out any possible thieves. Ventilation was not considered.

The floor of the rag-shop was never swept. The dust was allowed to gather day after day, week after week. But Jacob paid no attention to the dust. His children were in school. They could not have gone to school in Russia. There were no schools for Jewish children in the village where he had lived. So why pay attention to dust?

Solomon, or Solly, as he was called, the older of the two children, wanted to learn to play the piano. But how does one get piano lessons and buy a piano on which to practice on eight dollars a week?

"Some day I will learn to play," Solly said. "All sorts of miracles happen in America. Maybe something will happen so that I can learn."

Solly was eight years old. His sister, Rosie, was six. They were learning American games. They now played hide and seek, run-sheep-run and peg, with the American born children. These American born children took Solly and Rosie to Hull-House.

The children ran up the stairs to a play-room in which there was a piano. It was the first time that Solly had been near a piano. He struck a note and was thrilled with the sound. He looked around, and no one seemed to mind his

touching the piano. So he struck a few more notes. This was indeed a miracle! Such miracles could only happen in America, thought Solly.

When the play director entered to organize some games for the children. Patrick Ryan. who lived across the hall from the Saranoff family, took Solly to her.

"This is Solly," said Patrick "He's daffy about piano."

"Would you like to learn to play?" asked the director.

"Oh, yes! Could I?" Solly asked eagerly.

So Solly started to take piano lessons and he was allowed to come to Hull-House to practice.

Jacob had now been sorting rags for three years. He had been inhaling the dust for the same length of time. He would have liked to find other work. Something more interesting——something that would pay a little more money. He began to dream of the possibility of buying a piano for Solly. But he was afraid to take a day off to look for a better job. He was afraid he might lose the one he had. He could not risk having the family go without food. And there were shoes to buy. And the rent had to be paid. So he continued to sort rags, paying no attention to the dust on the floor. It was bad when the bales of rags were dumped on the floor and the dust rose and filled the room. The men who were sorting rags would get coughing spells when that happened. But the dust was soon settled, and the men went on sorting rags.

The Saranoff children were bringing good reports from school. Solly could now play the piano well. He was told at school that he would be allowed to play a solo when he graduated.

Solly found out that fathers and mothers could go to lectures and concerts at Hull-House. So on Sunday afternoon or evening, the Saranoffs listened to lectures they did not understand and to concerts that they did understand and loved. They found out that they could learn English, so they hurried through with the supper dishes and became members of the English class. One evening, Mrs. Ryan, their neighbor, took Jacob and Sarah to a Hull-

House party. At this party they met Jane Addams.

"Miss Addams," said Jacob one night while he was at Hull-House," do you know that I have never heard Solly play the piano."

"Well, that is too bad," said Jane Addams. "I must see that you hear him soon."

A week later Solly brought home a card announcing a piano recital to be given by Solomon Saranoff, at the Hull-House Music School.

There were about fifty people present at Solly's first recital. The Ryans were there. Sarah Saranoff had invited Mrs. Schultz, her German neighbor who lived on the floor above. The Molinari family, whose son was learning to play the violin at Hull-House, were there. Just before the recital started, Jane Addams came into the room and sat down next to Jacob Saranoff.

Solly played with a delicacy and warmth that made him a part of the piano. When the first piece was finished, the tears were rolling down Jacob's cheeks. Solly played and Jacob's heartbeats accompanied him. He was thanking God for America—-for Hull-House— for Jane Addams.

"For the last number," the piano teacher announced, "Solly will play a piece that he wrote. I am very proud of Solly, for it is not often that a child of his age can compose music. I think Solly will be a great musician."

Solly played his composition. It was a haunting little melody. There was a little of the Russian persecution in it. There was a little of the joy of Hull-House. There was a little of the dust of the rag-shop.

The concert was over. The entire audience surrounded the Saranoff family. Jane Addams invited everybody into the coffee-house for refreshments.

The dream of buying a piano now became an obsession with Jacob. He had heard one of the men who worked in the rag-shop, say that his two brothers were coming from Russia and that they would be looking for a place to live. The idea came to Jacob that he could rent one of the bedrooms to these two men. He

broached the subject to Sarah. She thought it would be a good idea. Sarah had heard that pianos could be bought on easy payments. Perhaps she could get enough from the man to make the payments on a piano.

The boarders moved into one of the two bedrooms. A shiny new piano was moved into the bare parlor. A relative gave the family a discarded cot which was put into the parlor. On this Solly slept. Rosie was moved into the bedroom where her parents slept. Her bed was made up of the four chairs.

Solly practiced every minute that he could spare from his school work. He had graduated from grammar school and had entered high school.

Jacob went on sorting rags. But the sorting was now accompanied by the tunes that Solly played. Jacob noticed that he would get very tired, long before the day was over. He coughed a good deal when the bales of rags were damped on the floor. He would sweat during the night, even when the bedroom was very cold. But he said nothing to his wife.

Solly was ready to graduate from high school. He was to play one of his own compisitions at the graduation exercises. This graduation was another event in the life of the Saranoff family. Jacob was proud of his tall, dark haired son, who was loudly applauded by the audience. Solly bowed again and again. Jacob thought: if only the cough did not bother him; he would be the happiest man in the world. But the cough did bother him.

Jacob would have liked to stay in bed the morning after the graduation. But a man had been fired the week before for staying home one day. So he dragged himself out of the bed and went to the rag-shop. Several hours later he was brought home by two men. They said that Jacob had started to cough and had spit large chunks of blood.

“Yes, the dust in the rag-shop is bad,” said one of the men.

Sarah was panic stricken. The neighbors called a doctor from the health department. A week later, Jacob was dead.

The realtives and neighbors collected

money for the funeral. Solly did not quite realize what had happened. He sat between his mother and Jane Addams. He heard the Rabbi say:

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was:"

But the day after the funeral, Solly knew that he was now the head of the family. The owner of the rag-shop offered him a job as bookkeeper and solly took it. He earned more money than his father had earned. But the dust was on the floor of the office.

Solly continued to take lessons at Hull-House in the evening, when he was not too tired. He had very little time to practice, now. After nine hours in the dirty office, weighing bales of rags, keeping books, haggling with the people who were selling the rags, he was too tired to practice.

Sarah was sorry that he could not go on with his music, but the rent had to be paid, food had to be bought, shoes did wear out.

One morning Solly noticed several people from Hull-House walk into the rag-shop. They spoke to one of the men in the shop; they gathered some of the dust from the floor into small white papers, and left.

That night Solly went to Hull-House. He found Jane Addams and asked about the dust that had been gathered.

"We are trying to find out whether the dust contains any tuberculoisis germs," Jane Addams told him.

"Dust——- tuberculosis," said Solly in a bewildered tone. "Every other house on the block has some one sick with tuberculosis. I heard an old woman say that a dybbuk has attacked the neighborhood. Perhaps it is a dybbuk! Perhaps there is a dybbuk in the dust that my father breathed into his lungs. I have been breathing into my lungs. The dybbuk always kills the person it attacks!"

Solly was hysterical! He was taken to a room and a doctor was called. The doctor looke very grave. Solly temperature was quite high. The docor was sure he had tuberculosis. He had been working too hard. He had been inhaling

the dust from the rag-shop.

Sarah was like a stone image when she was told.

“Thank God you will take care of him,” she said to Jane Addams. “Rosie will now have to go to work. I wanted her to finish high school.”

Solly was well cared for in a sanitarium which Jane Addams had helped to create. As he lay on his cot on the sun-porch, he was putting notes together that he would fashion into songs, when he got well.

At Hull-House a fight was going on to bring air into dark homes. Shorter working hours—less fatigue—less tuberculosis. Court proceedings were started to have the barn that housed the rag-shop, condemned. It took months to accomplish this. But the rag-shop was condemned.

Jane Addams travelled all the way to the sanitarium to tell Solly the news. But he was too ill to be told that the dust had at last been removed. He had become a part of the dust.

m

Circus Days and Ways

A. C. Sherbert
W. E. "Doc" Van Alstine

Looks younger than age claimed. Hair, iron-grey; oval face, dark complexion; medium height; rheumatic - walks with difficulty. Always wears old-fashioned black, derby hat, with wide, rolled brim.

I was born in the little town of Kinderhook, New York, in 1847. My father was Doctor Thomas Van Alstine, who later served as a surgeon in the Union Army during the Civil War.

At an early age I had a yearning for the show business. School didn't interest me a bit. I hated books. I wasn't a danged bit interested in reading about what somebody else did, or

where they went, or what they saw. I wanted to go, do, and see things for myself, and I couldn't think of any better way to satisfy my ambition than to join up with a circus.

School, in my day, wasn't much like it is now. Boy, oh boy, in them days if you didn't toe the line you got what was comin' to you. Teachers and parents both, in them days, had spare-the-rod-spoil-the-child ideas, and if a youngster didn't do exactly what he was told, they used to lay it on plenty with a hickory switch, or somethin' just as good.

Come a day, once, when I was a young gaffer in my early teens, I had a chance to run away with the Mighty Yankee Robinson Circus. The lure of sawdust and spangles was much stronger than family ties or the red schoolhouse, so off I goes. I was only with the circus four days when I was dragged home to the family fireside and my place at the table, but not without a trip to the barn first, where my father strapped me around the legs and across the back with a tie-strap until I wasn't hardly able to navigate. As tough a lickin' as the old man gave me, I soon forgot it - but I didn't ever forget my first four days with the circus.

The thrill of them few days with Robinson's circus stuck with me through more than a half century of circus troupin'. I was hired as a "block" boy. The block boy had to help set up and "strike" (tear down) the "blues". Incidentally, general admission circus seats has been blue as far back as I can remember. There wasn't no commoner job on the circus , but I remember how proud and thrilled I was merely to touch a piece of circus equipment: the blocks, the angle pieces, the seat boards - anything that was a part of "the circus ".

And I remember how I gazed in awe at the performers, and to think I was so close to them. I seen a lot of beautiful women in my day, but I don't believe I ever seen a woman in my later life that looked so beautiful to me as them circus women did. I had the feelin' that they was queens, or goddesses, or somethin' too beautiful to belong to this world. And I recall the thrill of thrills when a clown-circus folks call the funny men "Joeys" - said, "Hey, lad, run

out to a butcher shop and get me a pound of lard." The Joeys used lard for taking off their "clown white", or make-up. I was so excited at havin' a performer actually speak to me that I couldn't say yes or no. But with the ten cent piece he give me clutched tight in my fist, I run like lightnin' to the nearest butcher shop. Boy, oh boy, was I happy!

I well remember when I goes back to school after my four days with the circus . I cut quite a figger among the handful of bumpkins that was my schoolmates.

Bein' with a circus made me a hero among them youngsters, and did I glory in it. I knew I'd have to stay in school awhile longer - I couldn't help myself, but in the back of my head I know that when I got a little bit older I was goin' to join up with a circus and be a showman for always, and always.

My family was determined that I was goin' to be a doctor, like my old man was. They insisted that I take up the study of medicine and follow in my father's footsteps. In them days, anybody that thought they was cut out for it, could be a doctor if they wanted to. All you needed was a little schoolin' and be handy around sick folks and not be afraid of the sight of blood. All medicine was bitter, if it was any good, and if they didn't know what ailed a person they 'cupped' him and drew some blood. Then he either got better or worse, as God willed. I might of made a good doctor, at that, if I only could of got show business off my mind.

When I got a few years older, I was able to out-talk the old folks and get my own way. I give up all thought of pill-rollin' and left home to join a circus , and I stuck with circuses for nearly sixty years of my life. Studyin' for a doctor, though, give me the nickname, "Doc", and wherever on this globe the gray dawn seas a "big top" bein' raised, that's the name I'm knowed by.

I been asked to draw a comparison between the circus of today and the circus of the past. Well, they just ain't no comparison. The circus in this day and age seems really to be the stupendous, gigantic, colossal exhibition the

advance billing and the “barkers”, “spielers”, and “grinders”, claim for it. The oldtime circus was a puny forerunner of the mammoth aggregations now on the road. The circus your grandfather went to see as a boy, was nothin’ more than a variety, or vaudeville, show under canvas. Pretty near all the acts they done in the circus could of been put on in even the ordinary theaters of that time. Could you imagine the Ringling Brothers’ B B show of today tryin’ to squeeze itself into any theater, auditorium, or indoor arena in any town, say, like Portland?

The people who works for circuses today is all trained specialists. Everybody has only one job, and he’s supposed to do that one thing well. The oldtime trouper was a Jack-of-all-trades. He could shoe a horse, if he had to, he could clown, drive a ten-horse team, lay out canvas, and fill in at anything around the lot except perhaps aerial acrobatics, and believe it or not, many of the old-timers could even “double” in acrobatics.

The circus has always been one of the world’s most progressive enterprises. New inventions, if they was something the circus could use, was grabbed up by the circus as soon as they come out. The circus was always away ahead of anybody else in lighting equipment. When stores and business places throughout the country was still using tallow dips for light, the circus was using calcium flares bright enough to almost blind you. The pressure gaslights used by circuses in the early part of this century was intensely brilliant by contrast with the dim, dinky lights of the average town thecircus visited. Many small-town oldtimers will tell you they first saw Edison’s marvelous incandescent lamps when some circus came to town.

Yes, the circus of today is bigger and better in every way than circuses was, even twenty-five years ago. But the kids of today ain’t so wide-eyed and amazed at what they see at a circus as they was a quarter of a century ago. So many marvelous things goes on all the time in this day and age that
kids probably expect more from a circus now than it’s humanly possible to give.

In my more than a half century with circuses I worked on all the big shows one time or another. The circus has took me to the for corners of both hemispheres, and has give me many exciting experiences. I seen circuses miraculously missed by cyclones in the prairie states. When you're standin' in the middle of a couple million dollars' worth of circus equipment, it's always a thrill to see a blackish, greenish cloud with its trailing, death-dealing funnel, bearing down on your show. The 'stock' in the 'animal top' (menagerie tent) knows a storm is comin' same as you do. Makes you feel kind of funny in the pit of the stomach, to hear them snarl, howl, whine, bellow and roar as the storm gets nearer. They get nervous, testy, mean, and it all adds to the confusion on the lot.

I was with a show in Hutchinson, Kansas, once when a twister didn't miss. As the twister's whirling funnel came towards us, all hands got busy and begun grouping all loose and movable equipment and gear and lashing everything together with tie ropes and tie chains. The animal wagons was hastily covered. We drops all canvas flat to the ground and strikes all poles. We didn't have much warning. A few seconds later the twister was upon us and cuttin' a swath right through the center of the lot. We was what you could call lucky, though, because nobody got seriously hurt and we didn't lose no stock (animals). But the big top was picked up and torn to shreds, and small parts of it scattered all over the surrounding country.

Train wrecks is another thing. I been through many small wrecks in the course of years of troupin', and was also in one disastrous crackup. The railroads in the old days didn't have no block signal systems like they got now, and as circus trains was always extras and not regularly scheduled trains, wrecks was frequent. At Gary, Indiana, I was with Sells-Floto circus, when we had a wreck where over a hundred persons was killed, and a lot of valuable stock was lost.

A "Hey Rube" is practically unknown today. A Hey Rube was a fight between the cir-

cus folks and the town yokels. These ruckuses used to came regularly every so often in the old days. Many of the Hey Rubes was started by folks figgerin' they wasn't gettin' all the circus advertised; if the stupendous wasn't stupendous enough, the gigantic wasn't gigantic enough, the colossal wasn't colossal enough, or the "largest in captivity" wasn't large enough, the town folks felt like they had grounds for a fight. Another common cause of Hey Rubes was because petty thieves, purse-snatchers and pickpockets, followed circuses from town to town. The circus got blamed for what them slickers did, but they was nothing they could do about it. When the crooks hit a crowd too hard, and too many people got plucked, the town folk got together and tried to take it out on the circus people. Pretty near every Hey Rube I ever seen ended with the town folks comin' out second best physically, although the circus usually lost out financially. Lawsuits always followed a Hey Rube, and circus people had no chance for a square deal in a prejudiced small-town court.

I was in a Hey Rube in Lincoln, Illinois, once. It was one of the toughest battles I ever seen. The town boys was coalminers and same of the toughest customers I ever seen. We strung out in a circle around our stuff and stood 'em off with "laying out pins" and whacked 'em with "side-poles", finally giving 'em the run, but they sure could take it. Another Hey Rube in Ann Arbor, Michigan, was started by a gang of students from the University of Michigan, for no good reason at all except perhaps they thought it was funny. It cost the circus I was with more than $35,000 in lawsuits and damage to equipment. In a Hey Rube, most of the lawsuits that follow is usually by some innocent bystander who gets hurt in the scramble.

The circus owners - you name 'em, I worked for 'em - were all big men of fine character. Everyone of the big circus owners was a square-shootin', two-fisted boss, and not a sissy among 'em. I knowed the Ringling family well — the seven boys and their father, Gus Ringling. Gus Ringling was a harness-maker, and teamster, before he went into the circus

business. Gus wasn't ever able to hire a better teamster on his show than he was himself. Old Gus could handle a twelve horse team so slick that the string of horses would form a perfect circle, and the lead team could eat oats from the back of the wagon Gus was sittin' in.

Circus people in the old days was considered social outcasts. "Decent" people wouldn't have nothin' to do with troupers. This attitude on the part of "outsiders" towards show-folks, brought the show-folks closer together - made 'em clannish. Circus people was just like one big family, and was always a good lot, and always willing to help each other over the bumps. People don't look at it the way they used to, any more, but circus people is still clannish just the same.

Modern methods and high specialization has made it a lot easier for the circus man. Transportation is improved, and accommodations is a lot better than they was. You don't have to be tough inside and out, to troupe with a circus nowadays. In the old days any handler of circus stock knowed how to mix up a batch of kerosene or paregoric liniment to dope an ailing animal. Nowadays the big show troupes a staff of veterinarians, and each valuable animal is watched as close and its diet figgered out as carefully as for the Dionne quints.

I got a lot of respect for Clyde Beattie and other of today's animal trainers, but I don't think there is any comparison between the temper and ferocity of jungle-born cats that the old-time trainer faced twice a day, and the animals born in captivity that the present-day trainers work with. You don't hardly ever hear of a trainer gettin' killed in an exhibition cage today; but in the old days I have seen trainers torn to ribbons in the twinkling of an eye.

The circus reached its greatest size in 1908. After that year they never got any bigger. In 1908 Ringling Brothers introduced the first "spec", or "spectacle". Since that year the "spec" was a feature with all circuses. The first spec was called "King Solomon" - later specs were the "Durbar at Delhi", "Arabian Nights", and others. I was boss canvasman for many years with a number of different circuses .

Boss canvasman is a good job on a big show and pays from $75.00 to $100.00 a week. I made quite a lot of money in my day, but I haven't got anything to show for it now. As boss canvasman, I seen the sun rise in every town of importance in the United States. Most of my real old time friends of the circus have passed through the "connection" to the "other side". (The 'connection' is the opening and runway through which the performers and animals enter the 'big top' during a performance).

Portland, Oregon, has always had the name of being a good show town. I visited Portland with big shows many times before I quit the show business. I quit the show business twenty years ago, and came to Portland to live. I figgered I was gettin' too old to be galavantin' all over the country. Since then I have made a living as a house painter, and am now the oldest active painter in the Painters' Union at Portland. Yes, I learned to paint while in the show business. Many a piece of show equipment, wagons, platforms, etc., I painted for the circus.

The show business may be a hard life, but if I had it all to do over again I would still want you to give me the same route. It's been a "long haul". I've passed the ninetieth "flare," and feel like I'm standing outside the "connection" waitin' for the whistle.

A "long haul", or a "long haul town", is a town in which the railroad loading spur is situated a long distance from the circus lot. "Flares" are kerosene torches set out along the way from the loading spur to the lot to guide the teamsters. As flares are usually placed two to a block, ninety flares would indicate a long haul. In other words, old Doc has passed the ninetieth milestone, and feels that he hasn't much farther to go. "Standing outside the connection waitin' for the whistle"... Performers, acts, animals, etc., stand outside the connecting entrance to the arena for a short time before they are summoned to enter by the shrill note of the "routine director's" whistle.

W. E. "Doc" Van Alstine retired from

active circus life in 1917, and has since made his home in Portland. Circus day in Portland is a red-letter day in old Doc's calendar of events. The big shows never forget him, and when they arrive in Portland, Doc is always presented with a generous supply of "Annie Oakleys" (passes). Surrounding himself with a bunch of his cronies from the Plaza Blocks, Doc and his party are the first ones on the lot, and though a nonagenarian, Doc misses nothing that happens during the progress of the performance, and is alert to even the slightest deviation from conventional circus routine.

Hard times struck Doc for a time, and he found it necessary to live for awhile at the Multnomah County Farm. With the passing of the Old Age Pension law, however, Doc was able to leave the County Farm and move into the city. He works occasionally for the painters' union, out of the Portland Labor Temple.

m

Fiddler's Cave

Eben H. Drum
A. D. Streeter

"I organized a neighborhood orchestra the year of 1912 in the neighborhood in and about Orchards. We played for most of the community dances for miles about. I had learned to play the fiddle when I was a small boy. In my orchestra was a first fiddle, a second fiddle, a cello, cornet, clarionet, flute and a flageolet. We met about from place to place to play for practice and also had regular meeting night at the town hall. The orchestra got to be mighty popular. We played such popular pieces as 'Devil's Dream,' 'The Girl I left Behind me,' 'Pop-goes-the-weasel' 'Last Rose of Summer,'

"Money Musk' and many more of the popular airs. I made a lot of small booklets so that each member could have one of his own. I drew the whole out by hand using a pen and ink. We know exactly what we were to play and played it. We traveled about the country with a team and hack (two-seated buggy). We not only furnished the music but did the calling, and bossed the floor. We played for dances in Clark County and would be sent for, to play for dances over in Oregon. We were mighty popular musicians and I was out-standing as their leader. There was a rival put in existence in the neighborhood over to the east of us. We were asked to play for a dance right in their neighborhood. One night our boys were playing away and the dancers were hoeing-it-down in a right smart quadrille, when the rival orchestra leader came into the room. He was mad to think our boys had been asked to play over there. He yelled, 'You think you can play, don't you? Get out of here, you damn fiddling cusses.' A free for all fight started right there. One of my boys got a black eye and I got hold of a piece of 2x4 that happened to be handy-and boy, didn't I clean out that mess. I was always pretty good with my fists and two black shiners was given that orchestra leader. That Orchestra never was any good— two fiddles and a cello were all the instruments they had. They didn't know half the time what they were playing. The fiddlers most of the time would forget to bring their resin along and how their fiddles would squeak. I remember one night I forgot to bring my resin along and one of the girls was chewing some gum which was some of that stuff maving a resinous base in it. I said, Kitty, let me have your gum to grease my fiddle bow with; 'Why yes, Art, sure I will.' And she opened up her face and rolled up her gum between her fingers into a ball and handed it over to me. Well, it did the stuff— I did not forget my resin again. I am a very versatile man any way. That's what makes me popular with the boys. Well I saved my orchestra's reputation.

I met-up with that orchestra leader that I gave the pair of shiners to, several months after that fight, and he says: 'Say, Art, I'd rather be

kicked by a horse than hit with your fist.' I was always a good fighter. Why, even now that I am 78 years old, I command respect from the fellers. During the hunting season this last fall, some smart young cusses was out roaming across my place, hunting. About that time I happened to be trying to shoot a sap-suck that had been bothering about my roof. I was standing near my door trying to get a bead on that sap-sucker These smart young fellers happen to see my old cat, settin' up on a fence post. Now be blamed if they didn't ups with their gun and shot my cat. Well that made me mad. I yelled at the sneaks and they looked over to where I was standing and then started to run for the road and their car which was standing out thar in the road. They got in and started-up their engine and then turned round and laughed at me. Guess they thought I was too old to square myself. Quick as thought I drew up my old gun to my shoulder, took a good aim and let it bang at their hid tire. Well now if that car did not head for the ditch. It did not do the smarties any harm but it did stop their car. They walked back and began cussing me Saying: 'We'd come in and beat you up if you did not have that gun in your hand! I walked over to the step their and laid my gun down and walked down toward the road. Now, gentlemen, come on, all four of you'. Well they said 'What business had you shooting at my car?' 'Well lots more business than you had shooting my cat!' 'Your old cat wasn't worth a damn.' ' That is what you think. I would not have taken $25.00 for that cat. There is a place down the road where you can get your tire fixed— and remember this, when you come out here hunting again, you leave my cats alone.' Well, they took off their tire and put on their spare tire, but threatened to send the sheriff out after me from Vancouver.

Well, that was several months ago, but they have not caught up with that sheriff yet, I guess for I have not seen anything of him. I tell you they hated the looks of my fist. Nothing like keepin' physically fit.

"I remember once, when I was quite a little boy, I was out walkin' with my father 'round

Green Mountain over thar. We came to a hole in the side of the mountain and as I was always curious, I said to pa, you wait here, while I see where that hole leads to. Well, I crawls into it. The hole went straight down. I went down about a hundred yards or so. It looked pretty dark to me and about this time pa hollered from the out-side, 'Art, you'd better come out of there.' Well, I came out but made up my mind that I'd get brother Bill to come with me some day and we'd go down that cave and maybe find some hidden Injun treasure. Well, about a week after that, Bill and me started out but we took our trusty old lantern with us. We found the cave and crawled into it. After we got in aways the cave got bigger. We lit our lantern and wandered along for a distance of what seemed to me a mile or more. We came upon a heap of bones, which looked like animals bones. Bill and I thought this may have been the home of some cougars that had carried in their prey to eat it. Well, we were kind of scared and decided to get out of that thar cave. The cave went straight in, so there was no chance to get lost. We had no trouble getting out.

"We decided to come back some tother time and go to the end of that cave. Well, about a month later, we went back. But some rock disturbance must have taken place. We hunted for several hours for the opening. But all we could find was a place where it looked like the earth had sunken in. We were mighty glad it did not happen while we were in that cave."

Ghosts

Cassels R. Tiedeman
Ophelia Jemison

Opehlia was asked if she believed that spirits ever came back to see their loved ones.

"I knowed sperrits come back. I seen um. Ef a pusson die mean an wicked an' want you, he come back an' git at you sure ting. You jes' go up to de grabe yaad (graveyard) at at sun down, an' hold you head close down to de ground you kin hear em comin' up louder an' louder an' ef you don't git way, you'll be snatched down in one ob dem graves.

"I see me husband one time. He stan' by me side but he bery little in size wid a big head, 'bout lak dat waiter ober dere on de table, an' he hair parted on de side jes' as natural. He all dressed in white wid long flowin' sleebe. You see, he killed sudden lak widout he hab time to tell me nuttin', so he come back to hab he say. He say it all right, but I ain't catch what he say, den I wanna talk to em but he banish. May be I too wicked to talk to a sperrit."

"But Ophelia how can spirits come back to this world?"

"Lord miss, sperrits ain't fasten down, dey freer den we. Dey come back when ebber dey lak but some don't ebber come back any. Tom an Alice, two ob me fambly been talkin' to me dis mornin', cause I been hear a buzzin' in me year an' I knowed dey want to know how I come here wid you."

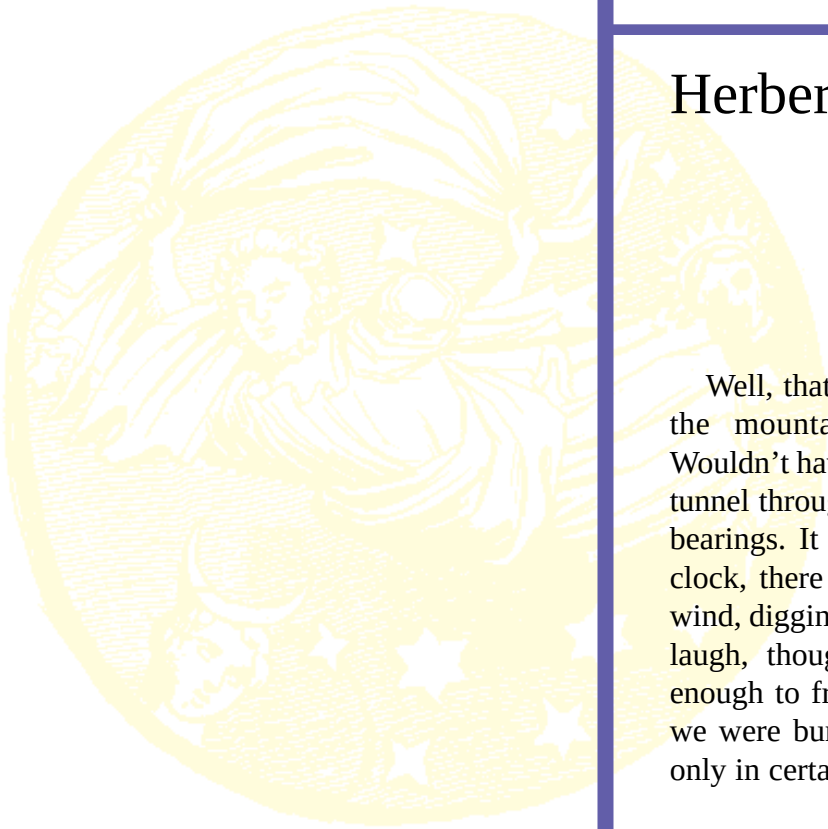
"Did they find out?"

"Oh! dey come agin an' agin till dey satisfy dem self. Dey know by de way I talk when dat buzzin' aggregate me. Sperrits all obber, dey 'tract you 'tention when ebber dey lak."

Source: Ophelia Jemison, Addison Court Charleston, SC,

Windology

Herbert Harris



Well, that was the longest winter I spent in the mountains. Jefferson county it was. Wouldn't have been so bad if we didn't have to tunnel through the drifts to the peak to get our bearings. It was, come Monday, regular as a clock, there we would be, in the edge of the wind, digging away. Funny thing that. Made us laugh, though we were so miserable. Cold enough to freeze the marrow in the bone, yet we were burning up, specially our faces. But only in certain places. At the proper angle, she

was a right smart gale. But it wasn't the wind that bothered us such. Matter of fact, that's what we were after — wind.

No, it wasn't the wind. It was them pesky wood ticks. Sure misery, they are. First off, you had to find them; then, dig 'em out. Nicked our axes plumb to hell. We honed them till there was nothing left of our hones. Wore? 'em to slivers. Couldn't shave then. See?

That was all virgin country. Fertile soil. Things just shot up. Came with our whiskers. And when our hones gave out… Got so, a fellow couldn't even scratch. Not to do any good, that is. Tangle got so thick. You couldn't see the swellings on our faces, but you knew they were there, a-burning away… just burning and burning…

We had one lad, smart as they came. Hailed from Omaha, Nebraska. "Looka, here," he said. "Wher I came from, folk have an old Indian custom."

"And what might that be," said I.

"Well," he said, "when whiskers in Omaha get to be real unmanageable, the menfolk stick their faces round a street corner and let the northers burn 'em off. 'Course, the Indians had an easier time than white folks. They just went out a piece from camp, caught the edge of a norther and let it singe off their whiskers merely by turning about to accomodate the blade, as it were. Now things are different back home. More houses than people; more street corners than a wind knows what to do with. If you want a complete singe, you got to catch the norther at the right angle. Well, gents, I heard tell some men, special the older ones, get plumb wore out chasing from one corner to another to get a proper singeing."

"Well, that's so," I said. 'It ain't in Nebraska only people get their whiskers singed off by the northers. My dad used to get a pretty good shave in Chicago, just by standing on the shore of a lake there. What's on your mind, boy?"

"I was thinking," he said, "suppose now we gets the North Wind to do 'at little chore for us."

Well, that got us. Here we were, getting feverisher and feverisher every minute with all

that poison from the woodticks ‘cause we had no hones to sharpen our axes with and cut through the underbrush and get at ‘em. And if that North Wind would do that little job for us, why, we figured, we had no call not to take advantage of his offer, in a manner of speaking. That’s where all the researching in? the science of Windology we had been doing would come in right handy, I thought. So we headed for the peak of Mount Olympus. You’d never believe what that North Wind could do when he set himself to raise hell. Once he tore up a whole mountainside. But that was before my time, long before even Omaha, Nebraska, was settled, long before any Indian ever thought of getting a free singe, I guess.

Well, so we tunnels our way to the peak. On the summit, it blows so hard we have to lash ourselves to a boulder to keep from being blown away. “Take it easy, gents,” yells the Nebraskan. “Its hitting straight on, wait till it starts climbing to lift its tail over the peak.”

So we huddles there watching old North Wind lifting his tail over the peak. Most fearsome sight you ever saw. To get that peak he had to circle and circle, easing up to the stars, now backing a bit to let the tail clear a ledge, now flicking it to straighten it out. That tail must have been as long as from here to Alaska. It was bright up there on the peak. If you looked close, you could see a million nicks in that tail.

“That’s where the Omahaans had rasped it,” said the Nebraskan in a kind of an awe. “My God! Never knew bristles could be so tough!”

Well, when it got so cold we couldn’t stand it any more, we took a chance sticking our faces over the boulder to get our whiskers singed. Nearly took our heads off, I can tell you. Blowed particularly bad when he was swishing his tail. And the cold froze the woodticks stiff.

But as I was saying, it was virgin country then, everything grew overnight. Next morning, sure enough, our whiskers were an inch long. And a week later they were a foot long. And then? woodticks had thawed out and were making up for lost time. Well, we kept singe-

ing them. But it was hard work, I can tell you.

One night, when we got to the peak, there was this Nebraskan putting the finishing touches to the finest board walk you ever did see. We hadn't missed 'im because we were each so miserable with all that woodtick poison in us, we couldn't see straight. But there he was, hammering away at the braces, pulling and hauling to test the strength of his boardwalk. Ran it clear around the peak, with cable rails, a-curving in and out like them derbies they make for the kids in playlands.

We were so astounded, we just stood there. Up north we could hear Old North Wind commencing on his nightly rounds. Was due to hit the peak any moment. 'Cause on straight ground North Wind was faster than greased lightning. Well, the Nebraskan threw off his clothes — everything but his wool socks, weighted 'em down with a boulder and got on his board walk. Maybe I should call it a balcony. If you saw one side — or curve, I should say, it looked just like a wooden platform sticking from a rock tower. Them curves were built according to the laws of Higher Windology. Perfect. Just an eighteenth of an inch into the known inner stream — path, that is — of North Wind's tail. It had to be so. If you built that platform a seventeenth of an inch out, the edge would take your skin off; on the other hand, if you'd get no better than a singe you would have to do it over again next week.

Well, sir, that wind was coming a-whooping. We lashed ourselves to a boulder. I saw the Nebraskan fasten his High Rigger's belt to the cable railing just in time. The blow was at first terrific. Then Northwind started to spiral to the stars, to lift his tail over the peak. We heard a funny sputtering sound. Sure enough, when we looked over the boulder, there was sparks flying just above the cable rail. The Nebraskan was so coated with frost he looked a frozen ghost. Cause he was moving around, now one way now the other, leaning a bit into the edge, then jumping back, like it was getting too hot. From time to time he would lean back hard against the cliff to shatter the frost off him, and then you could see bits of him as clean and

pink as if he'd been just sandpapered.

After a while it got warmer. Felt like heat was coming from the wind's tail. We got up on the boardwalk and started to undress, figuring that as soon as the Nebraskan had got his shave, another one of us would step up and the rest wait in line for their turn.

The Nebraskan waved us away. Sweat was pouring from him and he was red all over like a beet. Clean shaved! Everywhere! Even under the arm pits!

Then came the most goshawful scream you ever did hear. Sounded like the world was being torn apart in one rip. The North Wind's tail dropped so fast, the head was in sight before you could yell "Timber." Blood ran from the cable rail about the board walk and splashed all over the planking. Down below, in the canyon, the snow was turning red. We looked to the east. Narry a sign of the dawn. It was blood that was turning the canyon crimson. The North Wind was bleeding from all those woodticks that had dug into it as soon as its cutting edge had warmed up on the Nebraskan's beard. That's why. Those ticks dug in so deep they gave the wind a fever. Only he's a sluggish creature, is the North Wind. That's why it took him so long to realize what was happening to him. That wind is so long it takes hours for its nervous system to click. But once it does…

Well, sir, the Nebraskan got the cleanest shave all over any man could want. The best part was, his hair never grew again. Wind froze the roots. Now if I had thought of rigging that platform, I might be the cleanest permanent shaved man in the State of Washington now.

m

Hobo Lore

John E. O'Donnell
J. J. Stauter
Francis Donovan

All hoboes do not talk the same language. Some hoboes are "bums", others "yeags".

A bum, the untouchable of the road, works on occasion, but a yeag will starve to death before lowering himself to honest labor. In other words, a hobo is a periodical bum who works today and takes to the road tomorrow, while a yeag is a professional tramp. Moreover, bumming is a racket and yeaging is regarded as a profession with a history and a culture of a sort. There are poets and songwrit-

ers in yeagdom. Their creations reflect their abnormal life just as poetry, song and music reflect joys and sorrows of all people through the ages.

"Yorkey Ned's" poem, "The Klondike", for example, is the story of what, he saw and suffered while seeking gold in the Northland.

"At Fresno" by "Trot 'em Out Pete," is a picture of a yeag convention at Fresno, California fifty years ago. These conventions are annual affairs and are attended by "Johnsons", as the yeags called themselves, from all parts of the country. They arrive at convention headquarters, a jungle camp on the outskirts of some small city, via the rods and bumpers of freight and passenger trains. Cripples minus legs and arms, paralytics, able bodied loafers on high heels and crutches, and punks (boys) with their arms in splints are among the delegates.

The order of every convention day is the same: drinking and singing from morn till night; poets recite their poems and song writers bellow their songs with all hands joining in the chorus. Every poet and songwriter comes to the conventions with a new creation. Prizes, a hundred dollars, are awarded for the most popular creations and the winners are expected to squander their awards on booze before the convention adjourns. If they don't they are given "Micky Finns" (knock out drops) and are relieved of their cash.

The watering tanks of the railroads are the hotel registers of hoboland. Every yeag carves his "monicker" on the tanks and these registrations enable then to keep in touch with each

other. For example: “Boston Blackey-West-8-10.”

And so one day “Yorkey Ned” wrote ‘The Watering Tank.” Likewise the convention at Montreal in 1872 was the inspiration for “Moochers Hall,” one of the most popular drinking songs of yeagdom.

The yeags also have an anthem with which all conventions are opened and closed. It is called, “Oh, Where is my wandering Brat tonight?” Salvation Army street corner meetings gave Ned the idea for the yeag anthem and “The Guinea” the idea for “Tony’s Dream.” But no yeag poet ever sings of love because the “Johnsons” avoided alliances with women. “Gals” are outlawed and yeags who cultivated them are blacklisted. And so the songs and poetry of yeagdom reflect the elements of the abnormal life of the road. They are documents of human experience.

•

“In 1928 times was pretty good, and the “boes” (tramps) were getting scarce — they could make good money almost anywhere. I run across one feller near Cincinnati that was ridin’ the brakes west. He looked like he might be the
kind that took a job once in a while so I told him that there was lots of work in Kansas City if he was interested. He said: ‘Brother, I hain’t worked for eleven year. And what’s more, brother, I hain’t never gone to work again — until there’s a red flag flyin’ over the Post Office.” (told by anonimous)

*

…Mr. Botsford has some “tradin’ to do” and it is obvious that I have called at an inopportune moment, but he says he can spare some time and wants to know “what’s on your mind.” I ask him about unemployment in the old days.

“Wasn’t any, to speak of,” he says,” except during the panic, and durin’ the hard times that came every once in a while. They wasn’t any long drawn out depressions. A man wasn’t out of work for more than a month or so at the most. ‘Course there was always a few paupers that couldn’t or wouldn’t work, and there was tramps, same as they was today, that would rather lead a rovin’ life than stay in one place.

“I never told you about, some of the tramps we used to have, did I? The ones that came to be well known around here were all odd characters. I suppose you might say some of them weren’t right, though that’s matter of opinion. Maybe they was smarter than folks who looked down on them. Maybe they got more satisfaction out of life in their own way than some who were better off.

“We had a number of them that used to come through this way periodically. I guess the most famous of them all was the old Leather Man. He’s been written up in books and magazines and I guess he’s known all over the country. He
had a regular round of travel and he used to hit this section every so often.

“I can’t tell you a great deal about him, but I see him two - three times. I had a picture of him here, somewhere. (Mr. Botsford conducts an unsuccessful search for the picture). “Too

bad I can't find it. It was taken by somebody who found the Leatherman sittin' on a stone wall, munchin' somethin'.

"He used to dress all in leather, that's how he got the name, his clothes were patched and sewed all over with big leather strips and he wore a leather cap. He used to stay in caves. He had a regular route, like I said, and he knew where there were caves all over this state and New York and Massachusetts. He wandered around in kind of a big circle. There was one of his caves over beyond Bidwell's hill —they call it Leatherman's cave to this day. Maybe you've seen it yourself.

"They had all kinds of stories about the Leatherman, but nobody ever found out if they was true or not. Some said he had been crossed in love and vowed never to talk again. He never said nothin' to nobody. Most likely he was a dummy. They said his name was Jules, and that he was a Frenchman, came from a good family. The Leatherman never gave out any information. If he had a secret he took it with him. They found him dead somewheres, one time, if I remember rightly.

"There was another feller who came around for years, they used to call 'Hash and Coffee,' He used to go in the basement of Aaron Thomas' house and they'd give him coffee, then he'd go up to Woodward's up near the Catholic church and they'd give him hash.

"Another one that I remember was Johnny O' the Woods. He was like the rest of them. Never said much of anything. Never molested anybody. Always had certain places to stop. And he always wore two overcoats.

"When I was five or six years old, I remember, the queerest one of all used to come around. She was a little short Irishwoman they used to call Aunt Jane. She always came to our house. She'd always get a cup of tea and something to eat and the women liked to see her comin' because she was a great talker.

"Her son came to this country when he was a young feller and she never heard from him again. So she came over here to look for him. She thought this country was about as big as Ireland, and she never realized what a job it would be to find anybody like that.

"When she came in, she'd tell the whole story, and describe him, and ask if anybody had seen him. She walked from town to town for years, and I don't know what finally did become of her. She used to travel in a circle too, and to the end of her days I don't think she ever knew the size of the country. She never found her son anyway.

"I guess every country has their characters like that. I read about one called the Red Snake, down in Australia. This feller killed a snake and brought it home and hung it up. He went away from the house again, and the mate to that snake follered his trail in the meantime, and come in the house and killed his wife and child. When he come home and found them, he went kind of crazy. He went out and started looking for that snake, traveled all over Australia killing every snake he saw. That's the way he spent his life. Just travelin' from one place to the other, beggin' his food and killin' snakes.

"You know there's somethin' about that kind of a life that some people can't resist. Once they

start trampin' they're never no good for nothin' else. That's why you'll always have tramps. Some people have that urge, but they fight it.

"There was a feller herein town years ago used to be a painter. In his spare time he used to walk all over the back roads. Me and my father used to meet him all over the county when we was out drivin'. I suppose people who seen that feller trampin' along would think he was a regular hobo . And maybe he woulda been, if he'd follered his inclinations.

"Well I'd never make a tramp, because I don't care enough about walkin'. I'm going downtown now, but I'm not goin' to walk. You want a lift?"

m

Cowboy Hardships

Belle Kilgore

I was teaching near, Ranger Lake, Lea County, New Mexico during the first part of 1917 and boarded with Mr. Boss Beal's family. It was a severe cold winter, and the cattle men were having a great deal of work to do to keep the cattle from drifting in to the hills south and west. The cattle wereweak and the grass was short, so it was necessary to keep them where they could be fed.

"Of course, now since there are so many fences," he said, "and smaller pastures, we do

not have the trouble that we had in the country twenty or thirty years ago." Ranger Lake had been headquarters for a ranch operated by the Beall Brothers.

"The first drift fence that was built by the XIT syndicate company operated by the company that built the Texas Capitol building in 1886. This fence was built west from the State Line Fence and built to keep the cattle from drifting into the southwest of New Mexico. Every year thousands of range cattle from Colorado, Kansas and Northern parts of Texas and New Mexico would go as far south as they could. These herds were great by the time they reached the cap rock between here and Roswell.

Joe Cook and Jim Rogers were cowboys from one of the headquarters of the LFD, which was located south of Littlefield Texas. These boys were sent out to New Mexico with others to turn their cattle towards the southeast course into Texas. But they could not handle their herd, with the straggling cattle that came and there was no way to turn them against the north and east winds, and the driving snows and rains. Tim took a bad cold and Joe had to take of him and so on the cattle drifted. Joe and Tim housed up in a small shack that had been built by some trappers near Portales Springs. At night Joe sat by Tim expecting every breath to be the last, fearing to leave him for fear he would come back and find Tim dead. So for several days they stayed in the cabin without food and medicine.

Tim said, "Joe, you are starving, and I am dying, so you go and see if you can find something to eat, and get help." Joe refused at first, but Tim when in his rational moments, begged so hard that at last Joe consented to go for help. The day was cloudy, but the snow was not so thick in the air as it had been for the last three days. Joe placed all the fuel he could find in the cabin near an old stove and put water where Tim could get it..

"So long, old chap, "said Joe, "I'll be back with somthin' to chaw," and leaving his partner whom he did not expect to find alive again, he headed due east, as he rode the snow came

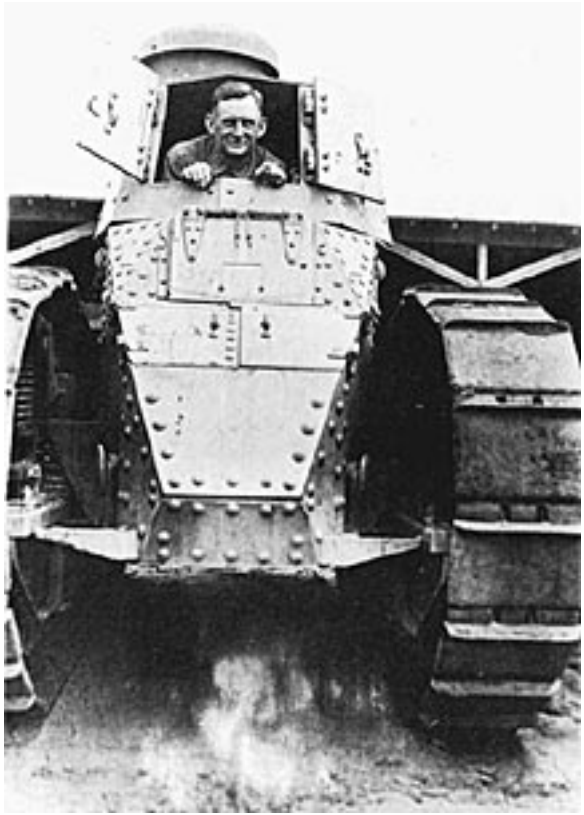
thicker and the wind blew harder, but he went as fast as his hungry horse could travel. When night came on he stopped in a clump of bushes and he had no idea where he was, he had lost all sense of direction.

He tethered his horse on the windward side of the bushes and huddled up in the center of the thicket. He passed the night nearly froze and in his dreams he could see Tim's white face, and dream of good things to eat and warm fires. He was awakened by the whinnying of his horse, at early dawn. The horse was throwing his head around and looking in the direction of the northeast. "What is it, Blue?" asked Joe. "Well, if you know where we're going, you know more than I do." The horse started in the northeast direction and seemed to be anxious to go. They traveled perhaps about five or six miles, when Joe notices tracks in the snow, horse tracks and a cattle tracks, as if they were being driven. In a short time he knew by the increased number of tracks that some cowboys must be not far away. At last, he saw smoke in the distance The horse which was nearly past traveling headed that way, but staggered. Joe dismounted and led the horse, staggering as he went, but he was set on reaching that camp fire. He began to halloo and he sighted some cowboys, who had heard his calls. The boys came lopping towards him.

"Hie, there, Joe Cook, you Ol-sun-uv-a-gun, we've been huntin' fur you and Tim for a week. Where did you hide youself? Bi, gosh, boys, he's dead, "and Will Green ran up to him and picked him up. "He's starved and froze to death." They carried him to the fire and put him down on some saddle blankets. "Get him some whiskey, boys, " and they poured all the whiskey that they could ge down him. Get some of that hot coffee and git him somethin' to eat," and the boys worked on him until he was fed and warm. He told them that Tim was awful sick. "He' pro' bly dead by now," and dropped his head in his hands and sobbed. "Now, Joe, tell us where we can find him and we'll bring him back sound and you git some sleep you'self." Two cowboys went for a doctor, and several of the boys, took food and

blankets to bring Tim. When they got there Tim was unconscious. They revived him soon and gave him hot food and the next morning, they put him on a horse and rode twelve miles each one them holding him. They did not expect him to be alive when they reached the camp, but he did not seem any worse, and soon the doctor from the ranch had him and Joe doped out and they were put in a chuck wagon and taken back to headquarters.

After the two weeks of severe weather, the cowboys could do nothing but take care of the cattle and horses at the headquarters. When the storm broke, Joe and Tim were about recovered and they went on the roundup below [Port los?] Springs. A rider from below Tatum came up and told them that the drift Fence had been out and thousand of cattle had fallen off the caprock and cowboys could make good money skinning the frozen cows. Cowboys and men from all over the country went down and as hides were bringing better money that steers, the wholesale skinning began. The brands were some of them well known and some of them were traced back up in Colorado and Kansas and Oklahoma. But to the skinner belonged the hide, though he had to have a bill of sale to the hide. This caused considerable trouble for some brands were not located. Well that was a spring when all the boys had a little money even if the cowman did lose."



A Baptism That Didn't Take

Wayne Walden
Fred Roys

Several of us were standing in front of the "Crusader" on Fourteenth Street and our rather desultory conversation finally turned to "gettin' religion." It was then that big Fred opened up. Said he:

"Them religious revivals they used to have, you don't see much of that sort of goings-on nowadays; but in them days they was great doin's. When I was a kid we used to look forward to 'em like we did the circus. Sometimes they was as good as a circus. It was a case of

come to Jesus everybody. You had to come in or they'd hound the hell out of you if you didn't. The woods was full of Billy Sundays, and if you could stand out against their persuadin' you, you was a good one. You had to have what they call stamina. Generally when some of those old hens got a hold of a guy, he was a goner, 'cause the women then went into the revival business with both feet. When they took out after you, there wasn't much use a runnin'.

But there was one old codger they had a devil of a time a snarin! He wouldn't fall for their bait at all. They tried every which way to get him, but old Rufe- Rufus Gray his name was- was one guy they couldn't bring into the fold. He had read Bob ingersoll, I guess, and didn't seem to give a damn if his soul was saved or not. Pie in the sky couldn't move him. The chase went on for years, revival after revival, and still old Rufe couldn't be swayed from the paths of wickedness he preferred to travel. His soul was getting blacker and blacker with accumulatin' sins, but still the old cuss hung back. The stubborn old geeser seemed sure as hell-bound-for-hell, and the bettin' was odds against his ever being corraled.

Well, it finally happened that a revival came on and, whether the Bible-pounder was more convincin', or whether the sistern put on greater pressure in their persuadin' whatever it was, old Rufe- maybe he thought it was better to get it over with, but anyhow the old guy shows signs of weakening. He give up arguin' and told 'em O-Kay, that he was ready to submit at last.

Well, of course, landin' a hardshell old sinner, the likes of him, caused a lot of rejoicing among the sistern and the brethren. It was a great triumph, something to holler about. All that was lacking now was the baptism. And for old Rufus it'd need more'n a little sprinkling. It'd need a whole damnedpuddle of water for him to be made pure and radiant!

The baptisings was most of the time done in a lake, about a mile and a half from town. The preacher, and whoever would be his helpers, would lead the converts out to where the water was about arm-pit deep, and then dip 'em

under. That's what they done to old Rufe too — they leads him out to where the water was up to his whiskers and then topples him under. But he wasn't countin' on being ducked.

So he comes up sputtering, and pawing, and madder'n hell. Soon as he untangles himself from their hanging on to him, he starts out swimmin' to beat the devil himself, and when he gets out in about the middle of the lake he turns his head and hollers out-"Yeah, you would, would you? You'd try to drown somebody, would you? You gawd-damned fools."

m

Reconstructing England's Time Lord

Between 1971 and 1978 the BBC burned 135 episodes of its long-running SF show *Doctor Who*. Since that time, only about twenty have been recovered. Rumors abound of missing episodes still existing in the hands of collectors, in television archives abroad, or in the hands of former BBC employees who rescued them from being junked, but no new finds have been made since 1993, when a four part story from the show's fifth season was found complete in the vaults of a TV station in Ghana.

The presumed non-existence of nearly one quarter of the series run has — uniquely among cult TV shows — given fans of the

series a Cause, and while Who fandom has its share of the usual pointless conventions, cruises, fan fiction and the like, a small group of fans are using their time and talents to useful ends: the recovery, or, should recovery prove impossible, reconstruction of the missing episodes.

Created in 1963 by Sidney Newman (who at about the same time created another runaway hit, *The Avengers*) and originally starring character actor William Hartnell in the title role, *Doctor Who* is a science fiction soap opera geared to children, though from the very beginning it had an enthusiastic adult audience as well. A single story lasted between four and six weeks on average; with its cliffhanger structure, eccentric hero and a virtual parade of monsters it quickly became a Saturday night ritual on British television that lasted nearly thirty years.

It is a show that requires a certain amount of willing participation from its audience — the low production values, unconvincing monsters and wandering scripts would try the patience of many — but viewers who invest a spark of their own whimsy will find that the show fires on that spark and feeds it with its own eccentricity and a sense of healthy, gentle sedition.

That "willing participation" reached a new level in the early nineties with the discovery of a very complete series of "Telesnaps" — photographs of scenes from the missing episodes taken by professional photographer John Cura.

Cura, whose clients included actors, directors, and the BBC itself, made a business of setting his camera up in front of the television and snapping photos off the air. These were the days of live TV, and off-air photos were often the only record an actor or director had of their work. Many of Cura's *Doctor Who* photos were bound into volumes and stored at a remote BBC archive — which is where they were found thirty years later.

Soundtracks of the missing episodes were already known to exist. Indeed, the BBC made commercial releases of this audio material at about the same time of the Telesnap discovery. It was only a matter of time before someone thought of combining the audios with the Telesnaps and existing video material (includ-

ing film clips held by Australian censors) to "reconstruct" the missing episodes.

Working independently and, at first, unaware of each other, four fans (Richard Devlin, Robert Franks, Bruce Robinson and Michael Palmer) began reconstructing the shows on video between 1993 and 1995. At first their methods were primitive and the finished product reached an audience of as few as six people. Soon, though, computers, video editing software and cameras were brought into play, and the quality of the reconstructions improved. The four men later joined forces and under Robert Franks's supervision an internet-based distribution network was set up, with dubbing sites for the finished videos on two continents (the videos are free to anyone interested).

Rick Brindell, VP in charge of Marketing at Sterling & Sterling, a Long Island insurance agency, was a part of that distribution network from the start, but found the passive role he played in the project unsatisfying; last year he decided to try reconstructing a serial of his own.

Rick Brindell

"I actually had no video editing experience at all," Brindell says. "My first two attempts at *The Macra Terror* [a 1967 episode starring the late Patrick Troughton] failed as both times I had to rely on other people to do the 'work.' I did not have the equipment — video capture card, scanner, video editing software ... if I wanted to produce a recon, I would have to rely on myself alone. So I did some homework and went out and bought all the hardware and software I needed, and taught myself how to do it by trial and error."

Since then, under the name Loose Cannon

Productions, Brindell has produced three more reconstructions and is working on a fourth. Reaction has been good, with the finished product reaching an audience of about 500 people and an enthusiastic reception.

Brindell spends between ten and twenty hours a week at his reconstruction work, "most of it after my wife has gone to bed. When I first started these projects my wife couldn't stand it as it takes up a lot of my free time. Now that I have gotten quite a bit of acclaim, she has realized that what I do is appreciated by fans everywhere. She is now very understanding."

Pre-production work, gathering the materials and planning their arrangement, takes up most of the time. "Then I scan the pictures and take the screen grabs with my 'snappy,' capture whatever clips there are and record the audio into the computer as a .wav file. I use Ulead's Media Pro video editing software to edit the episodes together frame by frame. This is very precise and tedious work. Many people have noted that I synch my clips with the audio extremely well, but it is made easy due to the software. Then I render the video editing program to an AVI file, which takes about 12 hours. Then I output to video tape."

Brindell's latest reconstruction, of 1965's *The Myth Makers*, required more than the usual degree of inventiveness — and an element of Kismet. The story, a comedy, has The Doctor traveling back in time to ancient Greece and influencing history to the extent of suggesting and designing the Trojan Horse. Only seven photographs existed for the show, hardly enough to make a satisfying presentation. Screen grabs of the regular characters came from other episodes of the series, but the guest actors provided more difficulty. "I was able to get pictures of Agamemnon (Francis de Wolff) from a 1962 movie called *Carry On Cleo*. He actually wore the same costume as in *Myth* three years later. I was also able to get screen grabs of Max Adrian (King Priam) which came from the TV show *Up Pompeii!* and Frances White (Cassandra) from *I Claudius*. Both were great finds due to the period costume. For the rest of the characters I had to use a different face to fit the voice as there were no good pictures for them. I used a

Original Trojan Horse prop used in Doctor Who: The Myth Makers, as seen in Brindell's reconstruction.

variety of movies for scenery shots... the picture of the Greek camp came from *Jason and the Argonauts*. The picture of Troy came from *Helen Of Troy*. The crowd fight shot and the Greek fleet came from *The Odyssey*."

But the best find of all came as Brindell was finishing the reconstruction. "I had an email one day back in the beginning of July from a guy in England I did not know (Derek Handley). He told me that he was a friend of David Howe, who has written quite a few books on *Doctor Who* and who owns the actual Trojan Horse prop used in the production. He asked if I would like some pictures. I jumped all over that, believe me."

New video footage was taken of the horse, which stands just one meter high. "They decorated a picnic table with sand and a few branches and filmed the horse with a camcorder. Then they 'aged' the film to make it look 30 years old." In addition, new plans for the horse's construction were drawn up and photographed with a digital camera. "The 'actor' that played Hartnell's hands also had a replica Hartnell ring, to give it an authentic touch."

The finished product amounts to a new presentation and in some ways it's more interesting to see how Brindell has pieced together the filmclips, still photos and new material into a form that carries dramatic weight than it would have been to see the original episodes themselves. As with all *Doctor Who*, the reconstructions require some participation from the viewer but on the whole they are very successful at capturing the flavor of the series... and they allow fans of the show access to stories that would otherwise be known only from novelisations — a poor substitute for a show that relies so heavily on the charisma of its actors.

Brindell believes that the BBC looks on the activities of the reconstructors with tacit indifference, and is unfazed by suggestions that his hard work might be rendered useless in coming years. “I do believe that some of the missing episodes exist somewhere,” he says. “Probably sitting in someone’s attic. Perhaps a TV exec died and the kids haven’t gone through the personal possessions yet. However, I will not hold my breath. As far as I am concerned, I will never see them. This way I will not be disappointed. And now with the reconstructions, it’s not as important.”

*To learn more about obtaining **Doctor Who** reconstructions, visit Rick’s website at http://www.recons.com/From there you can link to Robert Frank’s distribution site.*

sidebar

Is the Doctor a mason?

At the very least, the mythology of freemasonry is a part of Doctor Who. The Freemasons are an international secret society “having as its principles brotherliness, charity and mutual aid,” (Websters) or, as stated by Colin Wilson in his history of the occult, seeking nothing less than “the regeneration of mankind.” Wilson goes on to state that the freemason organisation has become the home of “occultists, alchemists, astrologers, and so on,” — in other words, an order of a very similar nature to *Doctor Who’s* Time Lords of Gallifrey.

The Egyptian branch of Freemasonry was founded by the sham magician Cagliostro, and has as part of its mythology the following interesting claim (again from Colin Wilson) “the pupils of the prophets never die... they have twelve lives, and after each, rise up from their ashes like the pheonix. Cagliostro began to drop hints that he was thousands of years old.” This almost exactly matches the background that series writers Robert Holmes and Terrance Dicks gave their otherworldly Time Lords.

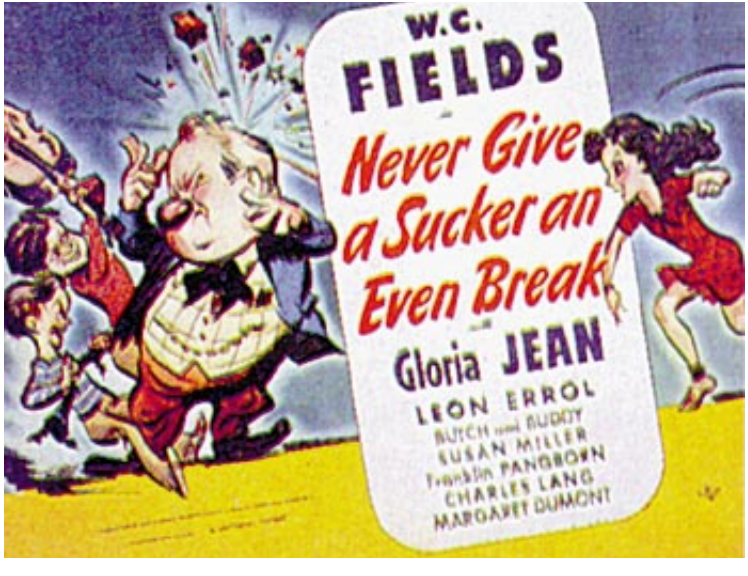
Each branch or temple of the freemasons is governed by a Master — and Cagliostro set himself up as the Master of them all. The Doctor’s second most frequent adversary is another renegade Time Lord calling himself The Master.

Could it be that a certain renegade Time Lord was attempting to create a rival group on Earth, one with similar powers that would, in time, grow to an extent that would allow it to challenge the Gallifreyan order?

Or, far more likely, perhaps when it came time to flesh out the mythos of ***Doctor Who*** writers Dicks and Holmes did some research into a real-life “secret society.”

FILM-FLAM

MILLENNIUM
A JOURNAL FOR TOMORROWLAND



Fields for President

The criminal lack of W.C. Fields available on home video is about to come to an end. Universal, no doubt spurred on by the success of their $14.95 line of black and white classics (first their horror library, then comedy and musicals) is *finally* releasing more of the Fields canon to us. IT'S A GIFT and YOU CAN'T CHEAT AN HONEST MAN are both making their video debut in October, to the delighted huzzahs of Fields fans the world over. It has been too long since we've seen

YOU CAN'T CHEAT for us to offer comment — but IT'S A GIFT (which we were lucky enough to tape off the air fifteen years ago) is delightful: Fields plays the downtrodden shopkeeper Egbert Souse (pronounced Soozé) who sells out in order to invest in what turns out to be a phony Orange plantation. It is Fields's most realistic comedy, a film devoid of big contrived setpieces or gimmickry, relying instead on Fields's own merciless vision of the American middle class to carry the weight of laughs. Completely unvarnished (the movie doesn't even have a musical track), IT'S A GIFT is caustic, subtle and wicked: the very model of Fields himself.

Also available: THE BANK DICK, an almost surreal little number which sees Fields from shiftless rogue to bank detective to movie director to Public Hero all in one day. This one will probably be more satisfying to viewers who like their comedy to pack a bigger bang.

Pray for success, ladies and gentlemen, and buy all the Fields movies that you can: not only will it inspire Universal to release more classic Fields films (including, we hope, *The Man on the Flying Trapeze* and the unseen-in-decades *Million Dollar Legs*), but it will undermine your sensibilities, clean out your cranium and put a bounce in your step. When was the last time a movie did that much for you?

Godspell Deux

In issue 2.2, we published a long appreciation of the film version of the '70s pop-rock musical, **Godspell**, which had just been released to video by a company called Bridgestone. The low quality of the video print should have tipped us off (and sort of did) that this was an unlicensed and illegal release; but the bootleg has had one good result: Columbia Pictures has apparently realized the sales potential of this neglected, perhaps guilty, pleasure, and has given the film an official video release with a price tag of $19.95, more than a quarter century after its theatrical release. For detailed comment on the movie please track down our last issue;

for now, we'll leave it by giving the film a high recommendation.

The Rape of Zorro

Pulp heroes are not human beings and should not be expected to function at that level. When they are forced to do so, as in the first half hour of ***The Mask of Zorro***, they not only lose their exuberance (and our interest) but they are forced to take on characteristics that are grotesquely contrary to every standard that they once stood proudly to defend.

Of the final two thirds of ***Mask*** many favorable things have been written with which we do not choose to argue. Hugely contrived climax aside, the only thing that really bothers us about this portion of the movie is that the filmmakers would kill off Don Diego Vega for no better reason that to satisfy a "no sequels" clause in Anthony Hopkins's contract.

What concerns us here is the grossly offensive prologue which takes up the first third of the movie and which colors everything that follows. At first, everything seems to go well enough — but the moment Anthony Hopkins (or his stunt double) climbs up the balcony to confront his enemy, things begin to go wrong.

At first, they're minor things indeed: Zorro carves a Z into his enemy's neck (somehow avoiding killing him in the process), a location which allows that enemy to easily cover the mark and go on happily about his evil business. Cheeks and foreheads are the parts Zorro usually scars: the point being to provide lasting humiliation. Perhaps the filmmakers wanted to save on the make-up budget. Whatever the reason, it isn't a terribly important point: things soon get worse.

Zorro returns to his villa and we get a glimpse of the happy family life that he is about to lose. The filmmakers have decided, most arbitrarily, that this happy family life must be taken from Diego Vega if a new younger Zorro is to be introduced: and so they set about robbing him of it in the most

economical, nonsensical matter that they could devise.

What happens in the next few minutes runs directly counter to everything that has ever been written, filmed or recorded about this character.

The Evil Governor comes barging into Don Diego Vega's happy villa. How did he and his guards get past Zorro's faithful retainers and into the house? On what authority is he making such an invasion (it has been made very clear that this is an *outgoing* governor who has been stripped of his position and power)?

Worse is yet to come. Zorro has not survived this long by being foolish about his choice of battles. We know from previous Zorro tales that if Diego were arrested he would very swiftly be freed again by one means or another. Yet he allows himself to be drawn into a swordfight inside his own home, where it is more than likely that his family will be endangered by the action. As the great screen poet Chuck Jones once said, "It just don't add up!"

Rather than vent or channel his outrage when the obvious result occurs and Diego's wife is murdered before his eyes, Diego at once deflates and becomes kittenish and helpless. He is packed into a paddy wagon and watches with tears streaming down his cheeks as his home is burned and his daughter carried away by his worst enemy.

Fade to title card. Diego rots away in prison for twenty years, and *then* decides to break out.

Say what? Not the Diego Vega *I* know from the novels of Johnston McCully and the films starring Fairbanks, Power and yes even Guy Williams. I wanted to shout at the screen, "Uh, excuse me, that's your *daughter*, buddy, aren't you going to *do* something to save her from being raised by the man who murdered your wife?"

The Zorro *I* know would have been out of custody well before they had a chance to turn the key on his cell. He would have rode like the wind, would have bent heaven and earth to save his child.

But no. Fade to title card: *Twenty years*

later.

And I'm sorry, nothing, but nothing that the actors or filmmakers could do after that moment was capable of winning me back to this travesty. Much of it was very fine. Bandaras was perfect, Catherine Zeta Jones has been making my heart beat faster for years, the splendor of the views and costumes, the really fine action scenes, all of it, wasted effort. It could have been so good.

But did they *have* to rape and fuck over one of my favorite heroes to do it?

That Sinking Feeling

No, I have not seen *Titanic*. And right now I don't have any intention of seeing it. Once you've seen *A Night to Remember*, who needs any more movies about the Titanic?

So, I'm not here to comment one way or the other about the dramatic elements of the movie. Haven't seen any of it, can't make a judgment. What I *have* seen, in numerous televised clips, are many of the film's much-vaunted special effects shots. And what I'm here to ask is:

"Is anyone really *convinced* by this stuff?"

Computer generated special effects seem to be the wave of the future, yet the art is clearly in its infancy and is producing results that are dwarfed by the trick photography and miniatures of forty and fifty years ago. I look at the long sweeping shots of Cameron's Titanic, the bodies falling out of reality and into computer-generated e-space, the vast computer-generated bulk of the ship crashing down on computer-generated waves and computer generated swimmers, and it simply does not convince me. The stuff looks fake. It has an ethereal and static quality that, although it can frequently be beautiful in its own right, does not register as photographic reality with me.

Better by far is the work the Lydecker brothers were doing in the late thirties and forties for Republic Pictures. Their effects for the *Rocketman* serials, produced very cheaply, put to shame the work of effects artists on Disney's *Rocketeer*, made decades later.

Using miniatures shot outdoors under natural light, the Lydeckers produced results that tease and fool the eye even today — and when they slipped up, as they did most often with boats or other scenes involving water (it's tricky to get a tank of water to act like the ocean), when their images did not fool us, they still carried weight that computer images do not.

It's true that the process of optical matting by which live action and animation are combined has far outstripped the Lydeckers, Ray Harrihausen and Jim Danforth (both masters of stop-motion doll animation), to the point where the old telltale "matte line" that until very recently plagued fantasy films has been banished for good and all. That is, the *line* separating fantasy and reality (still very much evident in the early '70s when Harrihausen's best film, *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* was released) has been crossed, conquered and erased. But the actual *effect*, the fantasy created, suffers in the hands of computer artists.

Granted, the computer produces smoother motion than the comparatively imprecise hand of the animator. But stop-motion animation involves filming actual three-dimensional figures against a three-dimensional background, and although the computer can *render* in 3-D, the image that is transferred onto film is still a flat picture, carrying no weight, no presence, occupying no space. For all of its ease of gliding, effortless motion, the computer generated figure is somehow less convincing.

More important, the computer does not know how to act.

Ray Harrihausen knew how to *act.* The physical presence of the dolls helps us enjoy our suspension of disbelief, but the acting is what makes his effects. Compare the silver-fanged animatronic in S*pecies* to the feral centaur that appears near the end of *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad.* Like Willis O'Brien's famous stop-motion gorilla *King Kong*, the centaur's hair actually bristles. Its cyclops eye gleams with hatred, with surprise, pain, fear, and yes, lust. Like King Kong, when it carries Carolyn Munro off into the caverns, you know what it's got on its mind.

When it dies under Sinbad's blade, you an see its agony, its puzzlement and its outrage at being defeated. The range of emotion displayed in this one scene is far greater than what modern moviegoers are accustomed to witnessing — even from living actors.

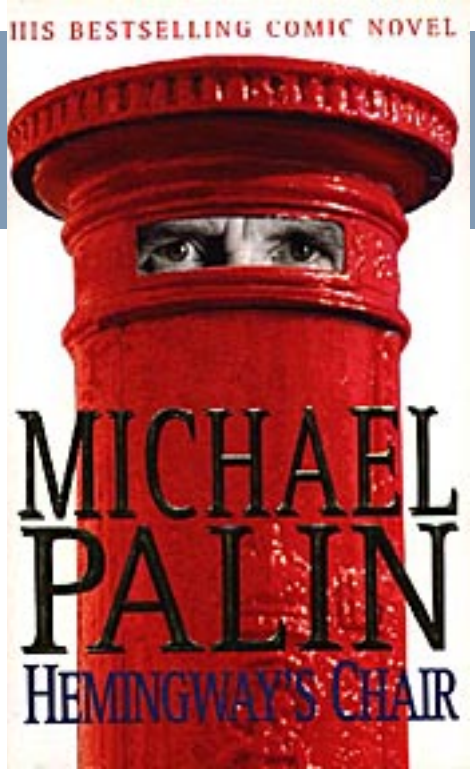
Try getting *that* from a computer effect.

The computer geeks who administrate our fantasies have mastered the snarl and the steely claw. That isn't acting; it's pyrotechnics; it's jumping out at you and shouting "BOO!" It carries none of the weight or depth that a great movie monster must possess. Computer artists can render textures all right. They can generate more effects footage in a single day than Mssrs. Harrihausen and O'Brian could create in a year of hard work. But that's where it ends.

Unfortunately, that's all it takes. Computer work has supplanted the artists of physical effects, probably for good, because they have conquered the *line*, because they are fast, and because computers have the benefit of being The Latest Big Thing.

All this has cost us dearly in Romance. No longer will the eighteen inch dolls of gorgons and great apes threaten the likes of Fay Wray or Carolyn Munro. No longer will skilled craftsmen poke and prod their creations, ever so gently, to produce giants much larger than life. When Ray Harrihausen retired, his art retired with him.

m



PAGES

#6 Vs. GodCorp.

My greatest fear about the future lies not with the implications of cloning, or the rapidly-shrinking gap between human and machine intelligence, or the snailís pace at which at we are moving into that final frontier beyond Earth's gravity well. No, what scares me most is the crushing of human Individualism.

As we close the books on the 20th Century people are more interested in blending in than standing out. They are frighteningly willing to shrug their shoulders and accept a level of social injustice, corporate price gouging, and political corruption that would have been unthinkable a quarter-century ago.

As a teenager growing up in the 1970s I learned a life lesson: these is nothing wrong with dissent. America, after all, is a country founded by dissenters. The finest scientific and artistic minds — the Einsteins and Feynmans, the Picassos and Hitchcocks — have always followed stars that beckon to them alone. Today, unfortunately, brown-nosing has become a widely-accepted way to improve one's lot, "team" is the most overused (and misused) word in the businessman's lexicon, success is valued more than excellence, and mavericks are pressured from all sides to quit making everyone uncomfortable with all their questions — can't'cha just conform and quietly melt back into the herd?

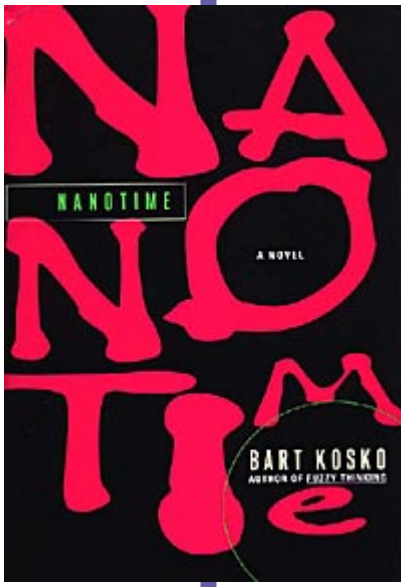
This downplaying of Individualism is clearly visible within the science fictional sphere. Where is the modern counterpart to The Prisoner's No. 6, defiantly shouting at his oppressors, "ìI am not a Number — I am a free man"? Of Heinlein's Lazarus Long? Of Frank Herbert's quasi-mystical Muad'Dib? Of Asimov's Hari Seldon, who carried on his psychohistory project under the heavy-handed scrutiny of the Imperial Commission of Public Safety? The shrinking role of The Individual in SF extends all the way down to the genre's lowest common denominator: Captain Kirk's activist approach has been replaced by Captain Picard's tedious negotiations and compromising ("They may be godless Cardassians, Number One, but they have feelings, too. . ."). Contemporary SF authors do many things better than their counterparts of bygone days, but creating memorable characters who also function as standout Individuals is not one of them.

These two books consider provide entirely different perspectives on Individualism: one adds to my concern that the rebel is headed the way of the dinosaur, the other reminds us that it is still better to die on your feet than live on your knees.

NANOTIME by Bart Kosko

"William Gibson meets Tom Clancy in this brilliant and chilling cyberthriller…" I read that line of inside jacket copy and said, "Oh,

Murgatroyd — this I gotta see!" Three hundred pages later I understood the copywriter's outlandish claim. Kosko combines dense Gibsonian piles of future-tech ideas with lovingly detailed descriptions of deployed weaponry and a clunky prose style that recalls Clancy at his most tedious. The result is an even more disastrous hodgepodge than I expected.



Nanotime takes us to the year 2030, when the remaining oil reserves will last less than five years and information has exploded even more rapidly than the world's population ("One second of computing time on the linked computer nets of 2030 involves more CPU cycles than all the CPU cycles in all the computers running in the year 2000"). The best minds are targeted on the search for alternative fuels, but the political climate is more unstable than ever because even the smallest countries are armed to the teeth with "smart" weaponry. In Clancy-like political-thriller fashion the author continually leapfrogs from the Middle East to Azerbaijan to inner Mongolia, putting over a dozen cardboard characters through their paces in an ambitious but ultimately failed attempt to give his story breadth and scope — Kosko fails to deliver even a single convincing personality amidst the geopolitical hurly-burly, and as a result I soon found myself hard-pressed to care who was doing what to whom.

Nor did things brighten appreciably in those sections where Kosko focuses on his core story: researcher John Grant has patented a new molecule that turns water into hydrogen fuel. The forces of mysterious Sufi terrorist Hamid Tabriz (the same organization that opens the novel by detonating a nuclear bomb in the Saudi oil fields) strike against Grant first by destroying his

Israeli research facility and second by seizing Grant's fiancee Denise in order to replace her brain with a computer chip that gives Tabriz control over her. John discovers that Denise has become a "chiphead" while making love to her. At the end of the struggle that subsequently erupts, Denise is dead and Grant is running from a murder charge. . .

In addition to the crucial chiphead concept, Nanotime sports a veritable laundry list of hyper-technological wrinkles. There are infants gestating in artificial eggs that allow the mixing of third-party genetic material with the parents' genomes — cars run by autopilot and come equipped with windshields that double as video monitors — a superacid capable of dissolving an oil tanker is released — and intelligent computerized assistants with complete personalities exist in tiny ìraisinî units carried in one's ear. Though this is clearly the Gibson influence at work, it's also proof that Kosko understands the effects Gibson achieved in his "Sprawl" novels without a clue regarding his technique. Gibson placed his superscientific wonders with exacting care, trotting each one on-stage at the precise moment in the narrative when it would have the maximum impact on his audience; Kosko, by contrast, heaps marvels into his manuscript like mashed potatoes piled high on a holiday dinnerplate. He may want his readers to think, "Man, this is too cool!", but my reaction was to recall Lester Del Rey's sage words: "In a story where anything can happen, who the hell cares what does?"

This novel's troubles extend all the way down to the dialogue, which is all too often laughably inept. Consider this exchange between Grant and "Jism," a raisin-inhabiting cyber-assistant; it occurs shortly after Grant has killed his fiancee:

"But why?" John said. "Why?"

Of course he must view you as a threat. He went to such great lengths to deceive you.

"You mean he want to such great lengths to kill me."

We donít know that Dr. Tabriz wanted to kill you. He could have killed you when you entered the cabin. He certainly could have

killed you before you two engaged in sex on the floor.

"Hey. I had sex with her. Not him."

I should think we can safely say you had sex with both persons if the term person has any meaning beyond the flesh. The point is that the Denise automaton —

"Jism. Don't call her an automaton. We're all one of those if you look at it in terms of differential equations. We're all made of meat and we do just what the equations of physics say we will do and no more. Christ. You know that. What the hell are you? There is no Markov process in nature. No future is free of the past. Look, I'm guilty of a lot of things, but I have never violated the law of conservation of energy. . ."

The single aspect of Nanotime that worked for me nevertheless made my flesh creep: Kosko depicts a world in which science has transformed every government — local, state, national — into Big Brother. Roadway sensors automatically tally speeding fines, police are armed with tasers, and privacy (as one cast member observes moments before being killed in a cruise missile strike) is something most people have never known. Human life can have no sanctity because human consciousness has been utterly devalued, as Grant discovers when his Israeli "allies" strap him down, slice open his skull, and begin removing sections of his brain to turn him into a chiphead under their control. . .

According to the jacket copy, Bart Kosko is a professor of electrical engineering at USC and "the acknowledged leader in the controversial and cutting edge field of machine intelligence called fuzzy logic." A "fuzzy logic" of an entirely different type is at work in *Nanotime*, and my advice to Kosko would be to concentrate on academia and leave the fiction to the likes of William Gibson. Or even, Heaven help us, Tom Clancy.

HEMINGWAY'S CHAIR by Michael Palin

There is nothing even vaguely SFnal about this novel of a reclusive small-town British postal worker ground up by the gears of dubi-

ous Progress. Still, *Hemingway's Chai*r is the first novel by Michael Palin, who was one-sixth of the comedy troupe Monty Python's Flying Circus before becoming a featured player in the bleak dystopian SF feature film Brazil and then turning into the BBC's modern-day Marco Polo for a trio of excellent travelogues (*Around The World in 80 Days, Pole To Pole*, and last year's *Full Circle*).

Having visited some of the most exotic locations on Earth, Palin chooses a setting he knows intimately and affectionately: the sleepy English hamlet. In this case Theston, a place where a cold wind whips in from the sea and the annual carnival is the village's social pinnacle. Onto Theston's streets Palin places thirty-six year old Martin Sproale, who lives with his aging mother in Marsh Cottage and every day bicycles the two miles to his job as assistant manager at the post office. There Martin works with Elaine Rudge, with whom he has a long-standing, mostly chaste, relationship.

Uncomplicated people in a simple little town? So it seems, but Martin has A Secret Passion — he is an Ernest Hemingway devotee, owning rare editions of Papa's books and magazine appearances, stocking his liquor cabinet with all of Hemingway's favorites, and carrying in his skull an encyclopediac knowledge of the man and his works. Elaine finds Martin's obsession with Hemingway endearing, if beyond her understanding:

"*Nothing happened between them until the evening she was first invited up to his room. . . He'd always maintained that his room was far too much of a mess to take a lady anywhere near but, as they neared Marsh Cottage on the way back, heíd admitted that the real reason was more complicated and sheíd probably laugh at him if her told her. She didn't laugh when she saw the room. She was just relieved he wasnít a train-spotter or a serial killer. What struck her most was that it was the room of a different man from the one she knew. Not someone shy and quiet and hesitant but a man of worldliness and display. He must have had well over a hundred books, many in beautiful hardback editions. Elsewhere there was a har-*

poon, a stack of jazz records, a typewriter, ashtrays from Paris cafes, boxing gloves, African masks. On one wall was a huge scarlet and gold bull-fighter poster. On another was the biggest photograph she'd ever seen of anybody. She had asked him why anyone would want to live in a room with such a sad picture."

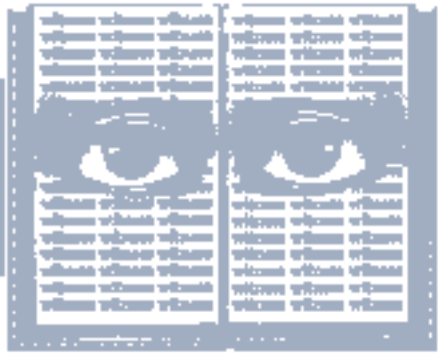
With the retirement of Theston's postmaster, everyone (including Martin and Elaine) assumes Martin will advance to fill the vacancy. Instead, the district office brings in an outsider named Nick Marshall who begins chipping away at "the relationship between post office and community [that] is close and pervasive." Marshall's smarmy glad-handing and glibness are enough to initially convince Martin to support the plans to cut personnel, reduce services, and create "improvements" like bulletproof counter windows, computer terminals, and a regimented queuing system. With the passing of time Martin finally realizes the true scope of Marshall's modernization plans — by then his attempts to fight back are are too little, too late. Bit by bit his supporters desert him, including Elaine, and at last the inevitable happens. Marshall sacks Martin.

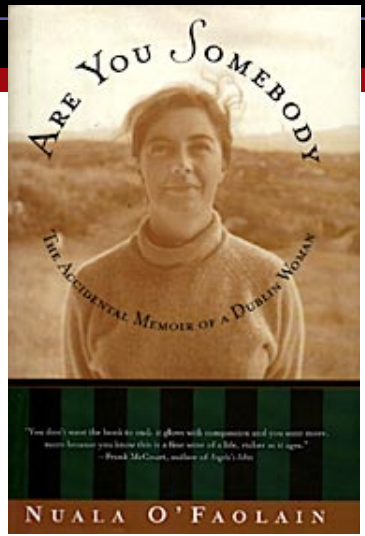
In America a novel about a postal worker losing his job would culminate in a scene involving semiautomatic weapons, torrents of blood, and a substantial body count. Fortunately Michael Palin carries a different sensibility, and the revenge he allows Martin is far more clever and therefore infinitely more satisfying. Without giving away details, I will note it involves new telecommunications equipment Marshall has installed, a purloined power boat, and Martin's prized possession, the fishing chair Hemingway used in Peru during the filming of The Old Man and The Sea.

Palin always strikes me as the most versatile of the Pythoners, an opinion buttressed in 1994, when I was lucky enough to attend his play *The Weekend* while vacationing in London, and this work only furthers my belief. He could have easily fashioned a whimsical feel-good piece of puffery, but instead takes his characters to the point of no return, then beyond. This willingness to make us travel the

more challenging road transforms Hemingway's Chair into something grander than a novel about The Little Guy versus Impersonal Progress: instead, Palin has delivered the tale of a person who puts everything he holds dear at risk in order to reclaim his individuality, transforming himself in the process into the man he always dreamed he should be. There is a sprinkling of comic moments, but they are far overshadowed by a wistful sadness that ultimately gives way to a glorious redemption. And I, for one, wouldn't have wanted Palin to do it any other way.

—BRUCE CANWELL





Most Likely, Yes.

While I was under the very considerable spell of Nuala O'Faolain's beautiful book ***Are You Somebody*** (Holt, $21.95) I wanted very much to join the legion of people who have written the author long, fervent, even ardent letters: because the effect of her honesty and the skill of her writing is to convince a reader that they have discovered a long-lost friend or lover, one whose experiences mirror (or at least provide emotional and intellectual counterpoint to) our own.

But now that I have finished book and set it aside, now that I am detached and having to fall into my "critic" mode, it's easier for me to say that everyone has a sack of rocks to carry around with them, and the Irish do it so much better than the rest of us: so *of course* Ms. O'Faolain blames her parents and she loves her parents, she blames herself and she loves herself, she blames her experience and she loves her experience, she blames her lovers and she loves her lovers, she attends Church and is devout in her physical rituals of the Church, yet she doubts the existence of God, she is fiercely nationalist yet she is opposed to the darker extremes of the nationalist movement, she is propelled by the woman's movement yet she feels let down by it, she is simultaneously attracted to and terrified by the humanity of the individuals who make up her family and her extended family and the acquaintances she has made in a life that has allowed her many and varied and colorful acquaintances.

These are all very human contradictions that allow for a tightly conflicting narrative, one that is bound to be compelling to any reader. But there is a deception being practiced here: Ms. O'Faolain has led far from a common, provincial life. She is a sophisticate, and brings a sophisticate's energy and tools to what she describes as a simple quest for love.

It's a deception that she acknowledges, and one that she seems to have practiced on herself: at one point she describes the surprise she felt to hear her childhood labeled "bohemian," to hear the anger of a man who experienced a childhood of genuine poverty when on a radio program Ms. O'Faolain laid claim to a poor background.

Perhaps after all it's the simple things that cause the most difficulty even in a complicated life. Nuala O'Faolain has traveled all over the world and led what can only be seen as a richly creative life, yet relationships have defeated her at every turn.

The book itself is almost impossible to review: how do you review a person, especially one that you rather like? The deliberately self-serving aspects of the book (the author

makes no bones about writing purely for her own psychological benefit) are successfully torpedoed by intelligence and taste, by objectivity and social awareness. This comes easily to no one, and in some cases it is forced on us, at cost or well after the fact. Ms. O'Faolain is one of the few feminist writers who doesn't fall into the trap of painting the men in her life blacker than black while painting the women correspondingly whiter than white. Failings are individual qualities, common to all regardless of sex — and, fortunately, so are strength, intelligence and humor.

All are evident here. So, bring your sack of rocks to the table, as Ms. O'Faolain has. Have them out and compare them and enjoy the commentary. Nuala O'Faolain has led a life that allows her now the ability to pour herself onto paper; reading her book is very much like imagining to know her, and if you must examine your rocks it is very well to do so in the company of an understanding friend.

Cruelty as Art

"The beastly forebears on the walls condemn her to a perpetual repetition of their passions." — Angela Carter, "The Lady in The House of Love"

I have just emerged from the corrupt and perverse night of *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales.* When I bought the book I thought it would be a treat: the horror films of the '20s, '30s and '40s still thrill me, as does *Weird Tales* and its ilk, and the moral horror comics of the '50s and '60s, *Tales From the Crypt, Haunt of Fear, Creepy, Eerie*. But the operative word seems now to be "moral," and shortly after beginning the Oxford book it became obvious that morality does not enter into the gothic genre, which has more to do with suffering and the extremes of cruelty that humans are capable of perpetrating on each other than it does with mystery and imagination.

It is mystery and imagination that I hoped for, and those qualities are evident in the book's best stories. But the plain depravity that

drives most of these works weighs down the brilliance of the work that surrounds it, and causes us to come away from even the best of the stories with the taste of curdled human blood in our mouths. The book depresses the imagination instead of firing it.

Thus Eudora Welty and Hawthorne and William Faulkner, Angela Carter (whose *The Lady in The House of Love*, quoted above, is the single most brilliant modern vampire story, and the only one worth reading) and Charlotte Perkins Gillman, H.P. Lovecraft and Ray Russell's *Sardonicus* are made to rub elbows with trivial works, penny-dreadful nasties and a graphic account of the Countess Bathory (one of the most loathsome tales it has ever been my displeasure to read, and all the more appalling for being true).

I'll always be grateful to Chris Baldrick, editor of The Oxford Book, for he has introduced me to Welty's "Clytie," to the gothic "fragment" and to a half-dozen stories of brilliance I might not have encountered elsewhere. It's true that I came looking for a glimpse into some dark corners: but I had hoped that the corners would be illuminated by compassion and invention: in the end, the only invention to be found is the inventiveness of depravity: seen in this light, *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales*, and the genre itself, evokes only disgust, and a morbid relief when it's over.

Looking Ahead into The Past

The time has come to sing the praises of Applewood Books. This fall they will begin reprinting (in both paper and electronic editions) the complete Civil War Years run of *Harper's Weekly* magazine, beginning with the Abraham Lincoln election issue; this may be the most ambitious (and financially risky) program that they have undertaken, but it's right in character for the company that bills itself as "publishers of America's living past."

While Grosset & Dunlap continue to publish bowdlerized, completely rewritten versions of their famous Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys

series, Applewood has brought back the original versions in all their rough glory, complete with the artwork, design and typefaces in which they first appeared. Carl Sandburg's wonderful *Rootabaga Stories* and E.G. Lutz's first book on animation are among the titles in their fall lineup. Daniel Boone's autobiography, Songs of The Cowboys, Blackfeet Indian stories and the hugely rare *Wizard of Oz Waddle Book* are all at home on their backlist.

Anyone who tries to keep alive the best that the past has to offer is OK by us, and Applewood does it better than anyone in the business. We look forward to their catalog every year, and always find something to delight and enliven. You can get one of those catalogs by writing to Applewood Books, 128 The Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730. Their phone number is 800-277-5312, email them at applewood@awb.com, or visit them on the web at http://www.awb.com.

— DOUGLAS THORNSJO

We are sometimes accused of morbidity, but we believe that the world is diminished, not increased, by time, that immortality is attainable only in the memory of the living, and that people sometimes need to be reminded that life is short.

The Puppet as Metaphor

A world without Shari Lewis and Buffalo Bob Smith hardly bears thinking about. Yet we lost both of them in one stroke. As when Jim Henson died, we lose not only the artist but everyone the artist portrayed: all the splinters of the artist's personality that had gone on to take life of their own: Howdy and Lamb Chop and Wing Ding and Charley Horse and Hush Puppy.

Shari Lewis sometimes took the brunt of unkind jokes for being a grown woman who talked to a sock. But we're all empty socks

on the face of things: our bodies are nothing more than containers, animated by the hand of our spirit. Take off the sock: where does Lamb Chop go?

Lewis was very likely the most accomplished ventriloquist ever to grace the airwaves, but the strength she had in common with Bob Smith was one of character. There was nothing forced or synthetic about either performer. The characters they portrayed had rough edges and for that reason seemed human: they had reality that Barney and his peers, with their artificial smarminess, could never hope to equal. The one sweetens, the other sickens. With Shari and Buffalo Bob gone, the real fear is that we have lost character and integrity, and are now doomed to a future consisting of an endless succession of grotesquely cute purple dinosaurs, spewing the words of love without really loving us or receiving love back from us, the way Howdy Doody and all of Shari's characters did. Producers cannot "generate" or "create" or "design" love: only a revolting parody of it. Buffalo Bob Smith and Shari Lewis were performers who gave us the real thing, because they genuinely loved what they were doing, and the audience they were doing it for.

At the age of four I was in love with Ms. Lewis. I watched her show every Saturday, and I owned an LP of hers (I can still sing one of the songs) and a Shari Lewis Draw'n'Learn Light Board which allowed me to trace drawings of her characters into many different scenes. My favorite was Wing Ding, the crow: but Shari did not perform Wing Ding in later years, so I no longer remember his voice.

Buffalo Bob had recently begun to slow down, though he remained active well into his seventies, making appearances around the country and producing an anniversary show for Howdy in the mid-1980s. Lewis, after many years away from television, had only just succeeded in making a comeback, with her second successful PBS series, providing vivid proof of all that children's television had lost in her absence.

For children of a certain age, the final episode of the Howdy Doody show is not only a defining moment, but one of the saddest ever broadcast. It was inevitable that it should hap-

pen, but who wanted to think that the final show might also become a defining moment not only for a generation but for a period of history when Clarabelle the Clown, who for a decade and a half had never spoken a word, communicating only through signs and horns, leaned close into the camera and said, very softly, “Good-bye, kids.”

The Singing Cowboy

The loss of heroes from our childhood becomes almost unbearable when you add Roy Rogers to the list. He was a terrible actor and an indifferent singer, but in those days technical ability was not so important as the quality of genuineness that he shared with Lewis and Buffalo Bob Smith. The plots of his movies and television shows were often outlandish, but Roy Rogers moved through those plots with gentle authority because he was playing not himself but the ideal version of himself: and that is a mighty powerful thing indeed. In a sense, image was just as important in the ‘40s, ‘50s and early ‘60s as it is today: but in Roy Rogers the image that we had was as close to being the reality of the man as you are ever likely to find in any performer.

Beyond that, we will not eulogize or otherwise describe his career, but instead refer you to two songs: the one by Elton John and Bernie Taupin bearing the actor’s name, and the other by Roy’s wife and saddle companion Dale Evans, “Happy Trails.”

Go on. You all know the words.

The summer of last year was not a good one. There was still the echo of Lorna's ending what had been, until very nearly the end, the best relationship I'd known; at the newspaper where both of us worked, pressures were building under a new general manager who reduced the staff by a third or more while hiring new supervisors who abused and betrayed the people below them, trying not to publish the best damn newspaper that they could, but instead to decrease it, to bleed every dime that they could out of the community, to rob us of our time, rewarding only sameness and sterility, never talent or faith.

Until that time, the paper occupied a building at the end of Temple Street that had served several owners well since its construction in the first year of the century. In earlier years, when I worked at the bookstore, writing in my spare time, I drove by the newspaper building every day and frequently thought how much I wanted to work there. I'd tried several times to get in as a freelance writer and cartoonist, always failing, though sometimes not by much. It wasn't until I bought a computer and began learning the programs designers used that I was finally able to get a job in what was then called the Creative Services department.

I did not know it then: but my job was an experiment which, if successful, was intended to doom both Creative Services and the old Composing Room, combining certain aspects of the two, while losing the creative's somewhat independent status and bringing us under the direct control of sales people.

It took some time for this to happen — and in the interim I was much too happy for my own or anyone else's good. I met Lorna and

fell in love with her. I was encouraged creatively, and I took advantage of that encouragement, producing good work that had an impact on the paper. I learned a lot and liked what I learned. I felt part of a friendly and creative group, not knowing that the success of my position was slowly killing that group.

The old building was itself a part of my happiness. Up on the third floor it was cool and roomy and quiet, an easy place in which to work. From the windows near my station I could look down the descending slope of the town and across the river to the high broad ridge running north and south. The building had dark corners, attic and cellar rooms that had once housed presses and cranes and optical equipment — all gone by my time. These were fun to explore, and perhaps once a month things would slow down enough so that I could find the time to explore them. The cellar held shelves of old files, and still-wrapped packages of forms and paper that nobody used any more. There were boxes of American flags left over from a years-gone promotion. There were old newspapers and modular office fittings that no longer worked with our cubicle frames. The attic was mostly air conditioning ducts, but there was one closet containing a press operator's uniform and a box of coloring books. There was also a ladder, leading to the roof. I climbed it once, opened the trap door and poked my head out. The roof was flat but it was very windy and I did not dare to climb out.

Old timers at the paper had stories to tell about the building: of the dances once held on the third floor where I now worked, with live bands perched in an attic loft, now enclosed by walls; of the heat in the old composing room, powerful enough to melt things and people.

Later on I discovered the original service elevator at the back of the building, and started to use it exclusively. It had a wooden cage that pulled down in front and in back, and a motor that operated off a push-button. It had not been inspected in five years. I liked to watch the floors go by and I liked to feel a part of some-

thing great and old and monstrously mechanical which our contemporary machines are not. Age had narrowed the elevator shaft at the top: it was a tight squeeze of wood and metal against brick for me to reach the third floor. Once I got stuck when the wooden gate popped up from the pressure at the sides of the cage, causing the fail-safe to shut the motor down. But I manhandled the gate back into place, and rode to the top, and went on using the service elevator until I was ordered to stop.

We were assured over and over again that the paper was not to be sold — it had been in the hands of the Gannett family for more than fifty years, and it was to remain so. But this was a lie. In order to make the paper more attractive to prospective buyers, it was decided that it should be moved out of the old building and into a new one built for the purpose. An arrangement was made with the town, the details of which were never fully disclosed to the community, trading undesirable for undeveloped land. The building was built. It was clean and new, but it had no history and it had no character. From the first floor, where I would now work, the windows looked out on a parking lot.

One by one, everything that had made me so happy in my first year at the Sentinel was taken away: the woman who hired me, and who had some sympathy for the creative mind, was moved sideways so that now we answered to salesmen; the free and private working conditions were replaced by tightly constricted workgroups called “pods,” and “managed” by an increasing number of idiot strangers wearing suits; then Lorna; then the building itself with all of its history and its promise; even walls were taken away from us: now we sat in open space under the eyes of our supervisors, so that the slightest deviation from policy could be efficiently punished. The supervisors began dreaming up artificial tasks to add to our work load, and gave us less time to perform these additional tasks. We could not just do our jobs: now we had to sit in meetings devoted to

subjects that had nothing to do with us; we had to wear company tee shirts and watch training videos, with the deadlines ticking away while we wasted time listening to platitudes.

They tore down the old building. I walked over there once in the midst of the demolition and saw its back end gaping open, floors sagging, rooms we had occupied exploded outward into open air. I picked up two bricks and carried them back with me. I still have them: one an outside brick covered with godawful yellow paint, the other from inside somewhere, flecked with mortar.

Things were at their worst when the funfair appeared unannounced one morning in Castonquay Square. At first I did not even know it was there: from where we parked and entered the new Sentinel building, all sight of the square was blocked off. We worked away in our spanking-new sweatshop never seeing what the rest of the town was up to.

In the early afternoon the new digital cameras came in. These were to save money on film and developing costs, as the salespeople would go out and shoot dozens of rolls a day of used cars sitting in dealers lots. With the digital cameras, they could shoot up to thirty pictures, we could load them direct into our computers and save the scanning time.

For no reason at all, the sales manager, whose name was Paul Heidbreder, handed me one of the cameras and said go out and try it. It was the kindest thing he ever did for me.

Proximity to Castonquay Square was the one thing about the new building that I liked. At lunchtime it was easy to walk out of the building and be there: and now I headed across the street, took a shot or two of the Civil War cannon that sat at the end of the square, pointing directly at the new Sentinel building (it was a joke among people who knew me that I would have liked to fire the thing right into the General Manager's office. It wasn't much of a joke). If I had exactly followed Paul's intentions I would have gone right back in and set-

tled down again at my computer... but it was a hot sunny day, the far end of the square was packed with people... and what was that dragon?

I moved deeper into the square, taking pictures as I went, the funfair growing up around me. I took a photo of a child almost buried in a nest of blue and red and yellow foam rubber balls. I took one of a child bravely rushing across a bridge of rope high over my head. I took one of a little girl shooting down a circular slide. The giant inflatable dragon peered at me over the roof of a cotton candy stand. A miniature train ride carried diminutive passengers around and around in a monotonous circle. I took pictures of everything.

Emerging at the other side of the square, I found that Main Street had been closed at both ends. A large square of the pavement had been blocked off, and the children had filled it with drawings and designs in colored chalk. I took pictures of the two children still at work, and pictures of the street with its chalk markings already blurred by dancers and pedestrians.

The sidewalks were lined with vendors of various sorts. I bought some french fries and sat in the doorway of an office building eating them. As funfairs went, this was small-time stuff, but everyone was enjoying themselves, and it was fun to see how much could be packed into such a small park area.

When I returned to the Sentinel building I was hot and tired and contented. Everyone gathered to look at my pictures: even the editorial photographers came down to see them on the screen. Someone suggested they use my pictures in the paper: the photographers said nothing, I knew that it was stepping on their toes, everyone was afraid for their job.

A month later I was in a car wreck, and my supervisor wrote me up for being late to work. I didn’t understand at the time that she was feeling so squeezed from her own bosses that she did not feel obliged to cut anyone underneath her some slack. I was so upset with

everything that was happening and not happening in my life that I openly and rudely opposed her in a meeting. This was not acceptable. She took me aside, we had a conversation that only deepened the hostility between us, and I gave her my notice. But they did not allow me to work out my two weeks. Pack up your things, Human Services said, through Paul, and make today your last.

Most of the pictures I took that day at the funfair did not survive. There was not enough space, not enough time, no possibility of emailing them to myself. In the end, I saved only the more fanciful pictures. But I'm glad to still have them: my twenty minutes at the funfair were the last good thing that the Sentinel gave to me.

Cigar Man

As things grow worse for Bill Clinton, not one commentator to our knowledge has mentioned the single aspect about the affair that angers us the most.

The sexual affair, in and of itself, is no part of our concern. The lying under oath is much more disturbing, but even that is a matter of semantics: any reading of the Starr Report should make that obvious. Bill Clinton has been falling back on semantics from the start, so there's nothing new here: and to our way of

send your slings and arrows to:
thornsjo@uninets.net

thinking you can't impeach a man for a semantic issue.

But President Clinton is engaged in a struggle of the utmost importance for the future of the country against the extreme right wing of the Republican Party. They are the enemy: and only a rank idiot would walk up to his enemy, hand them a club studded with nails and say, "Here, take this and beat me over the head with it."

That, in effect, is what Bill Clinton has had the stupidity to do. That is what makes us so angry with him. That is what we cannot forgive him for. As a nation we have bigger concerns than this. But in political terms Bill Clinton has cheated on all of us, by giving his enemies the ammunition they need to torpedo any agenda Clinton might have had for the nation.

Is it grounds for impeachment? No. But we're beginning to wish that it were.

Charade

We are as disappointed in Bill Clinton's oval office sexual shenanigans as we were by similar behavior from Jack Kennedy, Dwight Eisenhower and Franklin Roosevelt. But we were more disappointed in the behavior of the press, which has far exceeded its mandate to report — not make or speculate about — the news.

All three major networks were "reporting" on Clinton's infamous post-testament speech at least 36 hours before it happened. Open speculation on what would happen next has been the rule throughout the Lewinsky debacle, prompting a noticeable desire from the public that the press would just let it rest — a desire that the press conveniently ignored.

On the one hand it is human nature to wonder what's really going on in an information vacuum. On the other hand, when no news is forthcoming it is the obligation of a reporter to zip his lips and move on. Investigative reporting does call for the asking of leading questions in the right place: but the right place is not in print or on the airwaves. News is news and speculation, questions, interest are not. Was anything else happening in the world dur-

ing those seven months between the time Bill Clinton rapped his finger on the table and said "Listen to me" and the time he made his not-very penitent speech late on a Monday night? It's hard to say. The press was so busy telling us what they didn't know about the Lewinsky affair (all the while proudly beating their shields and convincing themselves, quite erroneously, that they were upholding some kind of valuable tradition of the press rather than shaping events) that other news, real news, got sucked away into the vortex.

Understand that I'm not asking the press to hold back in reporting hard news from any end of the political spectrum. But they must stop trying to manufacture news by raising questions on the air when they have nothing to report.

— RICHARD AINLEY

Et Al

America has become a nation that runs absolutely everything into the ground. Beanie Babies, Caring & Sharing Speak, Political Correctness (and even the rejection of same), the sinking of the Titanic, Presidential Affairs, Pop Groups, Men From Mars, it matters not, anything that rises for long enough into the light is seized upon, bled dry, pounded into our attention with a relentlessness that is astonishing. At first it is interesting to watch how a news story, a theme, can be taken up by one source after another after another after another, the chain building link by link under the hammer of lemming Follow-the-Leaderism. This is Something Big — get us in on it. By the fiftieth time you have learned the same New Thing about the Spice Girls, the blood begins to curdle and you begin to realize that there is something terribly wrong with the culture. Everyone is feeding at the same trough, fighting over the same tiny morsel while a feast of really excellent substantial food goes unnoticed.

Any success will be followed and leached by imitations and reflections, ever greater extremes and distortions, until the original item, the one that we liked in the first place, leaves a bad taste in our mouths for being the

cause of all that followed. Phil Donoghue invented trash TV talk shows, and he was good at it: but within a decade it reached a point where we couldn't escape trash if we tried: the airwaves were so choked with Maurys and Oprahs and Jerrys, each distillation of the theme more extreme and more offensive than the last, until the whole thing collapsed under its own disgusting weight. Rosie O'Donnell appeared with a not-quite return to the nicer bad old days of TV talk, and already the imitators are following suit, so that the enjoyment we had at seeing something not quite so vile (marred only by O'Donnell's complete obsession with herself) has begun turning stale.

Nothing Succeeds Like Success, and as a nation we have taken that so much to heart that the eccentric voice is in more danger of extinction that any time since the Witch Trials. And yet when we succeed in finding that eccentric voice, that one exception to the rule that manages to squeak through into print or onto film or onto the airwaves, we now pray that no one else discovers it, that success misses the Wonderful Thing by just a hair... because god help us if it should become popular.

All of this strikes us as being fundamentally *anti*-American: the nation that was founded on the principle of free individuals is, more and more, in our media and in our boardrooms and in our workplaces, turning into a hive. *Invasion of the Body-Snatchers* used to be science fiction. Now (with at least two remakes of that film behind us) it is becoming reality.

What Communism threatened to do to us and could not, Capitalism has succeeded at doing with disturbing brilliance. Everyone get into line. Forget your name tag, names are no longer important. It's time to leap off the cliff.
— RICHARD AINLEY.

the COMICS pages

featuring

QUIRK

by Dan Fredericks

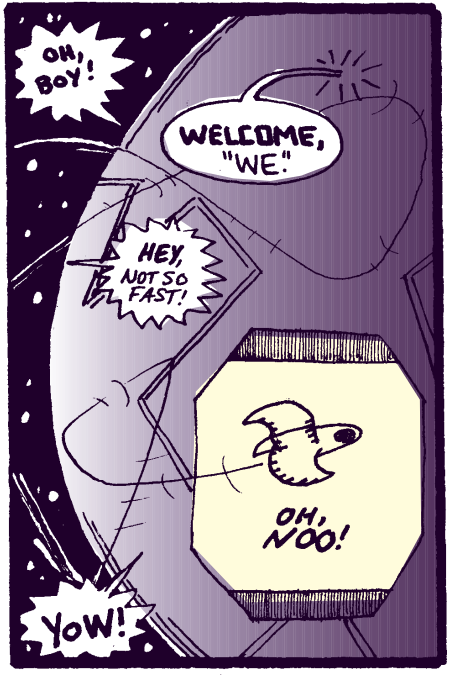
in part two of

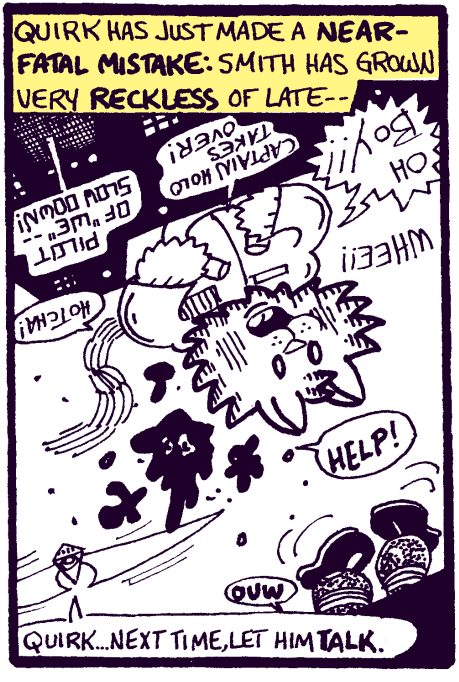
"KNIGHT'S GAMBIT"

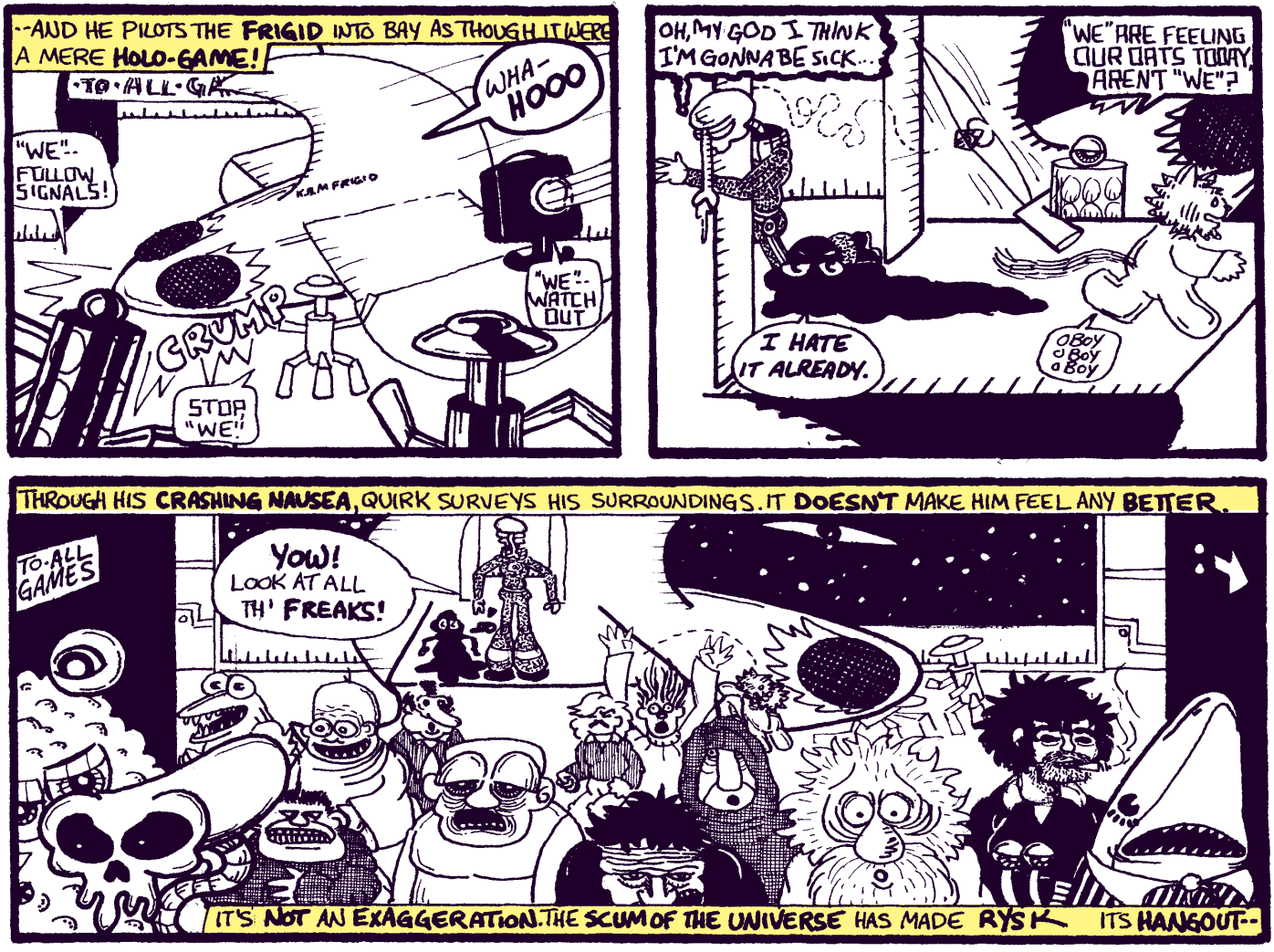
THE STORY SO FAR: SMITH, THE RAMBUNCTIOUS BONZONIAN NAVIGATOR OF THE SPACESHIP FRIGID, IS SUCH AN AVID GAMEPLAYER THAT HE HAS BEEN NAGGING QUIRK FOR A VACTION ON RYSK, A MAN-MADE PLANET WHERE GAME-PLAING IN ALL ITS FORMS IS KING! AGAINST HIS BETTER JUDGEMENT, QUIRK FINALLY RELENTS. WE JOIN OUR HEROES...

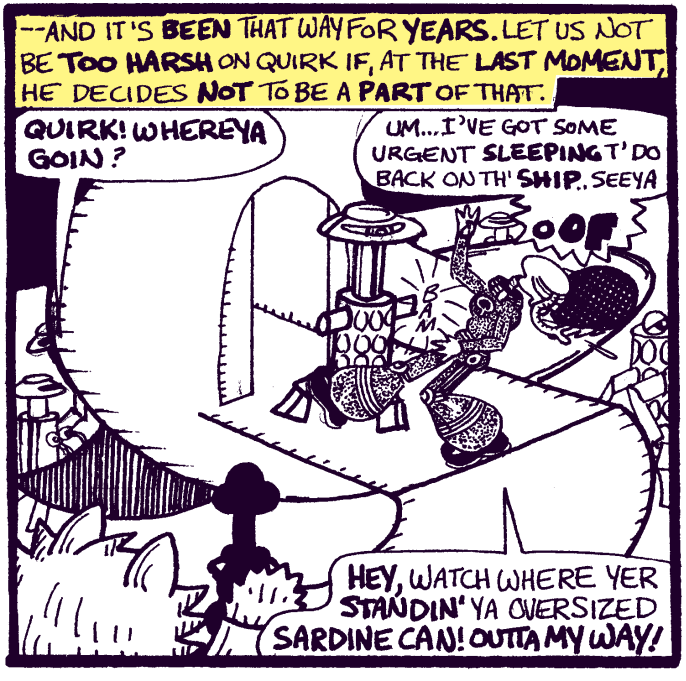

--JUST IN TIME TO CATCH THE FRIGID AS IT APPROACHES THE OBJECT OF ALL THIS TALK--
KIM FRIGID
YO, GAMEWORLD. WE IS HERE.
SPECIFY "WE," PLEASE.

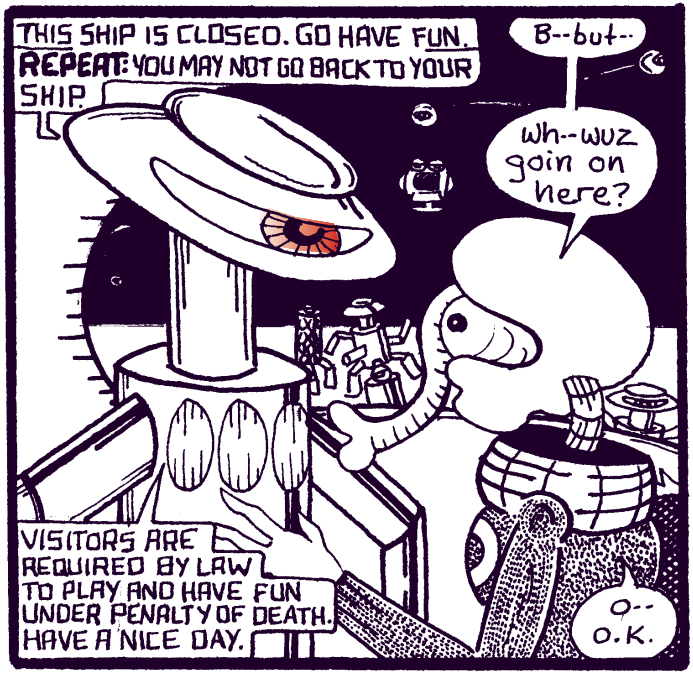

"WE" IS US: THE CREW O' THE FRIGID, HERE TA PLAY GAMES AN' YOCK IT UP.
YAH, AN' ARE WE GONNA BLOW YER DOORS OFF!
huh CHOO
SMIFF, IF I LET YOU TAKE US IN, WILL YOU SHUT UP ALREADY?!

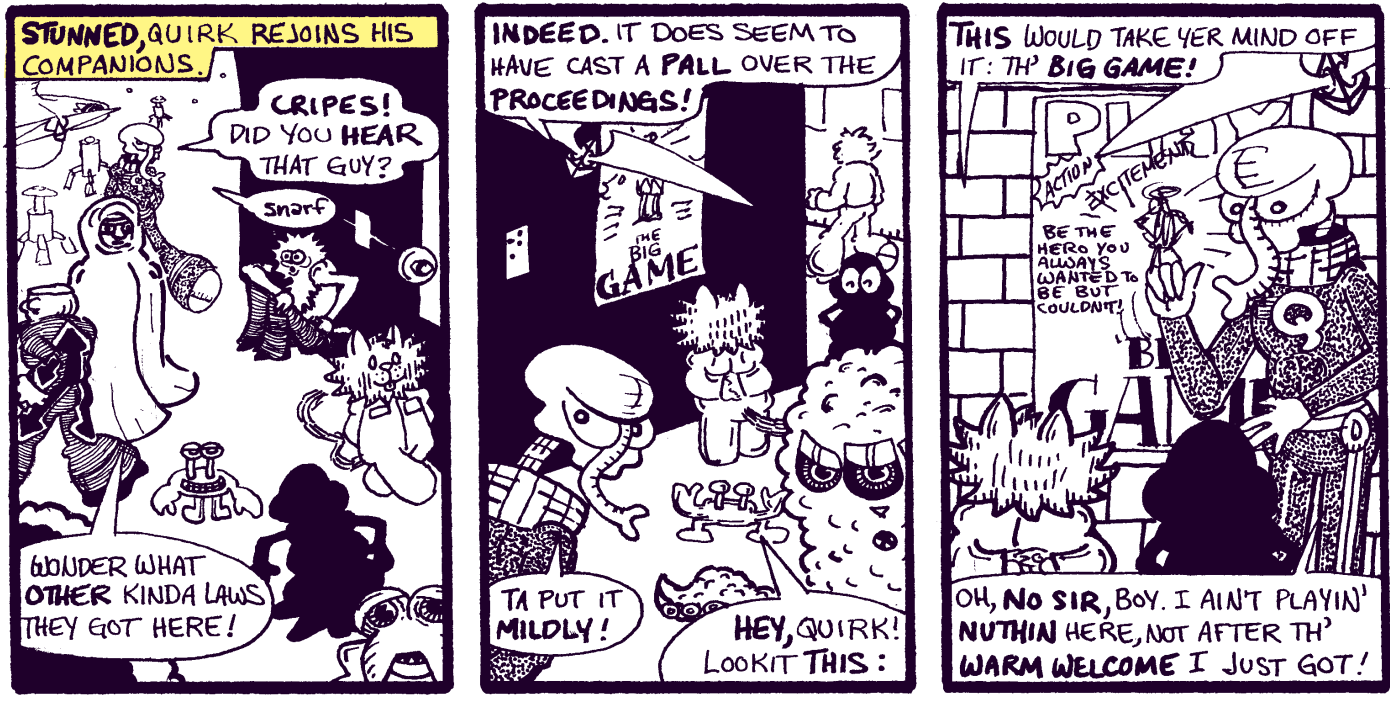

OH, BOY!
WELCOME, "WE."
HEY, NOT SO FAST!
OH, NOO!
YOW!


QUIRK HAS JUST MADE A NEAR-FATAL MISTAKE: SMITH HAS GROWN VERY RECKLESS OF LATE--
OH BOY!!!
CAPTAIN HOLD TAKES OVER!
PILOT OF "WE" -- SLOW DOWN!
WHEEE!!
HOTCHA!
HELP!
OUW
QUIRK...NEXT TIME, LET HIM TALK.


--AND HE PILOTS THE FRIGID INTO BAY AS THOUGH IT WERE A MERE HOLO-GAME!
TO ALL GA
WHA-HOOO
"WE"-- FOLLOW SIGNALS!
K.A.M FRIGID
"WE"-- WATCH OUT
CRUMP
STOP "WE"!
OH, MY GOD I THINK I'M GONNA BE SICK...
"WE" ARE FEELING OUR OATS TODAY, AREN'T "WE"?
I HATE IT ALREADY.
OBoy
oBoy
oBoy
THROUGH HIS CRASHING NAUSEA, QUIRK SURVEYS HIS SURROUNDINGS. IT DOESN'T MAKE HIM FEEL ANY BETTER.
TO ALL GAMES
YOW! LOOK AT ALL TH' FREAKS!
IT'S NOT AN EXAGGERATION. THE SCUM OF THE UNIVERSE HAS MADE RYSK ITS HANGOUT--


--AND IT'S BEEN THAT WAY FOR YEARS. LET US NOT BE TOO HARSH ON QUIRK IF, AT THE LAST MOMENT, HE DECIDES NOT TO BE A PART OF THAT.
QUIRK! WHEREYA GOIN?
UM... I'VE GOT SOME URGENT SLEEPING T' DO BACK ON TH' SHIP.. SEEYA
OOF
SLAM
HEY, WATCH WHERE YER STANDIN' YA OVERSIZED SARDINE CAN! OUTTA MY WAY!


THIS SHIP IS CLOSED. GO HAVE FUN. REPEAT: YOU MAY NOT GO BACK TO YOUR SHIP.
B--but--
wh--wuz goin on here?
VISITORS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO PLAY AND HAVE FUN UNDER PENALTY OF DEATH. HAVE A NICE DAY.
O--O.K.


STUNNED, QUIRK REJOINS HIS COMPANIONS.
CRIPES! DID YOU HEAR THAT GUY?
snarf
WONDER WHAT OTHER KINDA LAWS THEY GOT HERE!
INDEED. IT DOES SEEM TO HAVE CAST A PALL OVER THE PROCEEDINGS!
THE BIG GAME
TA PUT IT MILDLY!
HEY, QUIRK! LOOKIT THIS:
THIS WOULD TAKE YER MIND OFF IT: TH' BIG GAME!
ACTION
EXCITEMENT
BE THE HERO YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO BE BUT COULDN'T!
OH, NO SIR, BOY. I AIN'T PLAYIN' NUTHIN HERE, NOT AFTER TH' WARM WELCOME I JUST GOT!

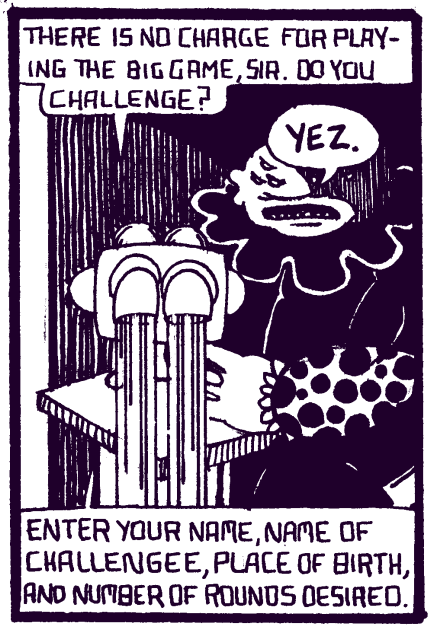

BESIDES, DIS "BIG GAME," WHATEVER IT IS, SOUNDS LIKE A GAME O' CHANCE.
SO! THAT JUST MEANS THAT YOU GOT AS GOOD A CHANCE AS ANYONE ELSE.
HOO HAH
BIG
WHICH IS TO SAY, NONE.


MY LUCK IS BAD ENOUGH WITHOUT TEMPTIN' TH' FATES... AN' AS FER CHANCE -- IT ALWAYS COMES DOWN IN FAVOR O' TH' OTHER GUY!
AW, GEE.
THE BIG GAME
WAIT UP!
"GAME OVER"? ALREADY?
INDEED. THE GAME IS OVER, AND THIS PLAYER HAS LOST...

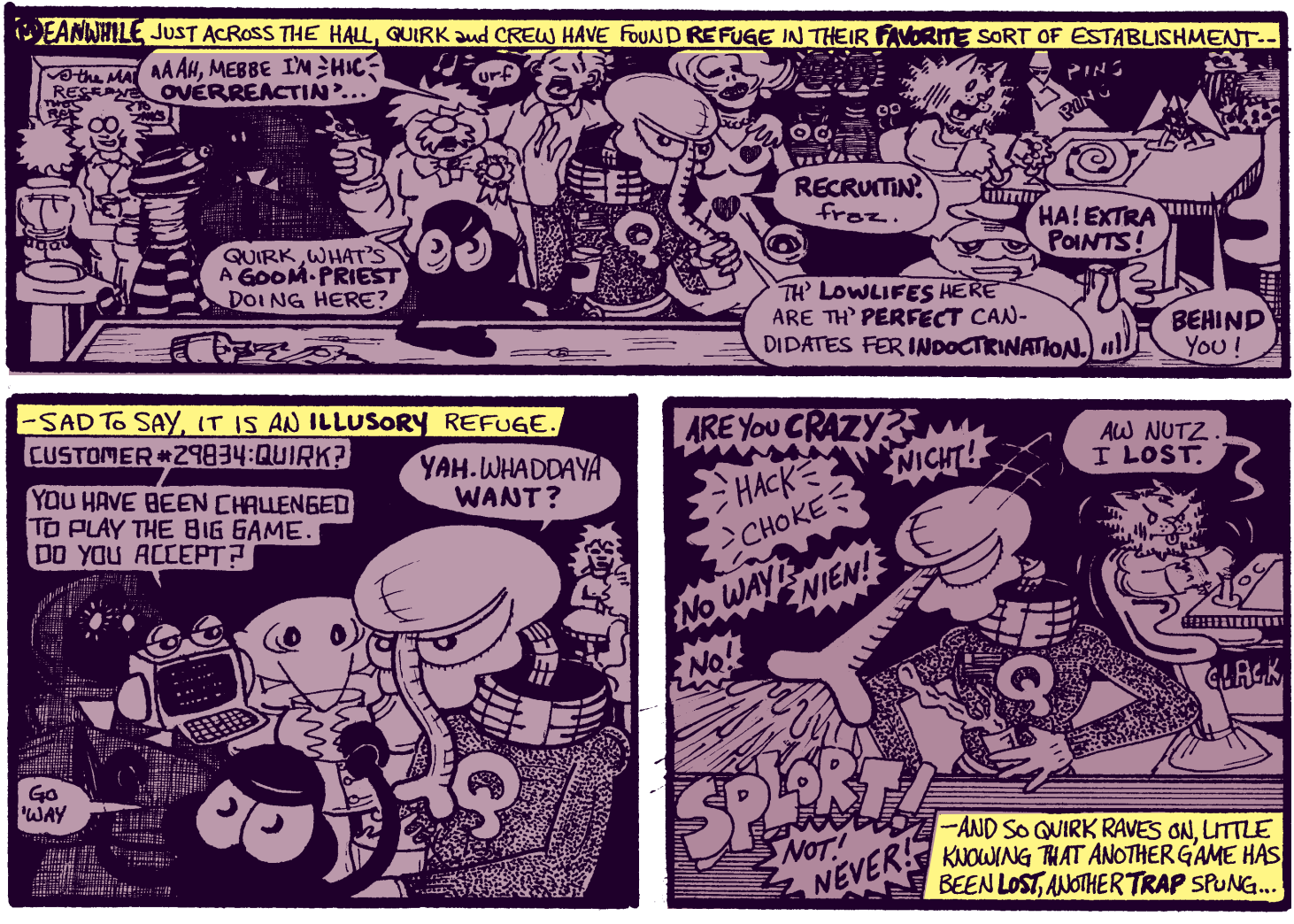

...LOST MORE THAN HE COULD POSSIBLY HAVE IMAGINED!
THE BIG GAME
--THE FLOOR OPENS BENEATH HIM, AND HE IS SUCKED AWAY!
EEE!
--DOWN TO THE INCINERATOR.
CLACK!

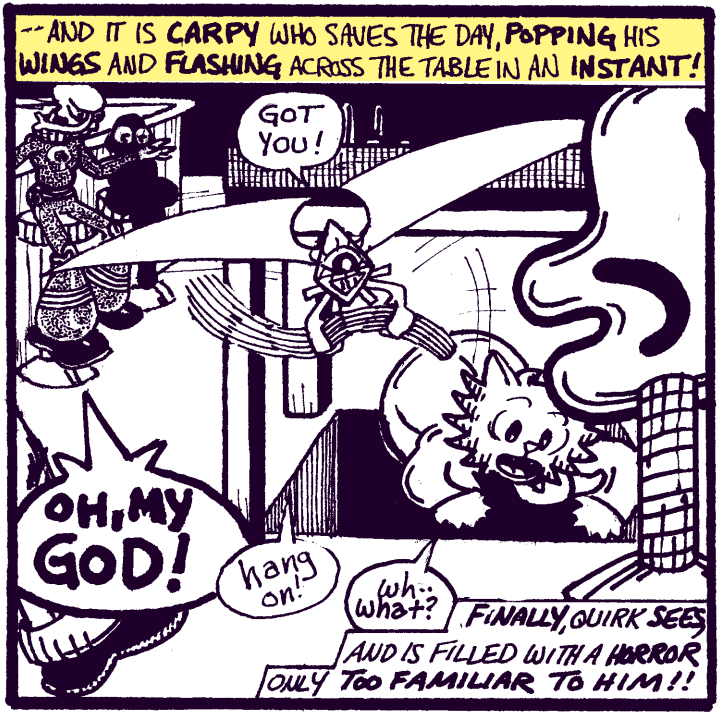

THE CREATURES' PASSING IS WITNESSED BY ONE BEING ONLY. IT DOESN'T FAZE HIM IN THE SLIGHTEST
DELE-D RONE.
FWOOSH

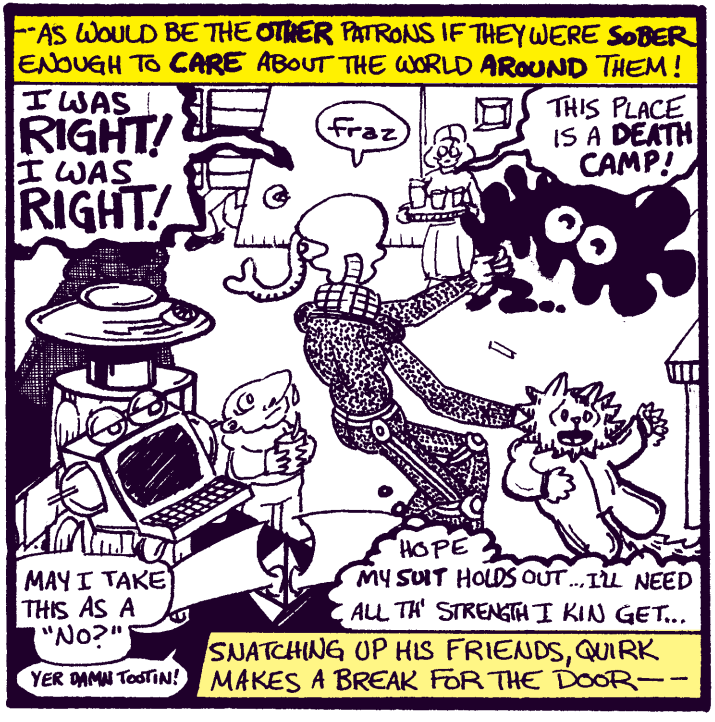

PERHAPS BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE ON THE SATELLITE, THIS MAN KNOWS THE RULES.
YES SIR?
BAR
ALL I GOD IS SEBBENDY CENDS. GAN I SDILL BLAY DA "BIG GAME?"

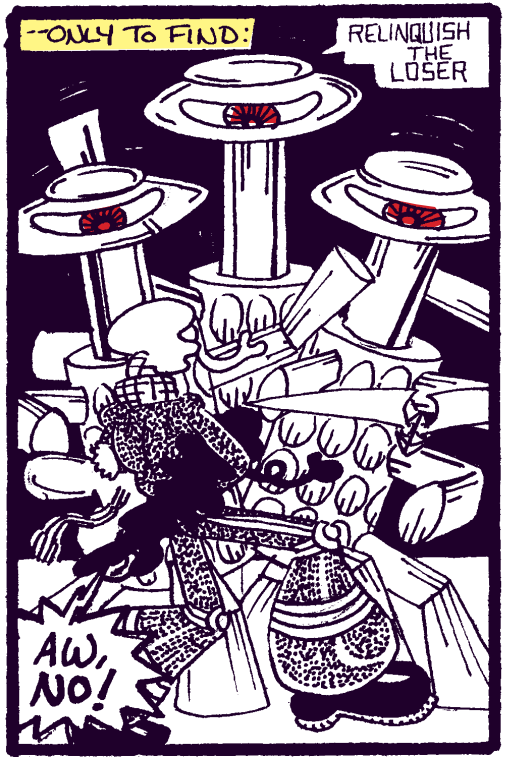

THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR PLAYING THE BIG GAME, SIR. DO YOU CHALLENGE?
YEZ.
ENTER YOUR NAME, NAME OF CHALLENGEE, PLACE OF BIRTH, AND NUMBER OF ROUNDS DESIRED.


GOODNESS! ONLY FOUR ROUNDS?
VOUR WILL BE PLENDY.
OBJECT: BIG GAME
DESIRE: REVENGE
OF ROUNDS: 4
CHALLENGEE: QUIRK
CHALLENGER: MA
PLACE OF BIRTH:
EARTH
VERY GOOD, SIR.


MEANWHILE JUST ACROSS THE HALL, QUIRK and CREW HAVE FOUND REFUGE IN THEIR FAVORITE SORT OF ESTABLISHMENT--
AAAH, MEBBE I'M HIC OVERREACTIN'...
urf
PING
QUIRK, WHAT'S A GOOM-PRIEST DOING HERE?
RECRUITIN'. frez.
HA! EXTRA POINTS!
TH' LOWLIFES HERE ARE TH' PERFECT CANDIDATES FER INDOCTRINATION.
BEHIND YOU!
-SAD TO SAY, IT IS AN ILLUSORY REFUGE.
CUSTOMER #29834: QUIRK?
YAH. WHADDAYA WANT?
YOU HAVE BEEN CHALLENGED TO PLAY THE BIG GAME. DO YOU ACCEPT?
GO 'WAY
ARE YOU CRAZY?
NICHT!
HACK
CHOKE
NO WAY!
NIEN!
No!
AW NUTZ. I LOST.
GURGK
SPLORT!
NOT!
NEVER!
-AND SO QUIRK RAVES ON, LITTLE KNOWING THAT ANOTHER GAME HAS BEEN LOST, ANOTHER TRAP SPUNG...


--AND IT IS CARPY WHO SAVES THE DAY, POPPING HIS WINGS AND FLASHING ACROSS THE TABLE IN AN INSTANT!
GOT YOU!
OH, MY GOD!
hang on!
wh-- what?
FINALLY, QUIRK SEES AND IS FILLED WITH A HORROR ONLY TOO FAMILIAR TO HIM!!


--AS WOULD BE THE OTHER PATRONS IF THEY WERE SOBER ENOUGH TO CARE ABOUT THE WORLD AROUND THEM!
I WAS RIGHT! I WAS RIGHT!
Fraz
THIS PLACE IS A DEATH CAMP!
MAY I TAKE THIS AS A "NO?"
YER DAMN TOOTIN!
HOPE MY SUIT HOLDS OUT... I'LL NEED ALL TH' STRENGTH I KIN GET...
SNATCHING UP HIS FRIENDS, QUIRK MAKES A BREAK FOR THE DOOR--



TO BE CONTINUED...

Visit our website:

http://www.ctel.net/~thornsjo

- Back issues of Millennium
- Electronic books & zines
- On-line writing and design
- Plenty of Free Downloads
- The Web's Coolest Links

BECAUSE

also:

- Antiques
- Folk Art
- Collectibles
- Toys
- Disneyana

(from Cock Hill farm Antiques)

I CAN

and:

- Comic Books
- Graphic Design Services

(from Duck Soup Productions)

it's a party in a can.

good-bye.