Harry Harrison: Interview and story
Harry, the Galactic Hero: An Interview with Harry Harrison
MALCOLM EDWARDS

TERRY GREENOUGH

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HARRY HARRISON

On the News page of this issue you'll find the results of the SFM Painting Competition Mk II. Altogether we've chosen eight winners and nearly all of the chosen artists submitted more than one entry. This means that hidden away in their attics at home is a wealth of mind-spinning sf art just waiting to be unveiled to the world. Perhaps 1976 will be the year of the 'new wave' sf artists, when Bruce Pennington and Chris Foss will be topped from their thrones.

FREE GIFT: Check the pages of this issue and make sure you've got your free SFM transfer. Don't hide your light under a bushel any longer. Just iron this full-colour transfer onto your T-shirt (or wherever you want to wear it) and tell the world that you're a SF reader.

Still on the theme of sf artists we come to Harry Harrison. He started out in the sf field as an illustrator and even designed the covers for the Faber editions of his books The Stainless Steel Rat's Revenge and The Stainless Steel Rat Saves the World. Of course, he's better known for his fiction and anthologies and he did a very good job on John W Campbell's Collected Editorials from Analog. If you didn't have the opportunity to follow these in Astounding, and subsequently in Analog, then it's well worth getting hold of a copy: it definitely brings John Campbell into perspective.

Malcolm Edwards interviewed Harry Harrison and got him talking about his most successful short stories (among other things). They both agreed on a short list of three: The Streets of Ashkelon (reprinted in the Penguin Science Fiction Omnibus as An Alien Agony); Rescue Operation and By the Falls. According to the author, the last title is the least known in England, so we've reprinted it here. It's a good starting point, then you can go on and read the other two stories he mentioned; if you're an agnostic An Alien Agony could really help you make up your mind.
Before you ever started writing science fiction you worked in comics, didn't you, as an artist as well as a writer?

Harrison: To put it very simply, I came out of the army, went to art school and studied drawing; at the same time I studied easel painting with a painter. While at art school I started drawing and selling comics with Wally Wood, then went from there to advertising art. I had my own art agency and also started editing comic books. When comics folded, since I was already into editing, I started editing pulp magazines: Science Fiction Adventures, Space Science Fiction, Fantasy, Private Eye and Sea Stories. So I got into editing and into a little freelance writing. I had sold one or two sf stories, but I said, 'Why did you leave my name off?' and they said, 'Well, we thought you wouldn't like it!' I had to do the second to get my name on it. I also did some spot drawings for my novel Captive Universe. The thing there was to con the reader into thinking: Astraec. So I did the chapter headings in skulls and various things taken from old glyphographs: a very simple bit of line stuff. I sometimes lay out my jackets for publishers, or at least give them a sketch for a design I'm interested in.

Your first major breakthrough in sf was Deathworld. How much had you written before that?

Harrison: I'd been working for about eight or nine years in the field. I edited these various magazines, and I published one or two stories—I think my first story was in 1951 or thereabouts. I was illustrating Worlds Beyond for Damon Knight, when I wrote a short story and asked him what I should do with it. He was an old friend—again, through art—and he read it and said, 'I'll buy it for $100.' Great! And Fred Pohl anthologised it—great! But I wasn't a writer, I was an artist; and in what little time I had for writing, I was doing other kinds of writing for money. I did sell one or two other short stories in various places, and I became a full-time free-lance, which meant mostly men's adventures, 'How I climbed Mount Kilimanjaro with my fingers', that kind of thing. I went to Mexico in 1956. It was very cheap in those days, you could live for $36 a month—that was myself, my wife, my baby, a full-time maid and a bottle of tequila a day!

I got far enough ahead, actually had a little bit of a balance in the bank, and I started working on Deathworld. I worked on it, then I talked about it with Campbell, kept sending him little bits. When I worked some more, went to England in 1957 for the Worldcon, lived in Camden Town and went to Italy in the spring of 1958. I came back to New York in the fall of 1958, and finally I sent Campbell 30,000 or 40,000 words, and he said, 'Where the hell's the rest of it?' So finally I finished it and sold it to him, he sent me the cheque and I used it to fly us back to Europe with a one-way passage to Denmark. Around that time I slid over into writing Flash Gordon and out of all the other things, then I really was doing science fiction full-time from 1959 on, one of the very first people—if you count Flash Gordon as science fiction, as well you might! And I never looked back.

Was that your first sale to John W Campbell and Astounding?

Harrison: No, I had sold him a novelette called The Stainless Steel Rat, which I eventually turned into a novel, so I had a nice correspondence with him over that and I had met him casually once or twice. We had a great correspondence about Deathworld—all the classical Campbell stories are true—and sort of collaborated on the book and got it done. After that it was easier. I always found it very hard to sell him a short story but very easy to sell him a novel. With all the novels, I outlined in advance what I wanted to do. He was the best collaborator in the world, because he'd never change anything: he'd say, 'Yes, well, all right, but have you thought of this?' and he'd give you four or five possibilities expanding on your own basic idea. I found by hindsight, after three or four serials, that if he worked this way with you he always bought the book. He'd rarely ask for a rewrite if you had worked it out with him. With a short story, no—

HARRY HARRISON, author of 'Make Room! Make Room!'; 'The Stainless Steel Rat'; 'Bill, the Galactic Hero' and countless other of sf titles, talks to Malcolm Edwards

was living on freelance writing of any kind, men's adventures, anything at all.

Was science fiction what you wanted to do?

Harrison: Yes—well, I didn't realise at the time. I'd been a fan since the age of 7. You know, you're a fan or you're not a fan; you know what that means. I was a founding member of the Queens Science Fiction League, with Sam Moskowitz and other greats, and I'd contributed to fanzines. So I was a reader, always was. As an artist it was a very interesting time, because I illustrated some sf book jackets and a lot of sf magazines. I used to belong to the Hyde Club—the science fiction professionals' club—so I knew all the writers as buddies. But I was Harry the artist, not the writer. And I was an editor, so I was OK. When I had a chance to start writing science fiction I did, though still earning a living writing other kinds of fiction.

Then I started writing Flash Gordon, the comic strip. I did that for several years in Europe, when I was living in Denmark. Dan Barry, who drew it, was living in France and we met in Italy. I said, 'Dan, after all, how many ex-comic-book artist sf writers do you expect to find living in Europe to write your Goddamn strip for you?' My experience was in writing scripts: the first thing I ever sold was called How to Write for the Comics. I was drawing comics, but the scripts were so impossible I had to do this article for Writer's Digest.

So for ten years I did Flash Gordon, and that enabled me to get out from under a lot of other garbage writing that I didn't want to do. Then in the late Fifties I found I could sell more and more. My books went to Astounding for serials. I don't write fast—about one book a year—and prices weren't so good in those days; but bit by bit I was in there, living quietly in Europe when it was cheap, and when science fiction started booming and I started getting a better price, I found I could live on it and I dropped everything else.

Do you do anything in the art line these days?


And they left your name off the first one!

Harrison: That's why I did the second one! I he'd send it right back. That's funny when you think about it; easier to sell a $3,000 novel than a $50 short story, but that's the way it was with him.

You're often identified as a 'Campbell author'.

Harrison: Yes. My science fiction writing career, if you look back, has a lot of other antecedents, but my first sales mostly were to him, and many people say to me, 'You're a Campbell author'. There were sfphonic Campbell authors who would wriggle their spines and suck up to the golden teat. It was very easy to do; Campbell was an easy lay for people who wrote to his prejudices. He was also a grand editor who would fight with you, but would print what you wrote even if he didn't agree with it. What made it easy for me was that I had been reading Astounding since I was a boy and I thought it was the best magazine going; I also write that way naturally. There are people like Poul Anderson, Hal Clement, whom you can identify as Campbell authors and early Van Vogt—he couldn't have been anywhere else. There's a sort of Campbellian twist of mind, and I never had to write up or down for it.

Eventually, after my third or fourth book, I got tired of writing the same novel, and I wrote a book that I knew Campbell wouldn't buy—a thing called Bill, The Galactic Hero. I never submitted it to him because I knew he wouldn't go near it and it was sold elsewhere. I was absolutely right, because years later I was in the office and he said, in his own quiet, friendly way, 'Why did you write Bill, The Galactic Hero?' He had me backed up against the wall, so I said, 'John, why do you ask?' He said, 'Well, I was going home and I saw your name on a book on the news-stand, so I picked it up.' That's a frightening thought to begin with: he only reads 2,000,000 words a week or so and he still buys a little science fiction to keep him busy on the way home! I asked him what he thought of it and, of course, he hated every word of it.

So though a born and bred Campbell author, as I became more of a writer I found there were other themes that did not fit the Campbellian pattern.

Did you have many philosophical clashes with Campbell?

Harrison: All the time, day and night, no shortage of them. You took that for granted with John,
which is why I say he was a better editor than people gave him credit for. I would call him a neo-Fascist and he would call me a crypto-
Communist, and we'd settle somewhere in between. Basically, he was an old-style technocra-
t. He believed that engineers could run the world, and they can't, you know; it's a very 
simplistic point-of-view, politically. We even 
fought in print, in the serial appearance of 
in Our Hands, the Stars, which I wrote as my 
answer to big government. I think nationalism is 
one of the evils in the world today; we have to 
be world-minded, not nationally-minded. At 
one point in the book, on Mars, one of the characters 
turned to another and gave him a quick lecture. 
A lot of things had happened, a lot of action had 
gone by. The reader was very tired. That's the 
time for a lecture, so I gave my point of view. 
Campbell wrote back and said, 'What do you 
mean by lecturing? Of those two people, only 
one of them was talking! If you're going to 
in a book with either of our names on it.' He 
\n wrote back saying, 'Don't you realise I had 
letters from the Chiefs of Police of Selma, Alabama and the Panama Canal Zone, saying it 
was absolutely right?' I wrote back saying, 'Well, Christ, yes, what do you think they would 
say?'

This correspondence got bigger and bigger, and 
finally in desperation I wrote a very short 
letter saying, 'I'm sorry John, really I just can't 
\n do it. If you want to use it in the book, you can 
use it, but take my name off the book. I will not 
be part of it.' He wrote back saying, 'Right, 
leave it out—you're the editor.' What's that 
\n he would have said in the first place if I had had 
the sense to take that approach. The way he always 
worked, he had the final word—he was editor. 
If he didn't like it, he'd cancel you. He would 
talk to you, cage you, but he would bounce 
what he wanted to bounce and print what 
he wanted to print, and he respected me the same

do it forever; you have to do a novel now and 
then to stay alive. Take the example of Harlan 
Ellison. He could vanish tomorrow! Think about 
it: Harlan's done anthologies and collections 
of short stories, he has but has hardly written any novels, and novels are where the action is. That is what 
gets reprinted year after year; that is what 
people remember; whereas, if you go into 
paperbacks and maybe gets made into a movie; 
that is what gets translated into other languages. 
That gives you a gestalt that doesn't exist with 
short stories, which is very important to keep 
your name in front of the public. Your work 
is appearing in magazines, and you have to get 
your name on the cover.

You could name a lot of people who did a few 
short stories and then vanished into the wood-
work. Someone like Sheckley, who once 
was a very important editor. At that time in 
the Fifties you could sell them all, so he be-
came very well known for his short stories. But 
there comes a limit to that sort of thing. He finally 
got into novels, but he wrote very few. Now 
young readers don't know the name Sheckley 
particularly, though he's still one of the best 
writers in the entire field. In some other field he 
might have had a reputation to hold on to—they 
might hire him as a lecturer—not in science 
fiction. Not for a moment, slow down, and 
you're dead—absolutely forgotten.

Which do you regard as your most successful 
short stories. I've got three listed on my piece of 
paper—

Harrison: I know which ones they are, too. The 
\n Streets of Ashkelon.

Right.

Harrison: Rescue Operation?

Yes.

Harrison: God, that's two out of three. There we 
are.

You've been reading over my shoulder!

Harrison: No, no! I know which have been 
anthologised; which succeeded in what I tried 
to do. I have never had one which came from a certain drive. What was the third one?

One which isn't so well known over here: By 
\n the Falls.

Harrison: Oh, yes. It's been anthologised half 
a dozen times in the States, but not anthologies 
appear over here.

With The Streets of Ashkelon you had problems, 
didn't you, over its use of the 'a' in the title?

Harrison: Endless problems! It was done over 
ten years ago, when you couldn't use the words 
'hell' and 'damn' in science fiction, and my hero 
was an 'atheist.' And that was that, mate! Your 
hero could be a priest—or maybe a rabbi, 
reluctantly—and he could cross himself all the 
time. He was a priest, not that sort of thing, but 
you couldn't use the word 'atheist.' Science fiction 
was a lump of pulp that was still leading a pulp 
life. I sent the story to my agent in New York, 
and he said, 'You can't call this— it's about an atheist.' 
So I tried: I sent it to every single magazine, 
and they sent it back. It was written for an 
anthology Judy Merrill was doing of ways-out 
science fiction. The editor thought The Mobsters 
got bust and the book never came out. I 
thought Britain might be more generous, so I 
sent it to Ted Credmore, and he and I went to 
New Worlds; he felt it was too far out. I asked 
Brian Aldiss what to do, and he said, 'I'll put it in 
my Penguin anthology.' We tried Ted Credmore, 
and he said, 'Oh well, in that case I'll 
print it'. That might give you the feeling he had 
a supple spine; but at least he had a spine, 
where the American publisher didn't have 
that. He just wanted to be reassured that it was 
OK to do. Ted was a very generous man, 
and a fine editor in many ways. So it was first published 
in New Worlds and I was happy. Not 
anthologised it, although Brian was really the first. After that 
I put it in one of my own collections, and now 
looking back it's been in half a dozen or 
more anthologies, a dozen languages, and I'm 
happy to say I've just put it in a high school 
textbook. That will give you some idea of how far 
it all. He just wanted to be reassured that it was 

How about Rescue Operation? I remember it very vividly from Analog, where it seemed out of place and wasn’t too well received.

Harrison: It wasn’t really for the Analog readers, but for the little bunch of fans of science fiction who read it. Many times he said he bought stories he knew his readers wouldn’t like, and to Hell with them. He knew better. And he really did know better. He didn’t always get it right, but you can’t have imputus, aside from the normal art and craft of writing. The craft you can learn; the art you might be able to learn. Many stories, if you’ve got the ability to write it, you can only have at a particular time. It was a story I felt very strongly about. I’d been on the spot; I knew everyone in the story except the alien, and I knew the other two characters, and I knew the countryside. Add this big emotional kick, and I just saw it all being done on the page. It was very different from the alien. That in itself is a mild twist on the old alien arrival theme: it always lands on the White House lawn, you know, but why not in some backwater of America? Why not? When those parts came together, the story generated itself. If you write well, and you have the material, you have a good story.

Are those the stories where you feel most successfully achieved what you set out to do?

Harrison: Some of those, yes. Not all. Sometimes the emotion is the emotional content. You can only write so well if you really feel it. The third one, By the Falls of Lodore, yes. It’s got emotional content and very little else. We were living in this house at the foot of a hill called Suicide Hill, which will give you some idea of what it was like. It rains there a lot, and it rained on the road ended at the top of the hill and there was no traffic. After a few years they built a road and car and the beginning of the house. The house was angled towards the hill, only about twenty or thirty feet back from the road. One night I was just going to sleep, some time after midnight, and I heard a noise. It was barely between the noises of sleep and waking. It was dead quiet, there wasn’t too much traffic in those days, and I heard a car at the top of the hill, revving its engine. It came down the hill, one of those little VWs of the time—you know, from the top, engine roaring—and the lights came through the bedroom window because of the way the house was shaped. I had this feeling that the car was going to come right into the bedroom and out again the other side of the house. All this while I was half asleep. I rose about five inches from the bed, just enough in mid-air from the shock of this thing, while the car went by the house. But as I did this—which had never happened to me before—I had a vision, not of a car coming down a hill, but of a waterfall from five miles wide, pouring down, nothing but sound overwhelming me. This vision so intense I can’t describe it, except to say that I went to see a doctor. I went to see a doctor, and while, went to sleep, got up in the morning, thought about it—and instantly the emotion came. I don’t know how or why, but I just wrote the story. Every time I flagged, I’d think back and revive the feelings I had, and those feelings are behind the story at all times. The story is a sequence of things, but once you’ve read it, you can read four or five things into it. But the reason I think it’s popular is not because of what you can’t understand, but because of what you can understand.

Do you always get emotionally involved with the stories you’re doing?

Harrison: No, I get intellectually involved, but a lot of stories aren’t emotional at all. If there are emotions, though, you should be involved. I did a story called Mute Milton, about an old Negro preacher. I thought it was a little bit of an attempt at a new kind of gravity power. I wrote this when I was living in Denmark and Martin Luther King had just come over to collect the Nobel prize. The Danish newspapers all criticized him, so I thought, here’s an American—you know, having an American getting a very important award. Then a copy of Newsweek came to my house, and I could get a view with some horrible sheriff from the south—great big pot-belly hanging out over his belt and pick handle in his hand, you know—saying, "Well, no, I’m not at all sure he gets the Nobel prize." I was indignant, and, though it didn’t come to me instantly, that strong emotion kicked the story off. I think that’s the only way you can write a story, not about the story itself, but behind it. That’s a logical decision: you want the reader to feel what you’re feeling, you don’t want to tell him what to feel. You don’t want to impose, a red-necked sheriff, and he’s going to recognise a good idea and a good man.

A lot of your novels have some kind of humorous content—you’ve done satire, slapstick, parody, pastiche, the lot. Do you find a good medium for that kind of writing and other kinds of humor of it?

Harrison: I think it’s an ideal medium for it: it’s so full of absolute bullshit, self-aggrandisement—well, it’s just fantastic. Beardsley, anyone who’s ever had bad writing that it’s just ripe for it. I do it because I found I could do it. But editors buy it. Editors will buy action and motion all the time, but each one wants a formula, and we can’t, we can’t. It’s as if you can’t laugh making it. It’s hard. I did one, and then another, and eventually I got a book out of it. I was doing it between more serious books so I can cheer myself up. If you write a book like Make Room! Make Room!, you’re so depressed you want to kill yourself, to have light in the end. I was writing The Bill, The Galactic Hero, just to take the edge off. It’s not done more because people do it so badly. That’s the very little good humour in St. Frederick’s Health Spa, which is the disgusting stuff of which we’re made. I don’t think they’re terribly bad. I wish there was more of it, but it’s really terribly hard to do. You have to feel the material is right. Sometimes it can inadvertently slip up on you. The Technicolour Time Machine started out as a straight adventure novel, but the characters came together and I thought the combination was just funny. And I kept hating myself; I thought, Christ, I should be writing a straight novel! And it kept getting more and more silly. I remembered there’s a straight adventure going on, but at the same time, high hysteria ruling. After a while I just gave up. It came about naturally, and it was in ten thousand parts, and I put in an assurance that I say now’s the time, if I see the right plot. For instance, I was so fed up with space operas that I wrote a sort of a real life experience of a science fiction writer’s life where I wanted to be funny—that I wrote a book called Star Smashers of the Galaxy Rangers, and if you can’t tell what it’s like from that title...

Another of your undoubtedly humorous books is the recent A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah! You seemed very much at home in the Victorian pastiche style you adopted in that book.

Harrison: Yes, I don’t remember exactly the genesis of this, but I was inspired by this pastiche of the Victorian novel. I only enjoy the Victorian novel, and I wanted to do a parody of one, and bring a lot of things together. Oh, I have to say—it’s a very strange thing of a world, this whole world theme is ignored in science fiction for the most part. There are a few short stories and a handful of novels, Bring the Jubilee, de Camp’s Wheels of Chance, Poul Anderson’s The White God. That’s about it, isn’t it? It’s a very good theme, but it requires an awful lot of work. You have to think it through, and you can’t run away from it. It’s a theme I like. I was feeling very transatlantic at the time, having been living both here and in America for a number of years. It wasn’t so much the writing that was so strange, because the parallel world’s theme. I started looking into Victorian crime and vice and, O Christ, once you’ve touched it it’s not unlike Upstairs Downstairs, which is the best part of Victorian-Edwardian life. What the working classes were doing in say, Nottingham at that time was so awful that I decided to leave it alone. Once I did that it had to be a funny novel, or mildly horrid at least. Then I generated the idea of writing it as if it had occurred in that world, and had a couple of years before I actually started it. Then, once it started going, then again, written as if in that world it could be funny, because I could bring out all the anachronisms—deliberate anachronisms. I’ve never met a reader who doesn’t catch it, he shouldn’t mind it; if he does catch it, it adds a grace note. Why not? How much better is the Queen of England in The Queen’s Own FBI, or something, and a detective called Richard Tracy.

And the book was true to the Victorian ethos of sir its time—this book, this world. The fact that there’s a wry love of Tory’s dream of glory—not that I side with the Tory party in the slightest, but you must be true to the theme. I had a good review by Aubercon Waugh in The Spectator. He said he was in tears when the girl got married—as well he might be!

I remember there were complaints from readers in Analog about the awful, mannered style: they said they couldn’t understand it.

Harrison: Those were just the ones they meant. The reviewer, if I remember, who had about fifty like that! I think it went down much better here because for better or worse this kind of novel is very much with us now. If you wrote a novel on education was subjected to the Victorian novel, and would instantly recognise what the hell was going on and enjoy it. I can’t make it transatlantic, because I knew I couldn’t write a British novel and I was getting out of touch with the American novel; by making it English you’re very carefully veted by my friend Toby Roxburgh, so the British characters at least sound true. You can get away with a lot of minor errors saying, ‘“This is an American novel”’—you can’t catch the ring of authenticity in the voice. You will find there is no American author who can write three lines of dialogue out of an Englishman’s mouth that any English reader won’t find false, and vice versa. You just cannot duplicate the whole tenor and thrust, not so much in vocabulary, but in the formation of sentences and word usage. You can fake it, if you get help with it.

The two of your novels which give the impression of having most work put in them, being least easily created, are Make Room! Make Room! and The Island of Null-A. I wonder also the books you regard as your most important?

Harrison: Well, I think they’re all important. Some books do take a longer time. Both those books concerned subjects I felt very strongly about. In Our Hands, the Stars is written against nationalism, and nullity, and it’s a book of power books where you have American heroes and Russian villains. The small countries never get a look in. So I set it in Israel and moved out of other books where people making the film—the director, Richard Fleischer, all the actors—were very involved in it. They were watching the film, and I had the feeling it was a different kind of politics, and that this was important. It’s the kind of politics that adds a grace note in the original script there wasn’t any explanation at all of how it got that way; you just started straight in. It didn’t make sense. I think that's a type of politics that has no parallel beginning, which at least gave you some idea that overpopulation had something to do with it. It isn’t the book I wrote but, as I say, that's the point mostly care about what they were doing. I’m not that unhappy about it.
It was Tamodil’s proudest moment. The Universe stood at his feet, acclaiming his genius. This at last was recognition.

He held the Creation steady with only a tiny part of his mind. His thoughts were an island of conceit, complacency, self-congratulation. Something intruded. Concentration flagged just a little and the forms he was controlling wavered. An irregularity of contour broke their perfection, a suggestion of dissolution, inch in inch growing. He snapped the intruder away and the shapes righted. Mercifully, no one had noticed. He sighed inside, wondering what had happened.

Sheea turned in through the wide doorway, hardly walking. The crowd swept her along. She smiled. They were all flocking to see Tamodil and his work. The name on their lips was the name upon her heart, and they carried her to him without knowing who she was. Ideal seemed to her a fantasy-world, where worry couldn’t intrude.

Banners drifted past as she skipped upstair, fluttering cloves bearing script. TAMODIL. That was all they said, but it was enough. Enough to bring worlds to a single man, worshipping. Only Tamodil was more than a man, much more; to Sheea he was everything. To the universe he was the supreme Artist. And yet, were it not for Cjang... No! she told herself fiercely. Forget Cjang. Let his memory die. But it wouldn’t.

She went with the throng down a corridor, up another flight of stairs. There in front of her was the door, closed. Livered men flanked it, grave and tall. They impressed her. The door, quite plain, impressed her more. Tamodil was beyond it, the sensation of all Ideal, the synonym of the planet.

People stopped chattering. A hush fell. It was the quiet of respect. Respect for the opulence of the building, for the dignity of the footmen, and for Tamodil.

The men flung the door open. Sheea, within yards of him now, hung back. She didn’t enter. Instead, she stood aside as the others, gazing, burst through. Awe was in the involuntary sounds they made, awe drawn out by sight of the Creation. She could understand it; she felt it herself every time she experienced his work, any of it. The depth of it, the scope, the wild ideas it evoked, the dreams transcending dreams, the hint of magic it seemed to convey. He had never produced a poor example. He was a stranger to mediocrity. Tamodil dealt only in excellence. But, without Cjang... She leaned on a wall. A wisp of night-black hair shadowed her brow, above eyes of grey mystery. It annoyed her that men hurried by but gave her no second glance. Tamodil must possess their minds fully, if female beauty was so unimportant. The old hunger deep in her body stirred as she watched the hastening men, the eager need for flesh within her flesh. When she was with him, she could turn to Cjang. Right now, she could merely spin fantasy inside her head and try to be content with it.

She marvelled at the love that kept her to Tamodil, despite the keen hunger. Not that it had always been Tamodil. No, there had been someone else, someone years ago, someone before Tamodil entered her life. There had been Cjang.

Again the annoyance was limned on her face, this time at Cjang whose image kept looming large out of the past. Cjang, the driving-force behind Tamodil in the early days; Cjang, the Animator who could instil the most wonderful vitality into the dullest of Creations— and Tamodil had the very opposite of dull; Cjang, who had loved her so ardently that separation had nearly killed him; Cjang... But why think about him? Because, she reasoned, she had to; she couldn’t stop.

She was in Tamodil’s chamber, edging herself into the crowd. Silence had returned, after the early cries of reverie. Around her she saw admiring glances, heard words of praise—but not for her; for the Creation. It put her close to jealousy. She knew where she stood in Tamodil’s affections— second, behind Art.

There were influential critics in the room, men and women whose opinions swung the tastes of worlds. Panegyric tumbled from their gaping mouths as they studied the Creation. One of them drew pen and notebook from a pocket, chewed the tip of the pen, immediately put it away. No one could capture the magic in mere words. The critic scowled, irritated by his own limitations.

Sheea moved towards Tamodil. He locked the mental mechanism that governed the Creation. He should be able to think of other things now, confident that his work would look after itself. But how confident could he be, considering the recent rebuff? He would have to be careful, spare the mechanism a conscious thought now and then. If it were to crumble, before the gaze of millions; if it were to fall in ruins, here, now, when he had finally proved his worth alone, built a reputation free from Cjang—he owed a lot to their partnership, but at last he had made it on his own. If the Creation... The intruder attacked again. Tamodil’s face was expressionless as he fought it, strove to keep the Creation unchanged, struggled to... "Tamodil." It was a whisper, carrying across silence, an interruption. Sheea’s voice. Get back! he thought. Go! This fight demands all of me; don’t be a distraction.

She came and stood beside him, a petulant curl to her lips. She didn’t like waiting. He could smell the enticing aroma of her perfume, some concoction from one of the outlying planets. He had to fight her closeness, too. Not a sign of the conflict showed on his face. He upheld through it all the classic pose expected of the true Artist: legs crossed, relaxed, negligent, aloof, calm. Never once he had betrayed normal humanity by a gesture, a smug smirk, a furtive scratch. The Artist before his work was a study in immobility. It added to his prestige.

Sheea remained there, watching him. Artist’s concentration against man’s desire. Would he succumb? Would he wear? Would he yield? He would not. A flicker of emotion pierce his shell of impassibility? It had never done so before, but she cherished the secret hope that one day it would. Although it would destroy some of Tamodil’s stupendous self-esteem, it would gratify her, appeal to a wish to hurt him. And that was odd, because she loved him.

He didn’t acknowledge her presence, merely carried on the quiet skirmish inwardly. He won, after nearly losing. Then he stood up and strolled off, wrapped in his cloak of introversion. A touch on his arm and he pretended to have only just noticed her. ‘Why, Sheea!’ he said with affected surprise. ‘That’s you?’

‘That’s what you always say,’ Sheea smiled, but her voice sounded harsh. He didn’t know whether or not she was cross.

He kissed her—normal behaviour, and permissible. The public considered that an Artist was free of his obligation when he had turned from his Creation. He could be as human as he pleased. It was evidence of a powerful talent if he could control his work whilst going about his business apparently ignoring it.

‘Come.’ He took her hand firmly and led her to the door. The crowd parted. Typically, he returned no thanks. Someone opened the door and they went through. The intruder was still bothering him as it closed behind them.

Tamodil drank greedily. People at neighbouring tables cast disdainful glances. Sheea was frowning. ‘Please go easy on the drink, Tamodil. For me.’

‘For you, woman?’ She said with calculated cruelty. Wine sparkled onto the table as he refilled his jug. ‘Having earned diversion, I shall enjoy it.’ Intoxication was often necessary, particularly after a strenuous session withstanding the stares of his admirers. It refreshed him, cleared his head. And usually it made easier the task of maintaining the Creation’s stability from a distance; the mind-lock sank down, quiescent, held on automatically. But would it stay fixed if the intruder came questing again, or would the wine’s madness clog his brain and render him vulnerable? All he could do was hope to drown it, swamp it, submerge it in a bog of other thoughts. Then, if he couldn’t find it himself, what chance would a stranger have?

‘You know you drink too much, Tamodil.’

‘Nonsense! Would you want the well of Art to run dry? I replenish it.’ He gave a shout of laughter; heads turned at it, but the startled eyes swerved off when he met their. He lay back on the couch, a man of slim build, with delicate features, fine eyes, hair touched with the gold of rare sunsets’, all suggesting an individual of gentle disposition and deep thought. And so he was, until the wine flowed. Then, profound thought was abandoned and mildness yielded to a sharp tongue. He puckered a memory from his mind, honing it a moment before stashing her with it. ‘You compare me to Cjang, Sheea! His sobriety to my inmoderation, his sweet talk to my sour. Ha! I scorn you, Cjang, most exalted of Animators! I don’t need you any more.’

‘But you once did,’ she reminded, ‘before... before...’

He stopped.

‘Can’t you say it, woman? Before I rubbed his face in the dirt and stole you from him? A sorry day for him.’ She brightened at what seemed a compliment, but he went on. ‘And a sorrier one for me, I sometimes think’

She looked away, hurt, and silence spun out. Minutes passed, then Tamodil jumped to his feet with the energy of anger. ‘You sicken me at times, Sheea! You all do—all you dull-faced people!’ he added, addressing the room at large.
"I despise the Universe; I am my own." And he strode out haughtily, his face set with his best glare of contempt.

Later, she found him on the flat roof. He was leaning on the parapet, a score of floors above the city, watching the traffic as it tangled in the air-lanes. Now and then his gaza dropped to the streets, a suicidal distance below. This was one of his gloomy moods. Seeing it, she ran to him.

"You clown?" she laughed, gripping his arm. Often it was best to coax him out of the depression with laughter. "Oh, Tamodil, those folks in the bar? Falsely, she giggled. "Tamodil, you should have seen them wince and writhe!"

"Should I? Why?" he asked abruptly, disconcerting her.

"Well..." She gestured her lack of words.

"I see. For no reason, I just should. You're a fool, Shea!" A gleam of pleasure lived in his eyes briefly as she winced.

"Shea, look out at the world. Is it, so aptly named? Where the thinkers of the universe come, the dreamers, the philosophers, the religion-merchants, the poets, painters, Artists, Animators. For a man such as I, this is the place; success here is success everywhere, and I've achieved it! Why should I waste time watching idiots cringe at the scorn they deserve?"

Shea had no answer. Shaking her head, she left him. After a long moment he followed her and caught up. They descended from the roof hand in hand.

"The façade of the building screamed once name at them, in letters as tall as a man: TAMODIL. The walls of the lobby repeated it, smaller: TAMODIL. It lined the stairway, or banners: TAMODIL. It graced doors, windows: TAMODIL.

"Critics, reporters, interviewers swarmed round him, receiving nothing, not a comment, not a syllable. Shea flashed smiles; Tamodil radiated indifference."

This was Tamodil's Exhibition, the acme of his career without Cjäng. He ignored everyone who tried to speak to him as they moved down the main corridor. Critics, reporters, interviewers swarmed round him, receiving nothing; not a comment, not a syllable. Shea flashed smiles; Tamodil radiated indifference. People made way. As he walked, Tamodil held the enroaching mind at bay—but only just.

He stopped at a door, not the one into his own chamber.

"This way, Shea. Let's view other work than mine." They went in. Only a few people were there, idly sauntering past the old, tired-looking Artist who sat frozen in his chair. Shea piled him, as well as the handful of other Artists and Animators privileged enough to have a small share in the Exhibition. Hardly anyone took the trouble to study their efforts—reasonable efforts, but no match for Tamodil's.

"I really do like this!" she said with feigned enthusiasm, for the old fellow's benefit. His posture didn't alter, but she felt sure he had heard her. "The colours are marvellous, and as for the stability..."

"It's as firm as a wet sponge? Tamodil intersected loudly. The Artist's mouth tightened. "Watch!" Tamodil snatched control of the Creation, shivered it, and gave it back. The old man's face drained of colour, but he remained still. His eyes closed a fraction as he locked his mind harder on his Creation, willing it to assume greater solidity. It did. Tamodil, bowing theatrically in recognition of the performance, decided not to interfere further. He had made his point.

Shea was shocked. 'Tamodil! That was wicked!'

He was unrepentant. 'Wicked to teach him a lesson? He should be honoured to have learned from me.'

She was too incensed to reply. Without interest, she looked again at the Creation, a small still-life of some deity she couldn't identify. Perhaps the Artist was an anachronism, a member of one of the fanatical cults from the barely-civilised Rim-Worlds Union. He had portrayed his subject in several different colours, using the entire spectrum of human shades. Probably symbolising racial harmony, she supposed, cynically dismissing it as a vain aspiration. One of the shades reminded her of Cjäng—the sallow appearance of his flesh, revealing the pre-Expansion Terra-Chinese in his ancestry. She sighed, remembering the wonderful years she and Cjäng had spent together on Ideal; the trials, the triumphs, the hopes, the plans. And then along came Tamodil.

"Shea! Shea! I want you a minute! It was Cjäng's voice, excited, downstairs. The door slammed; he always closed it with a bang, not through had temper, just because he was a powerful man, his strength never completely under control. "Shea! I've brought you a surprise!"

She was curious. Cjäng's surprises could be anything. A rare book, an expensive ornament, a cheap trinket that had caught his eye. "Coming?" she called, and went. Near the foot of the stairs she paused. "Oh! I didn't realise! Cjäng wasn't alone. With him was a stranger, a few years younger, fair-haired, rather nice-looking. His serious face was trying to smile but not really making it. He was unsteady; Cjäng's arm supported him. She smelled stale wine.

"Shea, this is Tamodil. You've heard the name. Cjäng's broad, flat features were eager, expectant."

"Tamodil? I..." Started, she searched for something to say. All of Ideal was familiar with Tamodil's name. He was said to be a genius, a young, fast-rising Artist destined to reach the very top. Rumour attributed to him a talent that had to be seen to be believed. "Yes, yes, of course. Hello."

"Hi!" He stepped forward and took her hand. His grip was tight, like a woman's. It lasted only a second, but it seemed much longer to her.
She nodded and said, "Cjang, I think you're the greatest artist in the whole of the Cjang family."

Cjang felt a rush of pride. He was the best artist in the galaxy, and with that realization, his confidence soared. He decided to talk to his colleagues about his new idea.

"Cjang, I've been thinking about this," she said, "I think we should do something together."

"Really?" Cjang asked, excited. "What do you have in mind?"

"I've been working on a new sculpture," she replied. "It's a representation of the universe."

"That sounds amazing," Cjang said. "I'd love to help with it."

"Great! Let's get started right away." They both nodded in agreement and began working on their new project together.

The next day, they presented their sculpture to the council. The council was amazed by their work and declared it the best sculpture of the year. Cjang was thrilled and decided to continue working on his art, creating even more amazing sculptures in the future.

The sculpture was a stunning representation of the universe, with a central figure of a woman holding a torch, symbolizing the light of knowledge. Surrounding her were various elements of the universe, including stars, galaxies, and planets. The sculpture was a true masterpiece and brought joy to all who saw it.
By Julie Davis
SFM PAINTING COMPETITION Mk IV: The Winners
At last, after six months of careful deliberation, we announce the results of our second painting competition. Learning from last year's experience, this time we changed the rules little, and we sent out entrants to send photographic transparencies of their work rather than the original paintings. This resulted in a marked drop in the number of entries and a significant rise in the standard of artwork. We've chosen eight winners and selected each painting for a particular reason. Some seem destined for use as book jackets and others as centrepieces in SFM, one in particular was selected because of its psychedelic flavour and two more for their strong colours, but the winning painting surpasses them all.

Peter Elson's painting has a strong science fiction theme (albeit hackneyed) and a clear, photographic quality which says much for the artist, considering that, unlike many of the other paintings, he did not use canvas or board, but simply cartridge paper. His use of light and perspective is exquisite and he depicts the natives in the foreground as just as effectively as he does the ominously approaching spaceship overhead.

Of course, we are all art critics and many of you will disagree with our choice, but no one can deny that the gallery of paintings here indicates that a great wealth of SF art lies waiting to be discovered. This issue contains all the prize-winning paintings with the first-prize winner displayed on the centre pages.

**FIRST PRIZE of £50 goes to Peter Elson of 5 Clay Lane Grove, Colchester, Essex.**

**Seven prizes of £25 each go to the following artists:**

P. Jevons of 14 Farnley Crescent, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire:
AR Lowe of 10 Sandown Road, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex;
Paul Mahoney of 18 Glenville Avenue, Coventry;
K Newstead of 343 Petits Lane North, Romford, Essex;
Robb Oford of 52 Fair Green, Cockfosters, Hertfordshire:
Michel de Saint Owen of 17 Belgrave Gardens, London NW6; and
John Seymour of 7 Moorland Grove, Pudsey, West Yorkshire.

**Nasty Rumours**
Harry Harrison has moved to Ireland... Cherry Wilder, whose short story 'Way Out West' appeared in SFM Vol 2 No 7, has been awarded an Australian arts grant to write a sf novel... Robert Silverberg won the Silver Comet, Italy's equivalent of the Nebula Awards... A. A. Attanasio, Leonard Nimoy and William Shatner have both been signed for a full-length Star Trek film... David Bowie is to star in The Man Who Fell to Earth, filming has started in New Mexico. His part was apparently written for Donald Sutherland but when the director, Nicolas Roeg, read the script he felt that Bowie was the only man for the job... Chris Priest won the 1975 BSFA award for Inverted World which was voted Best British SF of 1974. His next novel, The Space Machine, will be published by Faber in 1976... Charles P. Doherty, Frank Herbert's third novel in the Dune series, runs to 530 pages in manuscript and will be published in April 1976 by Berkley in America... Vortex, the American sf magazine, has folded. It started life in April 1973 as a glossy mag and changed after thirteen issues to a newspaper format, it stayed that way for these issues and then just flopped.

Shadrich in the Furnace, Robert Silverberg's new novel will be published in America next year; it is 90,000 words long and on its completion he took a well-deserved holiday from sf.

**Dune at the Movies:** The Continuing Saga
According to the report in SFM Vol 2 No 8, the filming of Dune, Frank Herbert's marathon novel, did not begin in September. It has been delayed for another month because the large flat northern California studio, which was used in Paris producing the whole film in pictures, a technique referred to as a storyboard and successfully employed by Alfred Hitchcock, among others, on several films. The artists selected for the job are Jean Giraud, a Frenchman well known for his psychedelic magazines, and Christopher Foss who will be designing all the spaceships and monsters.

Another change is that of special effects designer; Douglas Trumbull will not be working on the film, but Dan O'Bannon who handled the special effects for Mark Smith's film, The War of the Worlds, will.

There is also a possibility that Pink Floyd may be providing the soundtrack.

**Film News**
Gregory Peck and Lee Remick have been signed to appear in a new sf called The Micronauts. The plot concerns mankind's struggle to survive an ecological disaster which threatens the world with tidal waves. It is the co-producer of the James Bond films, will take over the entire Shepperton Film Studios for the filming of the film. Three months will be spent there constructing the sets before shooting actually begins. The film, scheduled to open at the end of next year, involves complex technical production sequences as the humans are reduced to insect size to battle the insect world for the remaining food supplies. The photography is already underway at the Oxford Scientific Film Centre for shots that portray insect life magnified more than ninety times larger than life size. Among the more curious props which have to be created for the film are blades of grass more than 30ft high and a bottle top big enough for two of the actors. The director is British film-maker Don Sharp who made the controversial Herrenness.

But is it Science Fiction?
Rollerball reviewed by John Brosnan.
Rollerball, as you all know by now, is about a society's war of the future in which the participants in the rollerball games try to beat each other's brains out, literally, with metal-studded gloves. The Corporations which rule this future world have devised rollerball as a means of keeping the populations under control, the idea being that if people are able to watch men on skates bashings each other in, they will be too busy to do anything to protest in any political activity. As you can see—it's a pretty deep film.

But then go wrong for the Corporations when one particular player, portrayed by James Caan, is so successful at the game he becomes an international hero and thus a threat to the status quo. The Corporations retaliate by making the game even more dangerous (they abolish the rules) in an attempt to get rid of him and prove to everyone that individual effort goes for nought in the long run. He survives, however, and the film ends with him alone and triumphant on a body-littered track while the Corporations, represented by John Houseman, gush their teeth with frustration. And that, basically, is what Rollerball is all about.

The actual rollerball sequences are very impressive, which is what you'd expect from a director who is as technically competent as Norman Jewison. Slickness is Jewison's major characteristic as a director and has been in evidence in all his films, such as *In the Heat of the Night*, *The Thomas Crown Affair*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Jesus Christ—Superstar*, and *Rollerball is no exception. He doesn't put a foot wrong anywhere, though his imagination in editing, all are superb and the film can be described as a visual feast, but that's about all it is. Like most of his previous work, *Rollerball consists of a very rich surface with little underneath—it's all gloss and no substance. And, surprisingly off the track it's rather dull. In an attempt to give the film a little excitement, the impact Jewison has deliberately kept the rest of the film on a very low key but in doing so he has actually let the film down. In places, it is a little way, don't have much to do except watch James Caan brood about What It All Means. Now there are some aspects of the film that can make you feel really envious, like watching, say, Marlon Brando and Jack Nicholson, but Caan, though a good actor in his own right, is not up to the standard. Jewison has said in press statements that *Rollerball is really a warning about the growing violence in society; but I doubt if anyone has actually made a film in which an actual corporation can be seen as the fascist instincts of the spectator. He has even gone so far as to suggest that he didn't try to make a rollerball sequences attractive; instead he tried to make them as repugnant as possible so that audiences would feel revolted by the spectacle demonstrated by the spectators in the film. Well, he may sincerely believe this but I find it difficult to swallow. My idea of good art is one that provokes some sort of response—however bad, which means he probably helped to raise the finance for it. Now I can't imagine him approaching a potential business executive with the idea, 'Hey, get involved—point of the film—the spectacular scenes of violence. He may honestly believe he's made a film with a social message but I'm not sure if anyone has actually made a film with a social message. I really doubt if anyone has had the time to think about it, even if they have made one. People have paid to see it because of that rather than rollerball itself? I'm not trying to moralise about this as I found this film both entertaining and exciting (though I like to think I wouldn't enjoy a real game of rollerball) but for the makers to pretend that they're making a comment on society, I think it's a sort of glossy Kung Fu epic—is just hypocritical. But, you ask, is it science fiction? More or to the point, is it insubstantial science fiction? Not Most good sf usually has a well-developed background. In fact, as Harry Harrison has said, the back- ground is about the most important part of the book or story or film, not what's going on in the foreground. But in Rollerball there is no background at all; just a blank screen. We're told in the film that this is the future, which is only forty years away, except that it is under the control of the Corporations and that the world is no longer free of the threat of poverty or disease. Not bad going for a mere forty years. Only twenty years ago, if anyone had suggested that a man would have been interested in is how did all this take place. Whatever happened to the Third World and population control? The Third World? The Fascism and Communism and Capitalism? Between black and white? What happened to the Feminist review? Too bad. If you had to compare it to the real world, it would have had far greater impact if it had been set in today's world or just a couple of years into the future. Nothing new in sport; nothing to do with the final game, that couldn't conceivably happen today. It is even rumoured—that it may be a publicity gimmick by the distributors—that inquiries are already flooding in for franchises both to stage and television rollerball concerts.

To give him some credit Jewison doesn't completely ignore his world of the future, in a token gesture he has his hero caress a computer at the end of the film. Again this is all the world of technology has to offer but unlike the past forty years of history. But when Caan attempts to find something out about it he discovers that all his files have been transferred to a big central computer. When he goes there he finds it in the hands of an eccentric keeper played by Sir Ralph Richardson, who is doing one of his usual eccentric turns. But the computer, consisting of a pool of bubbling water, has not only lost much of its information but it won't even say that which it has been asked. Jealous of the silliest sequence in the whole film and sums up the makers' attitude to both science and science fiction.

One thing you can say for certain, the game of rollerball will be around for a long time before the world of the future arrives.
THE QUERY BOX

CONDUCTED BY THOMAS SHERIDAN

Readers' questions on any aspect of science fiction are dealt with in this regular feature by Thomas Sheridan, who is internationally known as one of the foremost experts on the medium. Address your questions to THE QUERY BOX, 'Science Fiction Monthly', New English Library Ltd, Barnard's Inn, Holborn, London ECIN 2JR. They will be answered as soon as possible.

MAKING WAVES

As a relative newcomer to science fiction, I have heard much about the New Wave. Could you tell me what it is all about and who are its main exponents?

Michael Siddall, Askam-in-Furness, Cumbria

The so-called 'new wave' was an attempt to introduce into traditional SF of the elements of 'mainstream' fiction by modern experimental writers like William Burroughs, Kurt Vonnegut and Samuel Delany. It was sponsored by Michael Moorcock when he became editor of New Worlds in 1964 and sought to attract new readers by calling its contents 'speculative fiction' and concentrating on sociological, psychological and sexual themes while at the same time departing from the rigid literary styles of the conventional magazines.

The avant-garde movement was actively supported by British writers such as JG Ballard, Brian Aldiss, John Brunner, Langdon Jones and Charles Pratt, and Americans Judith Merril, Thomas M Disch, Norman Spinrad, John T Fahey and Roger Zelazny, besides many newcomers with revolutionary ideas. It also received financial encouragement from the Arts Council of Great Britain which enabled the magazine to continue until 1971.

The experiment caused much controversy in the circle, especially because its sponsors repudiated the basically optimistic outlook of old 'wave' SF, contending that its confident assumptions of scientific progress and galactic expansion were outdated fantasies in a world doomed to atomic warfare, overpopulation and pollution. That much 'new wave' writing proved almost unintelligible or was frankly pornographic, let alone dismal, outraged old-time readers who might otherwise have been won over by the trend towards a more realistic outlook. But the fact remains that leading exponents of the 'new wave', notably Moorcock himself, acquired a following as enthusiastic as any which adhered to their popular predecessor.

For further reading refer to The New SF (Hamish Hamilton, 1969), an original anthology of 'modern speculative fiction' edited by Moorcock and his editorial associate Langdon Jones; to Judith Merril's harrowing selection, England Swings SF (Gollancz, 1969), and the Penzher series of Best SF Stories from New Worlds, dating from 1962. Also, of course, there's the revue, paperback-form New Worlds, which carries the old 'science fiction' label while retaining its 'speculative' outlook. In the second issue (Sphere 1761), editor Moorcock made the significant admission that 'The built of so-called New Wave has no more claim to be worthy of serious attention than the junk of so-called Old Wave ...

TREK'S END

Could you say why production of Star Trek stopped? And what happened to the 'planet of the Apes' television series?

Graeme O'Kingston, Bolton, Lancs.

Production of Star Trek ceased in 1969 because, popular though it was for three seasons, it did not maintain a sufficiently high rating in the American national network. Its producers put down this to a change in "the worst possible time-slot" after its first success, and to an "impossible" streaming system. In short, it was a victim of the American TV system—but it is still going strong there as well as over here.

The first of the Apes episodes, as shown on ITV, made a poor impression on television critics and a few televi-

sion viewers. My own feeling is that the films left little room for television to make much more of the idea.

To: James Goddard on the subject of his review of Nebula Awards II in SFM Vol No 6.

For a supposedly well-informed reviewer you make several elementary mistakes:

(1) The Aldiss/Harrison annual collection is not called The Annual Best SF. It is called The Year's Best SF.

(2) You state yourself that each 'Best' of the year reflects a personal view and then go on, ludicrously, to state that one anthology is 'better' than the others because it has a higher proportion of stories that have won, or almost won, the Nebula Award. Learn a little logic, even the final results of the Nebula, which is only a popularity contest, may not always be a yardstick proves nothing to no one. You're wrong, I get all the annual anthologies, Dav, Ballantine, Sphere (the Ace edition has been curtailed, I don't get magazines, but I know that Carr, Wollheim/Saha, Aldiss/Harrison will let me probably 80% of the best sf published during the year.

(3) On 'Sharis!'-'it's denouement is nicely dovetail for a change'-what change? Where have you been the last hundred decades or so? There are no more 'upbeats' endings anymore, they're not 'true', not actual. 'real', they never have been, they never will be in SF, according to Malzberg, Ellison, Anderson, Roberts, Wilhelm, Robinson ... and the rest of the brain-washed Clarion Workshop, among others. Would it be strange nowadays, to be an upbeat ending, or even an ending, since most modern writers seem to leave their protago-

nists between earth and air.

(4) I suggest you read Tiptree's story again, in the light of the knowledge that the story is, as all Tiptree's are, a satire on our own society. Tiptree does not like women, just as Ruskin does not like men.

Ian Crowell (Middlesbrough, Cleveland)

James Goddard: I'm flattered that Ian Crowell should have read my review of Nebula Award Stories. It was made in order to bring up my elementary mistakes: what I forgot to say in the review was that I included a number of deliberate errors, and the prize for the clever reader who would find the first letter being replaced by one deliberate error is a lifetime's free supply of bicarbonate rocks from the asteroid belt—collection yours and arrange you arrange yourself everywhere seriously. Though I feel compelled to reply to your mention of Ruskin's women, and deal with your points in order. Firstly, I took the title of the Aldiss/Harrison anthology from the latest issue to hand at the time I wrote the review, that is from the US Berkley paper-

back. The title they give on both cover and title page is: The 7th Annual Harya Harrison—Brian Aldiss Best SF 73. I simply abbreviate to The Annual Best SF, which, I think you must agree, is not too much of a deviation from the full title. I assume you have the Sphere edition of the anthology? As a fellow collector of these annuals I hope you appreciate that the Sphere edition of this particular one is incomplete? I have in my possession an insert into the first edition. The Sphere edition is better than any other simply because it contains a higher proportion of award winners. In fact the reverse is true, in my opening paragraph I state very clearly, in simple, easily understood language, that I consider the Harrison/Aldiss selection the best, and, as I made clear in my closing paragraph, that book does not contain one single story written after the awards were made-

consideration. Having explained this, your second criticism is invalid, for nowhere do I imply that the Nebula Awards are the only awards; the others, what I do say is: ... I rank the Harrison/Aldiss anthology as being by very Carr's a close second ... A CLOSE SECOND. As far as logic goes I think yours is slightly askew. I have given the results of the indi-

cations of a large body of people to be a safer yardstick any other one is good or bad is than the opinions of a single person. That turns triumphant and will always be so is extraneous to your criticism.

Thirdly, I still maintain that the denouement of "Sharis!" is a treat for a change. It ends unsatisfactorily for the protagonist. Most sf ends in a kind of anti-climax, a kind of anti-

gonist. I don't wish to enter into a lengthy debate here, but take a look at Robert Silverberg's novel Eupyn Hystieres, one of the finest recent novels in sf, and very downbeat all the way through, but even so, in the final paragraph of the book the narrative takes a slight upturn. Seulg is beginning to recognize his lost telepathic power, his change of life, satisfaction of a sort is in sight. This still applies to most sf, even to what little of Malzberg I have read, but patently not to "Sharis!"

I can't understand where you got the idea that Tiptree hates women. Certainly 'Love is the Plan...': that description could possibly give rise to this misunderstanding, but the story is about the woman, not the man; what he has produced many sympathetic characters and for him he shows that women are just as much as the rest of us. The other Tiptree story mentioned in the review, 'The Girl Who Had Rongt' as it is curiously spelt, is Tale of the Tree, a story that says 'Love is the Plan ... is imbued with all kinds of feminist symbols for that reason and cares to search for it, but I can find nothing in either of Tiptree's two excellent collections. Ten Thousand Light-Years From Home and Warm Worlds and Otherwise, to suggest that he is anti-feminist.

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SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY 17
“We were living in this house at the foot of a hill called Suicide Hill, which will give you some idea of what it was like! When we first moved in, the road ended at the top of the hill and there was no traffic. After a few years they built a road and cars would come belting down it. The house was angled towards the hill, only about twenty or thirty feet back from the road. One night I was just going to sleep, some time after midnight, and I was in that half-way state between waking and sleeping. It was dead quiet, there wasn’t much traffic in those days, and I heard a car at the top of the hill, revving its engine. It came down the hill, crashing through the gears, right to the top, engine roaring —and the lights came through the bedroom window because of the way the house was angled—and I had the feeling that the car was going to come right into the bedroom and out again the other side of the house. All this while I was half asleep. I rose about five inches from the bed, just suspended in mid-air from the shock of this thing, while the car went by the house. But as I did this—which had never happened to me before—I had a vision, not of a car coming down a hill, but of a waterfall about five miles wide, pouring down, nothing but sound overwhelming me. This vision so shocked me that I lay there vibrating for a while, went to sleep, got up in the morning, thought about it—and instantly the emotion came back. I went into the studio and in one day wrote the story” (Harry Harrison)
I T W A S the rich damp grass, slippery as soap, covering the deep, steep, stony banks, the purling brooks, the steel-blue, blackish, steep steeps, and the not the steepness of the hill. The front of his raincoat was wet and his knees were muddy long before he reached the summit. He could feel the ground sliding away from under him. This continuous roar of sound grew louder. He was hot and tired by the time he reached the top of the ridge, yet he instantly forgot his fatigue and his blood hardened and clogged with the cold. Like everyone else he had heard about The Falls since childhood and had seen countless photographs and films of them and he knew that if he could reach out and touch just one peak, just one giant—just one— he would have felt the impact of the roar.

Distant, a vertical river—how many millions of gallons a second did people say came down? The Falls stretched out across the bay, their farthest reaches obscured by smoke and fog. The mist seemed so dense that he could not see the smoke or the fog or the trees. It was so thick that one felt as if he were swimming in it. The valley was only a cleft in the mountains, a cleft in the earth, and the smoke and the fog were blown over it, swirling and whirling, like a cloud of black smoke.

Very thick was the fog—very heavy. It made him want to gag, to retch, to vomit. He had never been to a place like this before experienced. Carter turned and looked along the ridge toward the sea, to the edge of the sea, to the sea, to the blue sea, to the sun. The sea was a wall of water that hid the mountains as they could not be seen. It was only a glimpse of the sea, a glimpse of the sea, a glimpse of the sea.

The sea was a wall of water that hid the mountains as they could not be seen. It was only a glimpse of the sea, a glimpse of the sea, a glimpse of the sea.

BODUM reached up to the shelf for a cup, breaking Carter’s grip with the powerful movement of his arm. It was a horror to see him, so strong, so unshaven, so unshaven. His face was so close that he could see it clearly. The people around him were hanging to the rails, some with their mouths open as though shouting in fear. The water was gone and there was only the water, rushing endlessly by.

‘Did you see it?’ Carter shouted, slamming the top.

‘There, out there,’ Carter cried, taking Bodum by the arm. ‘In The Falls. It was a ship, I swear it was, falling from the sky, and she hit the mountain ridge and it must be a whole world up there that we know nothing about.’

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C arter was looking at the glass but at The Falls themselves. They were so much more beautiful, so much more blue, so much more magnificent, so much more blue, so much more magnificent, so much more blue, so much more magnificent.

The window did not lessen the effect The Falls had upon him but it enabled him to stand and watch and think, as he had been able to do on the outside. It was very much like a peephole in a holocaust of water—a window into a cold hell. He could watch without being destroyed—but the fear was still there and the cold.

Bodum nodded wisely. ‘For forty years have I been here and I can show you what comes down The Falls.’ He thrust the cup of tea at Carter and Carter, picking up the lamp, waved Carter after him. They crossed the room and he held the light to a large glass bell jar.

‘Must be twenty years ago it washed up on the shore. Every bone in its body too broken. Stuffed and mounted it myself.’

C arter pressed close, looking at the staring shoe-button eyes and the gaping jaws and pointed teeth. The limbs were still and unnatural, the body under the fur bulging in the Warning places. Bodum was a man of considerable taxidermy.

‘Yes, perhaps, once or twice, he must have seen a terror.’ Yet, perhaps by accident, he had captured a look of terror in the eyes, a look of terror.

‘It’s a dog,’ Carter said. ‘Very much like other dogs.’

Bodum was offended. His voice as cold as snow can be. ‘How can you bring a broken dog here and tell me that? ’ he told you. How else could a dog have appeared here in my house? ’

‘I’m sorry, I did not mean to suggest for an instant— down The Falls, of course. I just meant it so much like the dogs we have that perhaps there is a whole new world up there.’

‘Never speculate,’ Bodum said, mollified. ‘I’ll make some coffee.’

He took the lamp to the stove and Carter, left alone in the parlor darkness went back to the window. It drew him. ‘I must ask you some questions for my article,’ he said but did not ask them. ‘And what happens to your dogs?’

‘What could help me?’ Bodum shouted, louder than ever.

‘A child scribbled it Meaningless.’ He seized the paper and crumpled it and threw it into the fire.

‘Yes. But it is meaningless. It is no worth know, ’ he said. ‘You had been here over forty years, and if there is one man in the entire world who is an authority on The Falls it is me. I know everything that there is to know about them.’
Julie Davis talks to Tony Roberts

How did you first get involved with book illustration?

ROBERTS: I studied at art college for five years which was really like spending five years in limbo. I was at Wolverhampton for the first two years and then I took a course in painting at Ravensbourne College of Art. I thought this was the best course to take for my personal development as I knew that it was more liberal than those offered by other colleges. Consequently, I looked away for three years and concentrated on drawing; at that time I was very impressed by Dali, so most of my work reflected this surrealist influence.

When I left college I was prepared to try any sort of work, but luckily I met a guy called Peter Sullivan who was Head of Graphics at Canterbury College of Art. He was also working for The Sunday Times and editing books for Collins, so he had a fair amount of contacts. I accepted some work from him, illustrating an encyclopaedia, and I worked on that for about a year.

Was that black and white work?

ROBERTS: No, it was full colour artwork, which was quite nice. I was pleased just to get my work published. It was the first time I'd had anything in print, apart from the litho and silk screen prints and etchings I'd done at college. I enjoyed being part of the publishing process.

After that I managed to mingle myself a couple of jobs from Panther Books. I knew someone who was working there as chief designer. I'd been to college with him four years previously at Wolverhampton, and he had done some work. He also introduced me to John Spencer who runs an artists' agency called Young Artists, and he suggested that I give him a couple of samples of my work to show to publishers.

Were they samples of sf artwork?

ROBERTS: Yes, and they all ended up as paperback covers. I stayed with John and after that, the work just came in.

Is that why you specialised in sf artwork?

ROBERTS: No, my work was sf orientated anyway and it seemed a suitable field to go into. I'd been working on some surrealist ideas and trying to combine unrelated images of different things, so going into sf illustration was a natural step.

Had you read much sf before you started to illustrate books?

ROBERTS: Yes, quite a lot in fact, especially when I was first at college. But I'm always aware of how very non-visual so much of it is.

Do you find it difficult to illustrate a straight sf novel?

ROBERTS: Well, I often find that if the author describes a spacecraft he does it in a very conventional way, so whenever I can I squeeze in my own ideas and interpretations.

Is there any particular sf book that you'd like to have the opportunity to illustrate?


Have you illustrated any of Heinlein's books?

ROBERTS: Yes, I did the cover for the Panther edition of Double Star; in fact that illustration was one of the original samples I did for John Spencer.

Have you compared your illustration of Double Star with any earlier interpretations? For instance, Kelly Freas' illustration which appeared in the Fantastic Stories in 1956. (See SFM Vol 2 No 10 p 26.)

ROBERTS: Well, I haven't seen his illustration, but I've just finished the covers for Gordon Dickson's Dorsai trilogy which Kelly Freas also illustrated. His cover for Tactics of Mistake concentrates on the people while I have more sympathy with the hardware. I'm really more interested in the classical themes of sf, like hardware going berserk and machines taking over the world rather than philosophising about political futures.

How would you approach JG Ballard's stories?

ROBERTS: As pure hardware.

David Pelham presented very solid images. Do you think that was suitable in the light of their role as psychological 'disaster' novels?

ROBERTS: I think the difficulty there is that alter egos are very hard to illustrate.

Do you think that's why the main characteristics of sf illustration are spacecraft, machines and hardware?

ROBERTS: Well, I think the artwork always has to be spectacular.

JON SPENCER: You have to remember also that the illustrations have to satisfy the demands of the publishers and that the publishers, by necessity, have to observe certain visual clichés.

Does that mean you're briefed when you receive a commission for a cover?

JON SPENCER: Well, you're told whether it's hardware or software, in other words it's either spacecraft or fantasy. They are two distinct marketing categories. Quite often the brief is very specific.

TONY ROBERTS: It needs the hardware to sell it really.

Supposing you don't agree with the publisher's interpretation of the story and you hand in something that doesn't include any hardware. What happens then?

ROBERTS: Well, they'd reject it, but as it happens hardware suits me. There are quite a lot of nice problems you can set yourself within the scope of hardware. I always like to make spacecraft look sinister, I tend to model them on insects or reptiles; they can still be spacecraft but they have a sort of menacing quality. The idea of a spacecraft having a personality appeals to me.

What made you decide to illustrate the Fritz Leiber book with a cat's paw smashing onto a spaceship?

ROBERTS: I did two books at that time for Sphere, The Best of Fritz Leiber and The Best of AE Van Vogt. The cat story comes from the Van Vogt book and the painting was meant for its cover. However, when Sphere got the paintings they swapped them over, for some inexplicable reason, and the cat painting ended up on the Fritz Leiber book.

I always look for striking visual images in the stories I'm illustrating and I feel that cats are nice to draw anyway. It was one of those situations where I knew the publisher would want a very obvious sf interpretation, so I combined the hardware of the spaceship with the cat's paw.

Have you been influenced by any other sf illustrators?

ROBERTS: I'm more interested in the early American pop art painters. I like the way they manipulate scale by putting two unrelated images together to create impact. I did something like that on a recent cover for Spheres; I used a pair of sunglasses and put a spaceship in front of them, this completely distorted the scale and miniaturised the spaceship. Of course, you can also paint a spacecraft which appears to be two miles long by setting it against a different image, such as a planet. I'm interested in manipulating the relative scale of things.

Has photography had any influence on your style; have you attempted to capture the same realism?

ROBERTS: Well, I use an airbrush chiefly because it gives a photographic quality to my work; I feel that it suits the subject matter, it's very slick. I used to be quite interested in photography anyway, especially stereo photography.

What's that?

ROBERTS: It's a process for taking three-dimensional photographs. I found a 1905 stereo-camera on a junk stall in Bromley and I bought it for 50p. It takes two photographs simultaneously, each from a slightly different angle. When you put them in the viewer they come together and form a 3-D image.

What would you say are the chief characteristics of your style?

ROBERTS: I'm pre-occupied with hardware.

When painting hardware, do you refer to space rockets in use today or do you rely on your imagination?

ROBERTS: All the spacecraft I illustrate are totally improbable, and intentionally so. I don't like the idea of drawing a spaceship which might end up in space in about fifty years' time. I prefer mine to double as insects, reptiles, etc.

What type of painting materials do you use?

ROBERTS: I use ordinary designers' gouache mostly. Sometimes I use Liquitex, a sort of acrylic paint. I never use ink.

Do you ever work in black and white?

ROBERTS: I always do a preliminary black and white drawing. It's more than just a line drawing; it involves tone drawing as well, because I like to work that out at the drawing stage.

Have you only illustrated science fiction?

ROBERTS: No, I illustrated the Australian edition of Golden Soak by Hammond Innes as well as a few pseudo-factual 'astronauts from other planets' books. I'm currently working on two Gothic horror titles for Granada.

How did you first become interested in science fiction?

ROBERTS: It's just one of the things I like to read; it's so open-ended. You can do anything in an sf book, you can write off all the characters when a comet explodes, you can let the machines take over everything. It seems nice to be able to do that rather than write within the format of, say, an historical novel.

Don't you really go along with sf authors who are totally pre-occupied with the science angle of it and who never include anything that is improbable. For it seems to me that the best sf deals with the fantastic and the impossible.

Do you just see yourself as an illustrator or are you trying to say something else through your work?

ROBERTS: No, I don't have any pretensions to do anything other than put a cover on a book. I don't intellectualise about my work at all.
HEF LEAK. Heat exchange fluid leak?!
At first Mal stared without comprehension; when the meaning penetrated, globules of sweat appeared on his forehead.
"Heat exchange fluid leaves the fusion plant white-hot and highly radioactive, delivers its energy thermoelectrically to the ionojet thrusters, and returns (no less radioactive) to the fusion plant. Without HEF there is no way of absorbing the vast energy output of the plant!"

Those safety mechanisms had better work.
The magnets for the H-plasma draw their power from the fusion plant itself, so once the ionojet is shut down, the jet is on the ground, near an external source of power. All power is lost if the magnets are cut off, so the situation has to be pretty bad before the cutouts operate. If HEF loss triggers them, then more than half the fluid has gone.

FUSION MAGNETS CUTOUT flashed across the main print-out scope. At least there was now no chance of detonation. Or of reactivation.

They were now shifting powerless over the ice deserts of Antarctica; power for the normal VTOL mode and power for low-speed jet control both gone. There were only the emergency batteries for the computer and life support.

'I don't believe it. . . . I don't believe it. . . Mal was muttering."

'It's impossible, but it happens on my jet!"

'Now do we get her down?' Mal asked.

'The only way to keep her in one piece would be to skid-land her,' Luke replied. 'You can eject and leave me to try it on my own if you . . ."

'Not likely!' . . . or stay with me while I try landing her. It'll have to be by radar; you can't see much out of the visors here.' Luke knew that for a stable skid-landing he must keep pitch height for speed in a shallow dive. When stalling speed approached, he dropped the craft's nose towards the invisible frozen land below.

Antarctica in June . . . the long winter night. Expeditions from Fuchs Dome, the research centre 1200 miles north-west of them on the Weddell Sea Coast. Well-protected in ponderous, slow-moving 'Big Bug' caterpillars, the scientists—and tourists, if they had the money—could move about and look at the ice. Be showered with radioactivity! Who knows what isotopes were even now solidifying into dust as they floated down on the wind. However well armoured the expeditions were, they still took raw materials, samples and souvenirs in. And above all, air. Unless they were warned, whoever was below them now would sign their own death warrants within minutes by breathing droplets and dust showered on them from above.

Mal announced, 'Fuchs Dome's a hundred miles away upwind; it's safe from fallout.'

'Pity,' Alme said.

'Cool it, Al. We know you don't like cheap holiday resorts. Just now, we've got a jet to fly.'

'Come off it, Luke, I was only joking . . .'

'. . . but we'll have to radio the Big Bugs, Mal continued, so they can seal themselves in and go on internal oxygen. Hey, all this is in the Safety Code anyway, isn't it? He reached for the Distress Frequency com switch. 'Freight jet Stornoway calling all expeditions in the region 72 'W22.5°S. We have a problem—radioactivity leak. Seal your environment, move upwind or crosswind, and request emergency evacuation by icecopper. Mal set the switch to Auto-repeat; the message would now be rebroadcast for as long as the power held out.

'Do the batteries last long enough to power the control surfaces for a skid-landing?'

Jolly well should do, Mal, I take it we're past the Pensacola Mountains.

'Fraid not. The way the computers have taken us, we're just crossing the near edge. They're forty miles wide here. No good for a skid-landing.'

'No. This isn't going to be fun. I can't even bring her round away from them, so I'll have to try and land her in the first valley I see. If I can't find one, we either bale out, or . . . You'll be safer this way. The ice cap is behind us now.'

'Alme and—sorry, I should say Crewmen Jorson and Burrows—you are ordered to bale out.'

The door to Mal's cockpit closed automatically as part of the ejection sequence. The capsule exploded away from the ionojet with Mal facing back along the flight path; he was thus cushioned by the back of his chair from the violent deceleration of the capsule in the airstream.

Gradually the steady pressure on Mal's back was succeeded by swaying; the capsule swung crazily as the parachutes above were many by the turbulence.

Mal stared hypnotically at the altimeter, wondering which of the figures on it would bring the bump that meant landfall—2,000, 1,500, 1,000? A night-time mission arose in his mind of the 'chutes ripped to shreds on the serrated edge of a mountainous cliff, and the capsule falling, bouncing off a ledge as it fell, then lying in bloody shards on the snow.

The capsule swung again and was momentarily in free fall when the 'chutes were caught by a downdraft. Mal's stomach complained at this and suddenly splattered its contents over the console and onto the floor.

Mal's body was exhausted by the convulsion, but his mind started racing. What's this stupid capsule for anyway? To protect me from hypersonic aircrashes if I need to eject. Well, this isn't a hypersonic
airstream any more. Shouldn't I be out of here, ready to land on my feet? Of course I should; why don't I get on with . . .

The capsule hit the flat ice-covered ground at the speed of the wind, which was 40 knots. It bounced off the ice, sent spinning by the impact. The twisted 'chute cables dragged madly behind it. Vertigo set Mal's eyes oscillating in their sockets as the console spun above him, below him, above . . . below. The capsule bumped again, finally halted.

Mal's mind felt as if abraded by steel wool. He was hanging on his chair straps, so the pressure on his chest made breathing difficult. There was a buzzing in his ears, and his eyes would only focus on the altimeter, which had come to rest at 4,600 feet. If only the buzzing would go away . . . but that was hardly likely, Mal realized, as he identified its source.

It was the radioactivity counter alarm.

Mal reached forward to detach the portable radiocounter from its retaining clips, but was hindered by the straps. He fumbled with the catches and one finally came undone. He first allowed his feet to fall away from the chair with the top strap still done up, then undid the other strap and dropped to a crouching position on the corner of the console, with the chair from which he had been hanging now above his head. He reached down for the door switch and activated it, but the machinery did not respond. Damaged by the fall, presumably. He'd have to open it manually. Leaning backwards round the chair and supporting himself by holding its far arm, he stretched up for the manual door handle and pulled it.

When the door gave, the wind hit him.

It swirled in, flapping at his crewman's jacket still held on its hook, and taking the cold through his shirt-sleeved state of dress as if it wasn't there.

He reached for his jacket and put it on. It afforded some protection; but if this was inside the capsule, what was the weather like outside?

Mal still had to get out; some of the heat exchange fluid had evidently leaked into the bulkheads and airducts of the ionojet, but hadn't activated the radioactivity alarm until the jolt of landing. The capsule was a very unhealthy place to be. High time he left.

There was no other clothing around that he could wear. The Safety Code had said something about clothing, but he couldn't remember what. Never mind that, too late now. Grabbing the radiocounter, a radar beacon and a torch, he pulled himself up onto the chair, balanced on it, and climbed out of the open door into the Antarctic night.

The wind nearly caught him off balance. He was now standing precariously on top of the rounded capsule, which had come to rest against a jagged, cliff-like nunatak wall. Nunataks are the peaks of buried mountains showing through the ice. The cliff Mal faced had snow lodged in every crevice and cornices hanging from the ledges.

The cornices were eroded by the blast even as Mal watched. He knew just how they felt; all the time he was being bitten into by the keenig, niemal wind. Above him the sky was for the moment clear; the half moon looked warm by comparison with these glacial conditions.

Mal turned round to scan the plateau. Its edge dropped away at an icefall, so that he was looking down the line of a curving glacier, its mountainous walls smoothed by the eternal passage of ice.

About five miles down the glacier was an orange glow which told Mal all he did not want to know about Luke's fate at the hands of the Stornoway. The mountains either side of the glacier glared unnaturally, and towards the far side lay the source of the light—the shattered, scattered wreckage of an ionojet.

Mal wondered how it had happened. Had the controls failed for lack of power, or had the mountain loomed up on Luke's radar screen too fast for him to escape? There was nothing he could do about it now. He must find shelter, and quickly. He jumped from the top of the capsule onto the ice and was just starting to run away from it along the cliff, in search of a nook not filled by snow, when a passage in the Safety Code came to his mind.

In cold climates or marine survival situations: para-

chute fabric can provide useful insulation if wrapped around the body . . .

Mal circled the capsule at a safe distance, towards the cliff on the far side of it, where the 'chutes were flapping violently in the wind. He had difficulty in persuading his hands to take hold of the cables, but he had managed it and was just pulling his blaster to cut through them when above the wind he heard that buzzing noise again. In his left hand were the 'chute canopies and the radiocounter, with its detector pressed up against the fabric.

The 'chutes were radioactive too. Wrap himself up in them for longer than five minutes and he would be as surely dead as Luke was. Mal glanced at the orange glow down on the glacier.

At least Luke must have gone quickly. A far better way to go than this—here he was, baled out in the wintry Penascola Mountains and forced to leave the warmth of his capsule because it was radioactive.

Perhaps a few million years hence they would find him frozen deep in a glacier, a perfectly preserved specimen of Primitive Man.

Exposure hypothermia, the medical textbooks say, is the result of an inability to keep up body temperature. They say things like:

*It is characterised by loss of heat production: the limbs cool first and the subject loses muscular control. When deep body temperature starts to fall, the subject becomes irrational and suffers delusions and hallucinations; these are followed rapidly by loss of consciousness. Death generally follows loss of consciousness within one or two hours, if the condition is not ameliorated by restoration of body heat.*

Behind the verbiage lies an unpleasant and often tragic reality. Mal Burrows was beginning to see himself as just another one to add to the medics' sad list of case histories.

After he had found himself unable to take refuge in wrappings of parachute canopy, Mal had resumed his search for shelter. When he had moved a quarter of a mile, he decided that he ought to inform possible rescuers of his whereabouts, and that he should activate his radar beacon.

He looked down at his hand and saw his torch strapped to it, but no radiocounter.

And no radar beacon.

He brought his hand up to touch the lapel of his coat, touched it. Saw the lapel move, felt his wrist bend—but couldn't feel his fingers moving. The fingers had turned white.

Frozen! No wonder he had dropped the beacon.

He had only been out here for ten minutes. This was indeed an
The World of Fanzines by Fredric Wetham MD
Published by Southern Illinois University Press; $10
Available in England from Transatlantic Book Service, 51 Weymouth Street, London W1
Reviewed by Cy Chaavin

The reaction to this book in the fan press (at least in its fan reviews) has been universally favourable; of the reviews I've seen, only Ed Conner's review in SF Echo, can be said to be favourable. Perhaps this is understandable because as one reviewer said: 'I found the book virtually useless' and so will most other fans. It will tell the experienced fan what he knows already — for $10 a copy. What I'm curious about is the sort of notice the book has received from the uninitiated. If, after all, it is aimed at outsiders and not fans themselves.

The thing I think most other fan reviewers objected to was Wetham's lumping together of comics, fanzines, and books into one category. Wetham justifies (or at least attempts to justify) this practice by saying 'the unity of what may be called a comic, a fanzine, and a fanzine spirit is greater than the divisions'. And considering the focus of Wetham's study, he is correct — for neither the comic nor comic book aspect of fanzines really interests him. Wetham uses these two types of zines somewhat arbitrarily. The quotes he takes from various low-circulation comic books and zines bear this out.

How did Wetham become interested in fanzines? He was sent copies at various times by 'young men' who were 'approving or disparaging of my writings or talks on such subjects as fandom, science fiction, or violence'. After reading the fanzines, he was attracted to them because they 'were so vital' and 'they felt that they were essentially un-published'. Now that he has an educational background that has invaded so much of our academic life', Wetham found himself enthusiastic about fanzines' spontaneity, humor, informal warmth and friendliness. Obviously, it was a natural love of fanzines that led to Wetham's book —and despite the fact that it is a serious, academic study, Wetham manages to convey some of his obvious enthusiasm and affection for fanzines quite well.

Wetham (like everyone else who has tackled the subject) is unable to come up with a really satisfactory summary of the history of fanzines. He can make one point that is obvious to us all, and yet is one we don't often consider: 'In contrast to movies, where a mass circulation publication is a necessity, fans are told that they should not treat people as statistics.' It's interesting to compare Wetham's remarks with some made by Ted White. Wetham's most vociferous critic, in Outworlds 20: 'I do not sit down to write something for a fanzine. I do so with a certain mental posture, an awareness of an audience, no matter what topic I intend to write about. Why? Because there is some limited specific audience in mind...'.

Of course, this is true. Wetham is thinking of the circulation of their fanzines, something almost unheard of (until very recently) among commercial magazines. Wetham notes that there are two very different ideas on what fanzines 'should be' in present-day fandom. 'One is that fanzines should be more and more professional looking; the other is that their greatest value is their amateur status and appearance. It is the more professional a fanzine is financially, aesthetically, and in production, the less it corresponds to the prototypical image of the fanzine.' This subject has been debated at great length in the USA, due to the growth there of various publications (eg Locus, Alpulp, The

Club representative, get a lot of work around here, ha-ha! We can offer you membership at the once-and-for-ever (and I do mean ever) price of just two ounces of echolotum! I'm joining, I'm joining, thought Mai. The figure Mal saw was at a quarter of a mile away and at the top of the munatak wall, but when he turned to look again he would see that it had no arms or legs, and was swathed simply in white.

He heard a voice. It called, 'Mal! Mal! It's me, Alme! So you've already joined the club, Al. See you soon; I hope they treat us nice. Alme all Mal me no Alme you Alme.'

Mal had crawled right up to the cliff. This was a very dark area here, he thought. He leant towards it, but couldn't feel it on his body. He leant further down against it. It wasn't there.

Mal felt himself falling... Thump. The wind stopped.

The tower had been in his hand, still gleaming. The beam fell on a rock wall. Rock roof - cave. A very small hole at the end. He sat and ate to warm up. Mal thought he had to kill it, when it wanted blaster out holster hand to go hip blaster out push trigger push push... The heat from Mal's blaster shattered the rock into pieces which fell to the flat floor of the cave.

Gotta kill it more push trigger push push push... The dragon was killed, but still its dead jaw smoothered and breathed fire at Mal from the floor.

A stray spark from the blaster beam's target hit Mal in the face; it he quit firing and put out.

'Why didn't he remember to use his parachute canopy?' Aline Jonson and the Rescue Service said. In the rain storm and is area a lot of ice were collected, the icehopper carrying them back to Fuchs Dome. Aline was still wrapped up in his warm, white chute canopy, an hour after he had seen a torch beam from him and another a few feet away from him and a couple of feet off the ground. It was blacker than the rest of the wall. Mal's eyes fell on it.

That's right, black dragon's come to eat me gotta kill it want blaster out holster hand go to hip blaster out push trigger push push push... The heat from Mal's blaster shattered the rock into pieces which fell to the flat floor of the cave.

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AT THE
PLEASURE CENTRE

Years ago the pleasure centre had been something monum-
ental and beside the point. A parking lot, or maybe a the-
tre. In any case, the ceiling was high and the floor tilted.
If Gloria had been a perfect sphere she could have rolled
from Room 348 to the exit. In fact, she was thin and angular
and walking served her purpose just as well. Most of the
doorplates indicated either VACANT or IN USE. When
you need a policeman he’s never there.

Except in one cubicle, where a very young, very homely
cop chewed on a cud of gum. Their eyes tangled and she
thought—No, not this one. She was not the slave of passion:
she could wait. Appetite would be her sauce. Hungry, she
imagined the ideal policeman: about 40, greying at the
temples and wilting at the edges of his spirit; friendly, wisful,
uncomprehending, and willing (above all) to accommodate
her needs.

The same rooms were still empty or being used, so on her
second go round she went into 111, where in the meantime
he’d got everything ready. She signed his form, he punched
her card, she lifted the quill of hair that covered the socket
in her forehead. Without teasing or delay, he unzipped his
pocket, took out the plug, connected it to an outlet and
plugged her in. It almost went too fast.

He went to the wall where the panoply of dials on the
console trembled in sympathy with her psyche’s least electric
twist, and his finger paused above the button—paused,
while their eyes skimished once again. There was just time
even for effort when he wanted her to beg.

Then it stopped.

‘How was that?’ he asked, after a just barely decent
interval.

‘Oh, wonderful.’

‘Yeah?’

‘Really really terrific.’

‘What did you see?’

‘It’s not like seeing exactly. It’s hard to describe.’

She was disconnected now. The policeman was wrapping
the cord around the three-pin plug. He no longer seemed
homely or hostile. She could see him pouting in his own
humanity, a Prometheus self-immolated and self-consumed,
and she wanted to reach forward and undo the tight little
black bow tie that was strangling him.

‘From the intrinsic centre of her being a seed of
light swelled into endless flowering. Cerise and
lovely, leaf after leaf of radioactive lettuce wrapped themselves around the grate-
ful lobes of her brain. Bells rang. Her cells absorbed a perfect nectar. The swift elusive
meaning of all existence slowed, stopped and
glowed with a yummy clarity. Heaven!’

By
Thomas M
Disch

‘Do you mind if I ask you a question?’

‘Ask,’ he said.

‘Why do you do this? I mean, it should be clear why
we’re here. But what does it feel like for you?’

‘I don’t know.’

‘Just a job like any other?’ she suggested.

‘There’s a lot of other jobs I don’t think I’d care for. What
do you do?’

‘Programmer.’

‘You like that?’

She shrugged one bony shoulder. ‘I like this.’

He laughed. ‘I’ll tell you, Dorabella, there’s one part I
like.’

‘Gloria,’ she corrected.

‘Dorabella,’ he insisted, with a shift down the spectrum
toward those wave-lengths she first remembered. ‘Can you
guess what part that is?’

‘No? Us, here, talking?’

‘No. I don’t usually care to talk. Tonight’s the exception.
Some guys do, but for me what I like is the same, really, as
for you. It’s when I’m holding down the button. I like to see
what happens in your face.’

‘What happens?’

‘I don’t know. Something disappears.’

‘Is it like flushing a toilet?’

He laughed again. ‘You said it, lady, not me.’

‘Don’t you ever wonder what it feels like for ordinary
people?’

‘I can guess.’ He pulled down the steel shutters over the
console.

‘You can’t.’

He turned off the lights.

‘Where are you going?’

‘It’s ten o’clock. I’m off duty.’

She followed him down the tilting corridor, linked to him by
the hopeless desire that he might be corruptible. It was
her dream that some day, somewhere, she would meet a
policeman who would yield her more than what she was
allotted by her card; who would have his own power
(sources (a battery)?); and who would never take his finger
from the button, who would hold it down for ever. But she
could not say this to him, and in any case there was no
policeman so guileless that he didn’t understand this.

‘Will I see you tomorrow?’ she asked him as they neared
the exit. It was as far as she could venture toward the dream.

‘If you come back to the same room, you will.’

‘One more question?’

His feet were already planted on the mat that opened the
door. ‘Shoot’.

‘When you imagine what it’s like, what do you imagine?’

‘Oh, colours, music. That sort of thing.

‘And you don’t want it for yourself?’

‘I’m not wired.’

‘You could be.’

‘So? You could have yours ripped out.’

She cringed. ‘No way!’

‘That’s just how I look at it, Dorabella. I got what I need.
My hand is on the button, I make you jump—that’s all
right.’

‘I don’t understand you.’

‘If you did, Dorabella … if you did, you might not come
back tomorrow night.’ He grinned, and the streetlight
underlined every lesson scrawled in the young, painful
false.

He strode out into the street, where she could not follow
him. He reached the bus stop at the same moment the bus
did. When the bus pulled away he was gone.

Gloria walked to the corner and waited for the green light.

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