NEW OPERATION CREATES TWO MINDS IN ONE HEAD!

FOREIGN RATES

Belgium (Belgie) .....70 B.Fr.
Denmark (Danmark) .....10 D.Kr.inkl.moms
France .....8 NF
Germany (Deutschland) .5 DM
Israel .....6.60 Israeli Pounds
Italy .....1000 Lire
Netherlands (Nederland) .4.60 FL
Norway (Norge) .....9.00 N.Kr.inkl.moms
Sweden (Sverige) .....7.50 S.Kr.inkl.moms
Switzerland (Schweiz) ...5.00 S.Fr.
United Kingdom (UK) ...50p

vertex

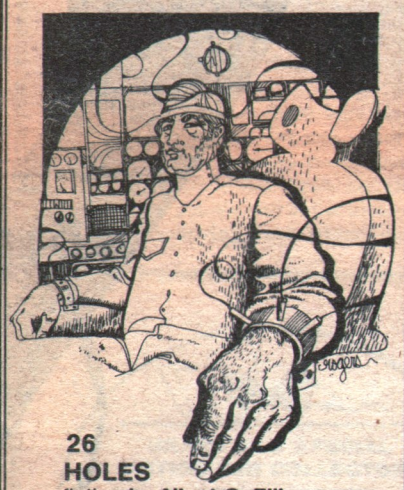
THE WORLD'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION AND SCIENCE FACT

MONTHLY
VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3
AADC
$1.00

© 1975, Mankind Publishing Co.
Los Angeles, Ca. 90046 U.S.A.

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

23
VERTEX PREVIEWS ROLLERBALL
A new science fiction film from Norman Jewison and United Artists, starring James Caan, will be spreading blood and action in your local theater next month.

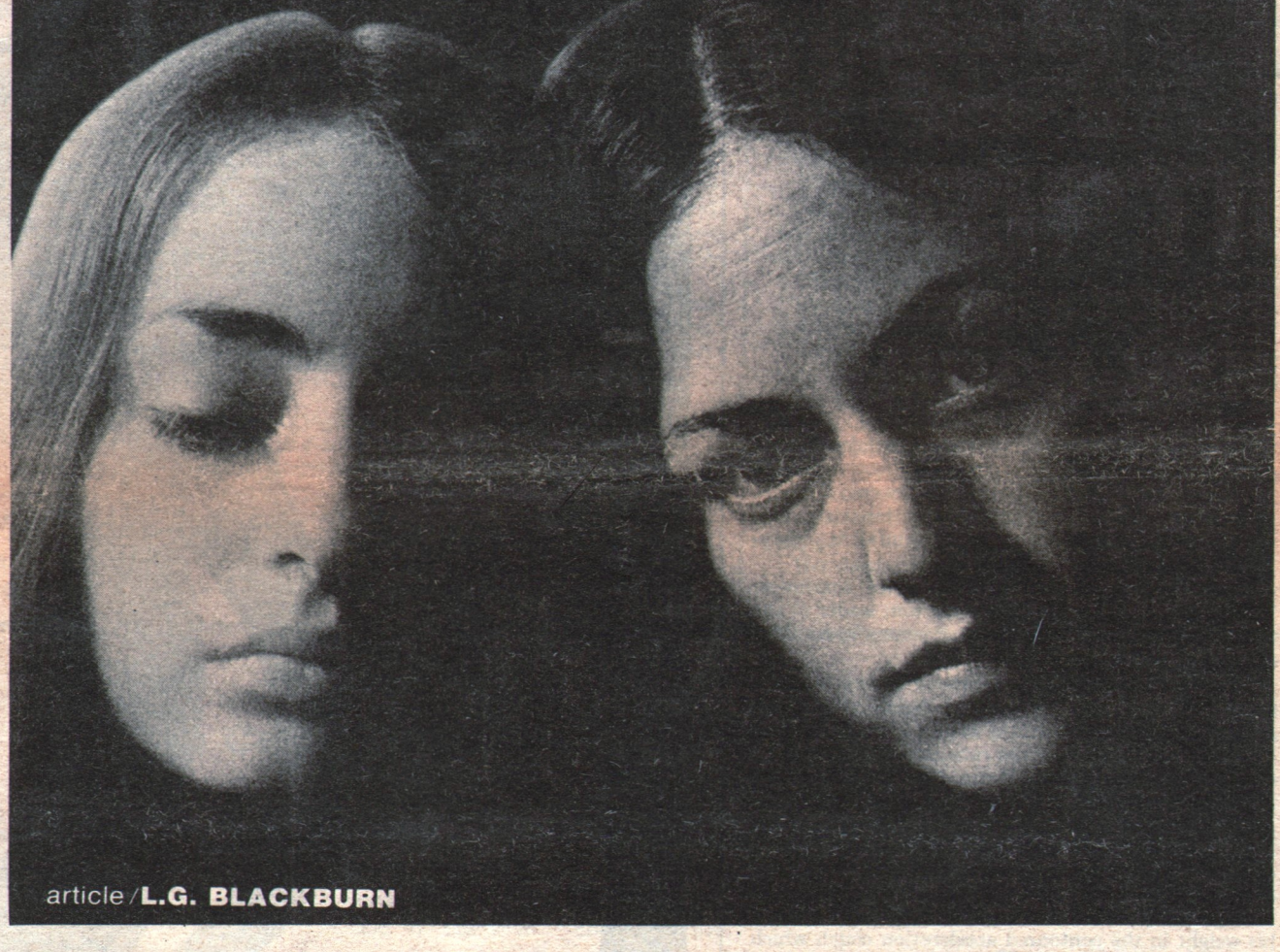


26
HOLES
fiction **by Albert C. Ellis**
He knew which of his worlds was the real world. Trouble was, he liked the other one better.

7
VERTEX INTERVIEWS TERRY CARR
interview **by William Rotsler**
One of the top science fiction anthologists tells why he is in science fiction, and what he is looking for in his books.
16
A KITTEN FOR ELINOR
fiction **by Georgia F. Adams**

Mind Splitters

Inside every person are two brains—two personalities, connected by only the thinnest and weakest of ties.



article / **L.G. BLACKBURN**

In the June 1974 issue of VERTEX there was a story by Robert Silverberg, *In The House Of Double Minds,* which looked at a society where certain people were chosen for an operation to separate the two halves of their brains. The story showed what sort of person such a mind-splitting might create, and gave a pervasive reason why such an operation should be performed.

Far from being a science fiction creation, though, the techniques and rationale of such mind-splitting, and the results produced by such an operation, have been intensively investigated over the past decade, and in the past year several such operations have actually been performed on humans.

It has long been known that the brain of man is actually two separate *pieces,* connected by a small amount of tissue, but for centuries it was assumed that the two pieces made up an integrated whole, each necessary for the proper functioning of the total unit.

In looking into the possibility of control of epileptic seizures through surgically separating the two halves of the brain, researchers soon discovered that the two halves of the brain could each function as a complete brain. Fortunately, since the researchers were working in unknown territory, it was quickly noted that the surgical halving of the brain seemed to have no effect on personality or general intelligence.

Before very long the doctors realized that they had some very unusual tests to devise, and the first of them was a visual stimulation test. With a masking arrangement they set it up so the right eye could not see what the left eye was seeing, and vice versa. It was expected that, since the two halves of the brain were separated, one side would not know what the other side had seen.

Eye nerves cross over, so what the right eye sees is sent to the left half of the brain, and what the left eye sees is interpreted by the right side of the brain. The first test had lights being flashed across the field in front of both eyes. The subject reported that the lights were flashing only on the *right* side. Next the testers tried flashing the lights only in front of the subject's left eye, and the subject said that no lights were flashing.

At first this was interpreted to mean that the right side of the brain was, in effect, blind. But further tests showed that the brain *did* see the lights. It was just that the speech center of the brain is located in the *left* hemisphere, which *did not* see the lights. So the subject *said* he did not see the lights. And, in effect, he hadn't. When asked to make a hand sign when lights were flashed on the left side, the subject was able to do so, proving that the right side of the brain was not blind. It just had no control over speech centers. Note that it wasn't that the right side couldn't *force* the left side to admit to having seen the lights. The left side actually had seen no lights, and therefore

turn to page 22

DOOR TO MALEQUAR

fiction/**KATHLEEN SKY**
artist/**TONY YAMADA**

Burson's World was famous for the Temple, for artists and art critics. Jorgenson didn't know which Malequar was, but he was going to find out.

Estimated time of arrival: sixteen hundred hours. Temperature at the main colony now stands at seventy-five degrees Fahrenheit, twenty-four degrees Centigrade. There are scattered showers, and the probability of heavy rainfall is eighty-nine point three percent.

"Burson's World," the computer voice continued, "was named for Captain Henry Burson, leader of the first expedition to this quadrant of known space. The expedition took place in . . ."

Jorgenson snapped off the overhead in-com, wondering why it was that commercial flights always felt duty-bound to give a travelog as part of their services. *"Thank Gods I can turn the ridiculous mess off; next time I'm out for a ComFleet run. I've served my Five, I should be entitled to a free hitch once in a while. Maybe the food isn't as good, but you sure don't get any of this garbage about some obscenity of a world and the silly prong who stumbled over it on his way to the john."*

Jorgenson yawned, arching his back to redistribute his weight in the contoured acceleration couch which was a bit snug for his muscle hung frame. He slid from side to side, hoping to find a comfortable position; his dark gypsycut hair, ruffled by the upholstery, stood up in horns over his forehead. Impatient, he shifted his legs, a frown corrugating across his face that clicked off as a subliminal message unwound in his brain. *"Trip instead of twitch—Trip—Trip—"* He fumbled absentminded at his tunic searching for a blade. *"A relax might do it—Trip—have to get through the wait somehow—"* Jorgenson thumbed the bladebox sending a purple cylinder rolling into his waiting fingers as he deftly twirled the case to present the lighter right side up.

"No point to a relax if they're about to pop the hyper—where is that thing?" he muttered, scrambling the contents of his flight bag looking for a timetable. He located the brochure on the glories of Omicron Ceti Five, a coloringbook about interstellar travel and a pack of Jumptabs for hypersick, but no timetable. *"Maybe if the damn history lesson is up they might have the smarts to squeeze in a word or three about jumps."*

As he reached for the in-com, someone beside him breathed, "Oh sir, let me do that for you," in a carefully trained sexy whine. Jorgenson swung his head abruptly for a pore by pore study of the stewardess's long, glitter incrusted legs.

"Now this is more to my liking!" Jorgenson smiled up at the girl as he did a quick heels to head inventory of her more strategic points. *"I'll admit you don't find a goodiebit like her on a Fleet job—going to be a nice flight, truly."* He focused in on her face with its pasted on smile and three inches of polycromatic goo; "Miss, could you give me some idea of how long before we hit drive? I can't find a timechart and there's nothing on the in-com either."

"Now I'd be glad to do that—we should be going into hyper-drive at any minute now." She took a deep breath that threatened to send her cantilevered breasts slithering out of the green elastic webbing that passed for the top of her uniform. "Please do not attempt to leave your couch during the jump; remember to keep your security straps in place until the strap-in light goes off, and—" she continued, catching sight of the blade in his hand, "no smoking. We can't guarantee its effects under hyper, and you wouldn't want to make a bum-run of it, now would you?" She bent over him, testing if his straps were all in place. Her plastic wig brushed across his face and her bosom was an inch or so from his chin as she rattled a swivle bolt holding his couch to the wall.

"Wonder what she'd do if I tried for a bite? Uh, better not, she's more than likely a 'Look but don't touch' type. Mustn't mess up the silicon, sweetheart." He tilted his chin to get a better view.

The stewardess wriggled her way upward, gave him a ravishing smile and cooed "now you just lean back nice and comfy, sir." Then with a skirt flying jiggle of her hips she moved on to the next couch in the compartment.

"Might try for her Tri-Tele number after the jump." Jorgenson watched her skirt flex over the cleft of her rump as she bent to tuck a strap tighter on the man across from him. *"She could make a good model or something . . ."*

The *Galactic Bar* on Burson's World was a nightmare of native logs, prestglass pre-fab and whatever else Roul Akiva, her owner, had managed to steal from ComFleet. The place was small, dirty and cramped; the beer was watered, the prices high and the *Goodtime* girls the roughest in town, but it was full tables all week and SRO on both shifts of the weekend. Roul had somehow managed to get *Kef* dancers to work for him. No one was sure what he had on the Temple, but there were no questions asked when the colonists packed the room and lined Roul's pockets with Fedcred.

Standing at the counter, his eyes on the small stage, Jorgenson hadn't noticed the girl until a feeling of being watched began to paranoid its way up his spine. He quick-scanned the room until he found the girl sitting in a booth by the stage. She continued to stare at him as he wove his way through the closely clustered tables to her side. She had odd eyes, yellow, without a pupil, glowing as they flickered in nets of silverspun lashes.

He pulled out a chair, bracing his hands on the back as he leaned his weight on his forearms. "I'm Jorgenson. Mitch Jorgenson. Do you want me to join you?"

"I am Malequar—please, sit." She shaped her lips into an uncertainty of a smile that looked as if she had practiced this custom many times in a mirror. "Do you like our dances? You watched most closely from over there." She tilted her head in the direction of the counter, her candyfluff hair falling across her face.

"Why were you staring at me? Do you work here or what?" Mitch realized as soon as he'd said it that she was no goodtime girl, but her intent gaze made his mind itch around the edge and the only way to scratch was ask 'why?'

Malequar pushed her hair back behind her ears with a twist of thumb and forefinger. "It is so hard to find one who looks to enjoy the dancing of my people rather than to react only to the nudity of the dancer." She made a graceful gesture of her sinuous, boneless looking arm in the direction of the stage and the dancer who was quivering in orgastic frenzy. "You saw but beauty, this I could tell from your face, so—I am sorry, I watched you most closely."

"I'm an artist, a painter—guess I was trying to think how I could get that girl to model for me in the next few days—but, don't take me wrong, I would have tried to bed her as well, you see."

"Naturally, but paint first, then—" Malequar cut short her sentence to look enquiringly over Jorgenson's shoulder. He shifted position, turning in the chair to find Roul, the waiter-owner of the *Galactic* looming over him.

"Say mister, is this rock harpy bothering you? If she is, I'll throw her out. I don't allow no messin' round in my place—too true."

Jorgenson appraised the girl, noting what he could of her figure hidden in the folds of her dark robe. "No, she's no bother to me; besides, I sat down here, maybe you should ask if I'm the one doing the bothering."

"Okay, mister. I'll put it to you right on. We don't hold with any mixing with the natives; they're no damn good for any Terran, you understand?"

"Now that's no way to talk about—"

"May you make a thousand, thousand bad ryhmes!" hissed Malequar, her voice rising above the din enough for several miners at the next table to turn around.

"Shut your mouth, guckkie, and don't go interruptin'" Roul flapped a dishcloth at her as if he was shooing an impertinent bird.

"Hey, why don't we go someplace else, seeing as how we're not wanted around here?" Jorgenson patted the girl's hand, and then got slowly to his feet to stand head and shoulders above the owner of the *Galactic*.

Roul looked up at him, realized he was no match for the bigger and much heavier Jorgenson, and backed off suddenly. "All right," he growled from a safe vantage point. "Get the hell out—but you ain't gonna find nowhere round Burson's that'll stand for that kinda thing. You take my advice, mister, you stay way from the natives; they're no damn good an' they got real nasty habits, some of them."

Jorgenson helped the girl to her feet, putting one arm around her; partly to shield her from Roul, and to get some idea of how big her breasts were under the stiff fabric of her robe. "If you'd like, I'll take you to my hotel for a drink, we should be able to talk there without any trouble I'm sure." When she nodded acceptance, Jorgenson led her past a glowering Roul toward the door of the *Galactic*.

"Damn Dirtlovers!" Roul spat after them, sure that Jorgenson would not take the trouble to push his way back through the chattering mob of colonists. "You'd better watch it, mister, she'll probably steal you blind, iffen she don't give you somethin' that'll rot your damn prong off!"

"Theft," yelled Malequar from the doorway, "is not my art, but yours it is!"

"You get the hell outta here and don't you dare come back—I'll have ComFleet on you I will—" Roul started to shove his way past the tables to reach the girl who danced mockingly out of his range.

"May all of your children sing off-key." she said sweetly as she ducked out the door, laughing up at Jorgenson as he made her a mock bow as he held the door open and watched Roul fuming his way toward them. Malequar came to a stop just outside the opening, and in a voice that carried to every corner of the room she added gravely to Jorgenson "I should have used the word 'bastard' for his children; 'bastard' is quite a bad word in your language, is it not?"

Jorgenson pushed her through the doorway, letting it slide closed before Roul could get out any answer except inarticulate sputtering.

"Yes it is, you little devil! Jorgenson laughed, putting his arm around her to guide her past a puddle in the street. 'But I'm sorry he upset you like that. I suppose some of the people around here don't care for you natives, but his attitude is surprising seeing as how he does hire performers like that dancer."

"Your people find that art good, so it is to that man's advantage that he have our dancers. He likes us natives, but only—" she waved her hand back and forth in the air, trying to remember the phrase she wanted. "—ah, in our place, he likes us!"

"Well, my beautiful little friend, I like you in my place too!" Jorgenson said, hugging her to his side.

Jorgenson's room at the *Government House* was crowded with canvases in various stages of completion, an easel and several trunks and boxes.

"Ah, pictures!" trilled Malequar, her eyes lighting up as she dashed from painting to painting.

"I found out that your people were fond of art; that's why I came to Burson's World."

"Fond? Oh no, much more than fond. Art is life. The purpose of one's life is to be perfect in one's art; to bé perfect is to live."

"Oh? Let me show you some of my work, you might like it." Proudly Jorgenson led her from canvas to canvas, explaining his techniques, lecturing on art, and pointing out his self-selected masterpieces. "Well," he said at the end of the tour, "so what do you think of my paintings?"

"Your pictures are not finished, but are starts only, more time must be taken on them." She examined the brushwork on one of the canvases, feeling the texture with her fingertip.

"So you're a painter too, why didn't you say so earlier?"

"Oh no, not a *painter."* She glanced at him over the top of the canvas she held in her hand. "I could never paint such as this. I understand much, but I have no gift for creating it, you see."

"No? Well I came to Burson's World because I do have a talent for art. I want to do some better stuff than these—things I can take up to the Temple and have judged by the High Priest. That way the fools back home will buy up just about anything I turn out."

"Have it judged by us? But we do not evaluate the works of outsiders! It has never, never been done, too dangerous. Our dreams and visions are not the same as yours; I could not do it nor would any other of my people."

"Look, I know it's never been done before, but there's always a first time for anything. Your people are said to be the last word on any artform in the universe. Just one good word from that Temple of yours, and people will fall all over themselves to buy my paintings."

"Our art is to us a religion, sacred. That is, we do not—I must think on this—and it's place in my cycles. Tell me, do you most truly wish judgement—are you willing to face whatever form that judging takes? Think—not to answer my question too quickly."

"I decided I wanted this long before I left earth, and what's more, I'm going to get it too. Now—why don't you start telling me about your art, Malequar," he said, slipping his arms around her waist, bending slightly to kiss the back of her neck.

"We have the Dance, Painting, Sculpture, Poetry, Drama, Writing and all the other major and minor Life Arts," she recited, carefully ignoring what he was doing to her.

Jorgenson gently turned her in his arms, pulling her close as he kissed her ears and the soft area behind them.

"Is it that you wish to bed me that you touch me so? If you want me you have only to ask. Did you not know this?"

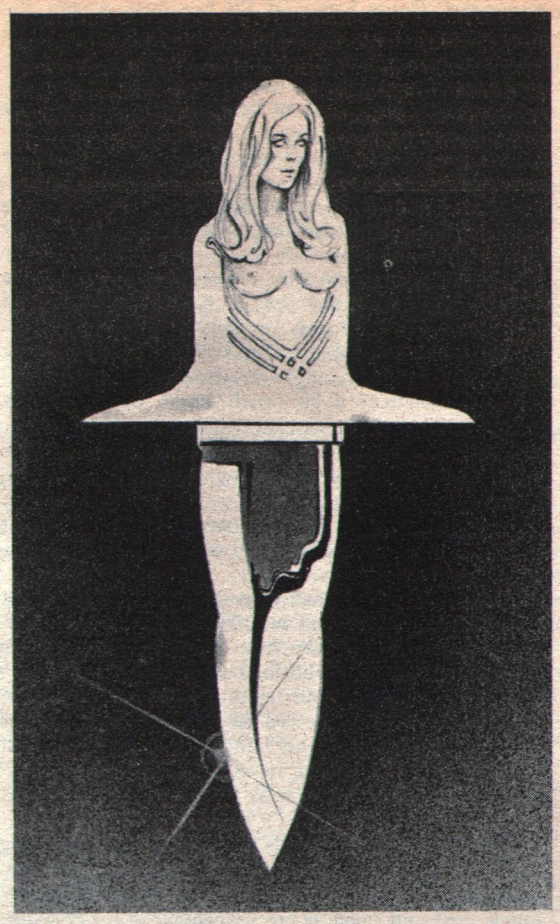
"Naturally I want to bed you!" Jorgenson's head spasmed away from her neck. He was startled by her matter of fact attitude, coupled with a lack of interest in foreplay. "That's why I brought you here. But I did think it would take a *little* time to get you used to the idea." He grinned, remembering Roul and his idiot prejudices against the natives. "But I don't mind, dear, truly. It makes it easier all around."

"I wish I might see one of your more finished paintings," she abruptly changed the subject, wriggling her way out of his grasp. "I am, you see, most interested in them. I would like you to do a picture of me if you will be so obliging."

"All right, if you want payment or something—I'll be glad to do a painting for you." He led her toward the bed, stopping when he realized she wasn't following him.

"First you must do the picture of me—then bed."

"Look, it'll keep until tomorrow—I promise you, on my life, I swear I will do your portrait first thing in



the morning."

"No. It must be now." Her voice was flat, petulance creeping over her lower lip.

"All right, Okay—if you are going to demand cash on the prong, I'll do the damn picture right now. Sit over there, I have to get a clean canvas."

A fat shining worm of black paint, a little red, and dribbles of brown and yellow were hastily smeared onto his palette as he proceeded to whip out an indifferent

likeness with a minimum of time or effort. It was an incredibly bad semi-Picasso of a sharp black profile barely outlined in slashing strokes with blobs and streaks of color for hair, eyes and mouth. "There you are, that's your painting," he said, putting down his brush and palette.

Malequar got to her feet, came over to the canvas, and looked closely at the messy splotch of a portrait. Jorgenson almost laughed at her puzzled frown—*"poor little aborigine, she doesn't know if it's good or not."* He forced himself not to smile as he watched her stare fixedly at the painting.

"That is Malequar?"

"Yes—that is, it's my interpretation of Malequar." He slid an arm across her shoulder, reaching down to stroke her breast.

"Would you show this to the Temple, Jorgenson?" she asked, refusing to acknowledge his caress. She leaned forward to see it more closely, his hand sliding off her body.

"Yes, naturally I would." He nuzzled her neck, murmuring into her soft nape hairs "now enough, come on, child, time for other things . . ." She shrugged, turned away from the painting and went with him to the bed, dropping her robe as she crossed the room.

Jorgenson found her no stranger to the arts of pleasure. She knew quite well all the little caresses, kisses and playful nips that could bring him to a fast climax. Drenched in his own sweat, body burning, he felt himself drown in her swift moving body. She ripped his back with sharp fingernails, screamed in an alien tongue and moved with him as the universe shifted in their arms.

Relaxed, he lay across her. His eyes opened—coming back, pulling the world together again. Satisfied, he rolled onto his back with a grunt. Beside him Malequar made a kitten sound halfway between a purr and a meow as she rose, leaning on one arm, to smile down at him.

"Art," he murmured, reaching up to stroke her slight breasts, "so that's what your art is; nice, really nice."

"Oh no, this is not my specialty, but only a relatively minor Life Art. And it has but little significance in my cycles."

"Relatively minor? Lord help us, then your art must really be something great—what is it anyway? Come on, tell Mitch all about it, that's a good girl."

She didn't answer him. Eyes glassy, Malequar got to her feet and padded naked across the room to his easel and the dripping portrait.

"Mal," Jorgenson called to her, "come back to bed, dear. You'll catch your death out there standing around bare-assed. Come here and I'll keep you warm; the painting will be there in the morning. No one will steal it or anything."

"Tell me Jorgenson, is this one of your best paintings?" She reached out to touch it, getting a smear of red paint on her fingers.

"Sure it is; one of my very best pictures, just for you."

She nodded, a cold expression masking her face as she left the easel for his bed, stopping to pick up her clothing on the way. She knelt beside him on the wrinkled sheets, her robe draped around her pale shoulders. "So you say that is *your* art, and that it is most worthy," she said, her fingers tracing the shadows the light spread over his body. "I do not think it good, Jorgenson; you are no artist deserving of life."

"Oh now—that's a bit much, child. Can't we talk about anything but art. You said yourself you were no painter, so how can you tell it's not great." He laughed and ran his hand down her side, trying to persuade her down onto him.

Malequar took his hand in her own, tightening her grip on it until the veins stood out from the skin like cords.

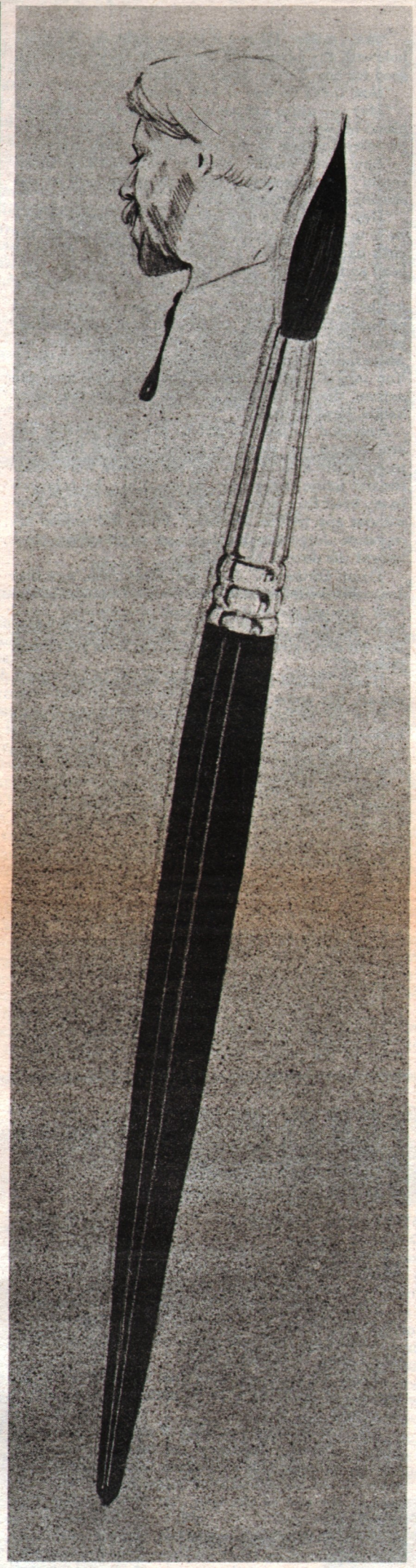
"Stop that!" Jorgenson yelped. "It hurts—I've never been fond of that kind of wrestling—Quit it, damn you!" He jerked the arm away from her, not watching the swing of her robe around his body.

"Your art is bad, and my cycles allow this—I am sorry." Distracting him was easy, the knife slid out of the robe neatly and into her hand. Trying to free himself from the robe, Jorgenson never saw the precise downward curve of the weapon as it swiftly cut his throat in one slice.

Malequar set on her heels beside the body, watching the warm blood make crazyquilt patterns on the love-moist sheets. She bent to examine the cut she had made, quick, neat and exact as her judgement of his artwork; for on Burson's World criticism too was an artform.

The stewardess wriggled her way upright, gave him a ravishing smile and cooed "now you just lean back nice and comfy, sir." Then with a skirt flying jiggle of her hips she moved on to the next couch in the compartment.

"Might try for her Tri-Tele number after the jump." Jorgenson watched her skirt flex across the cleft in her rump as she bent to tuck a strap tighter on the man across from him. *"She could make a good model or something . . ."*



Her cycles allowed her quite a bit. Much more than Jorgenson knew, or even would have understood had Malequar taken the time to explain.

He met the girl at Roul's place soon after his arrival on Burson's World. The *Galactic* was crowded, dim, with only the flashes of light from the flicker torches on the tables and the spotlight on stage for illumination. Roul, squeezing neatly between the tables, said he would try to find a spot for Jorgenson as soon as possible.

"Sorry we're so mobbed, but you'll see why when the *Kefs* come on; folks come from miles around just to get a look at them dancers—stand by the bar, iffin you've a mind to—get to you soon as I can, truly."

"Don't worry about me," Jorgenson said with a wink. "Nice friendly crowd you have—I'll find a spot all right, just let me look around a bit."

Roul nodded, relieved to be rid of the problem. "Yes sir, you do that; you'll find a lotta nice company 'round here—fun, *Goodtime* girls, you know." He leered, pantomiming the outline of a girl's body with his free hand, then balancing his trav again, he trotted off to see to the orders of a table of *orta* miners from the back country who were yelling loudly for beer.

Jorgenson scanned the room, disregarding the obvious B-girls and anyone who seemed to have a male escort bigger than he was. The picking, contrary to Roul's opinion, was slim; an old woman or two, hard colonial types and a sprinkling of plain beings politely referred to as 'women' made up the bulk of the female audience. Those and the girl sitting close to the stage, her head bent over a sketch-pad on the table in front of her. Jorgenson wasn't sure if he should take the trouble to push his way through the clots of tables between them. She was the only girl in the room with a table to herself, which meant she was either ugly, nasty, important, or all three. The sketch-pad intrigued him. An itch to know how good she was finally sent him shoving his way through the solid mass of colonials.

The lights dimmed, making progress harder. He reached her table, but looked up at the stage and saw a naked dancer giving an explicit rendition of the joys of childbirth, starting with conception. Struck by the movements of the dancer, he forgot the girl and her sketches until a rising chorus of swearing howls over his bulk blocking the view sent him scrambling into the only available chair.

"Hello there," he said to the girl across from him, trying for her attention. "You'll ruin your eyes working in bad light, you know." He tilted his head, trying for a better look at her face.

She glanced at him, her yellow, striped eyes contoured his body. She shrugged, and went back to her art. "Thank you," she answered, in a voice that sounded like the foggy shades of her hair. "I do not have a problem with this light. It is, for me, quite enough."

"Oh!" Embarrassment chased a smile across his face. "You're one of the natives, aren't you? Uh, I didn't mean to be rude, but when I saw you sitting in this light—I'm an artist too, so I understand the value of good lighting . . ." Her smile fixed itself tightly in place as he continued to stumble on the inane path in an attempt to recover his cool. He rolled to a halt, sheepishly mumbling, "I'm Jorgenson, Mitch Jorgenson, from Terra . . ."

"Ah. I am Malequar, artist of the school of Jhareb Tov." She tapped the stylus against the pad, impatient to be drawing again.

"Jhareb Tov? I've heard of him. He has a fine record; most of his students do quite well, they say."

The girl was hardly listening as she darkened a line on her dancer's leg. "More than seventy-five percent of his students pass their first cycle—it is indeed a good record."

"And what cycle are you on, or is it all right for me to ask?"

"I am on my fifth, that of a mural for a Temple wall. It will not, I am sure, be a difficult thing for me." The dancer on paper took shape as she shadowed the curves of the body.

"May I see your notebook?" Jorgenson asked, reaching for the pad. "I might be able to give you some advice on your technique."

"No, I . . ."

"Mister, what the hell are you doing with a Guck?" Roul shadowed the table, his tray a black moon blocking the light. "Look, when you said you'd get your own place to sit, I didn't think this would be what you had in mind. 'Round here folks don't care much for mixing with the natives—you want company, I'll fix you up with a nice colonial kid instead of a nasty like her."

"May all your children be born colorblind," Malequar snapped, her eyes narrowing to ice slivers.

"Now look you, don't go getting uppity or I'll kick your tail right outta here—I only let the likes of you in here because the Confederation says I gotta, but

so help me—"

"There is no need of such loud noises from your mouth!" Malequar took the sketchbook from Jorgenson, and stood up. "I will go of myself, not because *you* wish it." With her head up, shoulders back, she turned and shoved her way through the crowded tables to the door.

Jorgenson jumped to his feet and started to follow her, shouting "Malequar! Wait a minute, come back!" But Roul was hanging onto his sleeve, tugging at it and shouting to be heard over the sounds of the bar.

"Mister! Them natives are no damn good; they're bloody-minded bastards all of them!"

Jorgenson shook him off roughly and sprinted for the door, pushing miners and tables out of his way.

He caught up with Malequar two blocks from the *Galactic* as she picked her way slowly across the mud choked rut of a road, pulling her yellow one-piece robe above her knees to keep it out of the dirt.

"Malequar!" Jorgenson grabbed her arm, holding her steady so she wouldn't stumble. "Hey, why did you leave so fast? Didn't you hear me calling—I wanted to talk to you a bit more."

"Ah." She stood leaning against him; the rain beading her hair with damp little gems that glowed in the light from the shops along the street. "I thought it best to go; that man did not—I should have said 'your wife's children' as if to say not his, yes?"

"Oh Malequar!" Jorgenson laughed, patting her cheek; it was too dark for him to see the look of distaste that flitted passed her eyelashes. "Come on, Kitten, let's get you out of this rain and into someplace warm and dry." She seemed to hesitate, then nodding acceptance, she took his hand and let him lead her off through the muddy streets to his room at the *Government House,* the closest thing to a good hotel that Burson's World possessed.

Ah, good, good—most interesting." Malequar went from painting to painting, picking her way delicately around a mess composed of boxes and trunks, several half finished canvases, and a large easel. Her robe stuck damply to her thin body, showing each rib on her spare frame while her wet hair strung its way down her slender back.

"You look like a sea-nymph, what with that hair dripping water all over the place." Jorgenson caught her locks in his hands, wringing them out with a damp splash which added to the wetness already on the floor. "Good Lord, doesn't it ever stop raining around here?" he grumbled, kicking at the puddles forming on the hardwood surface.

"This time of the year it is the light rain, so it will be much more, and too, sometimes no wet season at all. You will see this if you stay so long on my planet." She knelt at his feet, swabbing at the water with the hem of her robe.

Jorgenson pulled her up off the floor, holding her in his arms. "Don't bother with that, little naiad—let it be, it's just water, why worry about it; there are far, far more important things you and I could be doing."

"What is a naiad, Jorgenson?" She pushed her wet hair back from her face, smoothing it down behind her ears. "You have called me sea-nymph also—the meanings I do not know, please explain?"

"A naiad is a sea-nymph—a little like an elf, only it lives in the water, a mermaid, but with legs." He could tell she didn't understand what he meant, the expression on her face was one of blank puzzlement. "Look, it really doesn't matter—they aren't real anyway. My people have stories about naiads, legends about them; but they don't really exist."

"Then why do you wish to call me something that is not real? I do not see the purpose of this."

"*I* know it isn't real, but it still would make a dandy painting, you as a water elf; it would be great for a fact."

"But why do you want to paint something if it is not real? Only that which is true should be a subject of art. Art is life, it must mirror it, always this has been so."

"But my people don't feel quite that way about it; don't you worry your pretty little head over something like that, it's not really important—I'm sorry I even brought it up. If you only paint from life that's fine and dandy with me. He bent to nuzzle her cheek lightly, moving along her jawline, leaving a pattern of damp kisses. "I'm rather fond of life studies, too." he whispered, tonguing the rainwater out of her small pink ear.

"Did you wish to take me to your bed, Jorgenson?" Malequar reached for the knot at the shoulder of her robe, untied it, and let the soft cloth fall in a heap at her feet.

"Say, you're really blunt about sex, aren't you? Don't you even want to give me a chance to talk you into it?" Jorgenson held her close to his hairy chest, caressing her back and soft childish buttocks.

"Sex is a life function like eating or sleeping, nothing more. There is no need of you persuading anyone; if you want me, I am here."

In bed Malequar proved to be a disappointment, she seemed to know what to do, but her caresses were abrupt and somewhat preoccupied. She did not react well to Jorgenson's touch, nor to the kisses he lavished all over her quiet body.

He took her roughly, biting, tugging at her hair, even yelling obscenities; trying for some sign of anything but her willing, calm indifference. His lust rose, climaxed, and was over without the slightest sign of any response.

Jorgenson lay beside her on his back, one arm outflung across her belly; a bittersweet taste on his mind. Malequar moved beside him, a soft stirring of the sheets as she sat up.

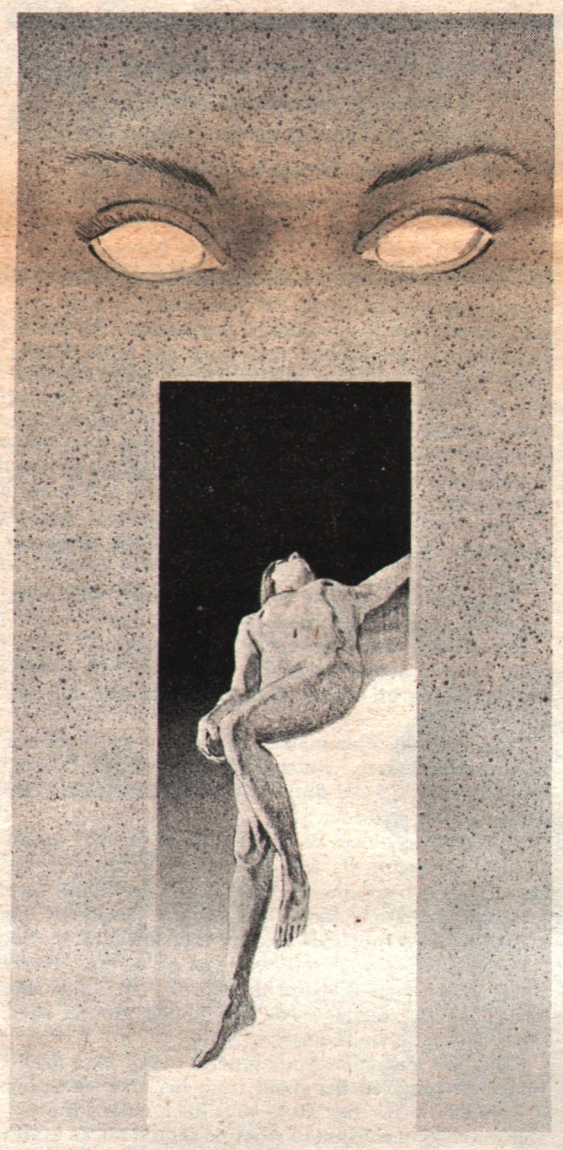
"I would paint you as you now are." she said, getting up on one arm to look down at him. You are tired and your muscles are very loose—were you ever a warrior, Jorgenson? You would do well, dead, a warrior fallen in his country's cause."

"Yes, I carted my ass all over the Confederation in my good, dear government's causes, but it was just so much running around. I never got close to anything big—maybe if I had I might have been a hero; as it was, I got out in one piece and I can't really complain about that.

"Ah yes," she answered, not really listening to him as she traced a shadowline across his chest, ruffling the dark curly hairs. "Dead, just so." she murmured, "blood flowing over this area—eyes, open or shut? Which would be better do you think for my mural?"

"Lord, but you've got a morbid mind, Malequar! Dead warrior indeed—and you were the one talking about taking subjects from life!"

"True, but this is life. It can be, or once was, thus



He claimed to be an artist, on a planet where art was taken very, very seriously. Which might well have been his first, and biggest, mistake.

it is real. Do you not understand?"

"Yes, I see—but what I don't understand is where on Burson's green hell did you get an idea like that!"

"But it is only a picture—" her eyes seemed to go watery with unshed tears.

"Now remember, I'm not about to promise to pose for you, but I might be willing if you come up with a better subject for your painting; also you've got to model for me as a naiad."

"Ah, very well. Only think that a mural it would make. You, forever on the walls of the High Temple! I would be sure to pass my cycle and you would gain fame also." Her eyes glowed as they should have at the prospect of his lovemaking; her body quivered with expectation. "It will take me many days to do such a mural—I could spend such days with you—" She ran her fingers down his body, twisting them deftly through his pubic hair.

"Well if you put it that way—all right, if it's that important to you, I'll do it—but you've got to pose for me too, you know. Dying warrior! I must be out of my mind."

"Thank you, Oh thank you, Jorgenson!" Malequar bounced on the bed like an excited child. "Marvelous well!" she crowed, her hair rippling and flying around her flushed face.

"I will do better than I have ever done before. The masters will praise my work with joy." Her words had breathless haste to them as if her excitement outstripped her ability to breathe.

"You'd better be a lot better in bed or you're going to lose your model. I mean it, Cookie."

"Oh that—I will do it well also." She jumped off the bed and dragged his easel over closer to him, searched for her sketchbook and charcoal, and then began to work. "Relax, lie most still, Jorgenson. Do not move, please." she commanded, drawing large sweeping lines across the paper.

"You should be painted that way, Malequar, naked, your hair falling down over your shoulders, and a piece of artwork in front of you. It looks very nice, dear." Jorgenson put his arms behind his head and stretched, smiling up at the girl.

"No, you said you wanted to do me as your not-real sea thing. Make up your mind, one or the other; this is not businesslike, the changing of ideas."

Jorgenson sat up suddenly, frowning at her. "Look, Malequar, did you go to bed with me just to get me to model for you?"

"Why else? I knew by such means I could get you to do as I wished, and it was so."

"You little bitch! Just wait until I get you back to bed; I'll teach you things you wouldn't ever learn in an art class!"

"Hush!" Malequar glanced up from her sketch to glare at him. "Do not talk, do not move; this must be right. My life depends on it—and you are not as you should be, not relaxed as once you were. It is wrong." She turned away from the easel, looking for her robe. Finding it, she slipped the damp cloth around her shoulders and sat down beside him on the bed; reaching out to turn his head to one side, then the other.

"Not good." she muttered, scowling at him.

"Oh, do it anyway. I'll bet it will be just fine." He groped his way into the folds of her robe, brushing his fingers over her breasts. "Why don't you take a break, lie down here with me or something?"

"No, not until all is as it must be." Her hands moved over his face and down his throat, stroking the cords of his neck. "I must pass my cycle, I *must!* I am sorry, Jorgenson . . ."

"What?" Jorgenson, alarmed by the look on her face, started to get up, but Malequar was on top of him, clawing at his neck with her sharp nailed fingers. He grabbed for her hands as she untangled her knife from the robe, holding it ready like a serpent tooth, trying for a good position to strike.

"Malequar, you little fool! What kind of a joke is this—Stop it, it's not funny!" he twisted under her, trying to slide free of her weight on top of his body, grabbing at her to make her fall.

Her answer was swift; the knife darted, once, twice it danced on his exposed neck; the look of panic on his face faded as the wounds went deep and precisely where Malequar had wished them to be.

She sat back on her heels and watched the blood flow over his body. At what she felt to be the perfect moment, she got to her feet and went back to the easel. After a while she began to sketch.

The stewardess wriggled her way upright, gave him a ravishing smile and cooed "now you just lean back nice and comfy, sir." Then, with a skirt flying jiggle of her hips, she moved on to the next couch in the compartment.

"Might try for her Tri-Tele number after the jump." Jorgenson watched her skirt flex across the cleft

in her rump as she bent to tuck a strap tighter on the man across from him. *"She could make a good model or something . . ."*

The *Galactic Bar* was packed to its edges with the usual weekend crowds; the air stank of beer, stale sweat and cheap perfume. Yells, feminine screams and shrill giggles twisted their way between and around the clink of glasses and the steady hum of conversations. On stage a *Kef* team was doing a fair imitation of the Spring fertility rites accompanied by two drums, a flute and an atonal singer chanting in some unearthly tongue.

Jorgenson, leaning uncomfortably against the chipped plastiwood counter, drank weak beer and waited for a place to sit. Figures moved between him and the stage, appearing and disappearing in the smoky gloom. Roul, the owner, waiter, and sometimes busboy, swooshed by, an overloaded tray covering most of his face. "I'll find you a table soon, very soon!" he yelled back over his shoulder as he passed the bar. Jorgenson wasn't sure if the message was meant for him or one of the other customers jammed around the counter. He considered the possibility of ordering another beer, or something stronger, but before he could make up his mind a voice spoke from the vicinity of his left clavicle, muted a bit by his tunic.

"Would you be so kind as to reach for me my drink? On the table it is." Jorgenson shifted his body sideways in the pack to get a better look at the girl who had flatted herself to his ribs.

"Hey, careful there, don't push the lady," he yelled into the mob, which either didn't hear him, or more likely, didn't care.

"I'll get the drink for you, dear—just a sec—truly." He grinned down into her yellow ribboned eyes, caught by their orange and gold weavings, as she returned his smile. "And, if you'd like, I'll try for a table for us too." He snaked an arm through the cluster of bodies to grab the frosted tumbler she had indicated and presented it to her with a grand flourish and as little spilt as possible.

"Aah, thank you. Do you wish a table? I can try with much more success than yourself." She edged away from him, deftly slipping out of the crowd to stand on tiptoes, searching for something . . . or someone.

Roul, hurrying back with his empty tray banging against his hip, came to an abrupt stop, his tray clanging to the floor. "YOU!" he squealed, staring at the girl. "Malequar, I thought you said you weren't coming back here. There isn't any reason for you to, huh?" He bent to pick up the tray with shaking fingers which seemed unable to get a grip on the metal. "I don't really want you here . . ." he mumbled to his knees.

Malequar pushed her hair back from her face, a smile slowly creeping out of the corners of her mouth, but not quite reaching her eyes. "Do *you* wish to put me out, Roul?" She lifted her drink, sipping it as she watched the barkeep over the silvery rim.

Roul's fat chins quivered as he brushed at the sweat popping out on his waxy skin. "I—no, but well—you know there are plenty of places you could go—why did you pick the *Galactic?* What in hell are you up to, Malequar?" Roul's clockwork whine wore down in fits and starts as he stood limply in front of the girl and panted, trying to decide which of the expressions crossing his face he should keep in place.

"Aaah," Malequar purred, a cat excited by the smell of mouse. "But you see, I wished to look at your *Kef;* I have been most curious since I heard the Temple let *you* have them."

"They're very good. Masters in fact. You can't touch them. The Temple won't let you, understand?" Sweat dripped large tears down his cheeks and his hands shook, rattling the tray like a tamborine.

"A table, Roul?" Malequar, tired of the game, decided to end it. She took Jorgenson's arm in a surprisingly firm grip as Roul meekly led them to a table, pushing and elbowing a path for them through the crowd.

"How 'bout another drink, on the house?" Roul asked, stopping at a small table near the stage.

The location was perfect, center front, first row. Roul quickly flipped off the 'Reserved' sign, saying "I can get them another table somewhere, somehow—" He twitched a smile into place for Malequar, started to say something to Jorgenson, thought better of it, and backed away with as much speed as could be considered polite.

"Strange man," said Jorgenson, helping her into a chair. "He seems to be afraid of you Malequar—ah, I hope you don't mind my calling you Malequar—"

"Please. Malequar I am, what else would you call me?" She tilted her head, regarding him from under gilded eyelids. "I attempt a small joke . . . too small?"

"Fine, a good joke, and you speak Comtongue very well, also." A grin climbed edge by edge up his face, "you're trying to change the subject, aren't you?"

"True. Roul is not the most pleasant of topics. He is ugly in his mind; a most unlikely person to have such dancers." She glanced at the stage, frowning at the *Kef* team's performance, "but the Temple likes him, even though I do not." She turned to smile at Jorgenson. "You need not worry about him. Ours is an old quarrel. I would not work for him at a time when he wished to use my art to his advantage, so . . . he fears I will turn the Temple against him, nothing more."

"How did he get the dancers? I heard they worked only for the Temple, religious services and such."

"Normally, yes. But Roul had done some good or another for the High Priest, so the dancers are his."

"What was it that Roul did? I'm rather interested in getting on the Temple's best side myself . . ."

"Some say he saved the Priest's life, others say not—personally, I think he is supplying some illegal trade goods or service."

"Well, that lets me out; I've done a lot of the dusty-rusty in my day, but smuggling wasn't my vice. By the way, I'm Jorgenson. Mitch Jorgenson, the artist. You might have heard of me?"

"No. I do not know of you." She tossed her hair in a negative arc. Boredom, wondering if it should show itself, crept into her eyes.

"I'm here to get some of my work looked at by your Temple—find out what they think of it—say, do you work for them, or do you know anyone who does? It's pretty important to me, so if you can help—"

"No. I am but a student of my art. This is my seventh cycle, and I have no friends at the Temple. I can not be of any use to you in this matter, I am sorry." She finished the last of her drink, and started to get up. Jorgenson reached across the table to catch her arm, holding her in the chair.

"Please, Malequar, don't go yet. Maybe you can give me some advice. It wouldn't take long—just let me know what they want in a painting, what they judge it for. Or better yet, what does the Temple particularly like as subject matter."

She looked down at his arm, studying the bands of muscle welting his tunic. "If you wish my help you will unhand me most quickly, Jorgenson." As he let go of her arm she pushed away from the table. Rising to her feet, she pulled her robe into place, then beckoned him to follow her through the crowd. "Your plea is most *strongly* put," she said when he came close enough to hear her over the din. "I must see your art before I could tell you these things. Will you take me to your rooms now—tonight."

Asking that his work be judged was a gamble, especially when he picked Malequar as the judge. He didn't know, though, how long the odds of his gamble were—or how high the stakes.

"Yes, thank you—I'll be glad to take you there." Jorgenson offered his arm to the girl, ready to follow her anywhere.

"Remember, you take me of your own will," she answered, ignoring his hand held out to her.

Roul, seeing them leave, came bouncing over, bumbling his way across the room. "Malequar," he puffed, "is everything all right? Was the table—the dancers good?"

"Yes, even so. This man is an artist. I go to see his work, nothing more." Putting her hand on Roul's arm, she said softly, "I did find some small fault with your dancers—they work for you."

Roul looked down at his arm as if he had found a snake resting on it, then glanced up at the girl, his face muscles trembling as he searched her blank face to see if she was joking. "Malequar—" suddenly he turned to Jorgenson, his doughy face kneaded by his emotions. "Look mister, please—you be careful. These Gucks, they, well—they're not like us, 'specially this one. They *do* things—" His lips folded around each other, trying to tie themselves shut.

"May the singers at your funeral be all tone deaf." Malequar removed her hand from his arm, caressing it from elbow to wrist. Roul shut his mouth abruptly, and watched, uncertain of what he should do, as Malequar almost dragged the unprotesting Jorgenson out of the bar. "Poor bloody fool," Roul muttered, "I tried to tell him—but that bitch, that damn bitch—"

Malequar, with Jorgenson in tow, picked her way through the rainsoaked streets; Jorgenson found he had to hurry to keep up with her long jumps across the puddles.

"Wait for me," he yelled, tugging at her robe. "We're almost there. *Government House,* the building on the left—"

"I know. There are but few places you could stay; when we turned in this direction I knew it had to be the *House."* She pulled her robe away from him, smoothing its soggy folds back into place, and set off down the street.

"Malequar," he shouted after her, "why was Roul so terrified? Are you a cop, or something?"

Her answer, if there was one, was lost in the splashing sounds she made wading through a culvert to reach the hotel steps.

Aaah, you paint well I think, but then I know very little of this art so I can not be held a judge of it." Malequar walked around his suite, looking first at one painting, then another.

"But I thought you were an art student." Jorgenson put the painting he had been waiting to show her back on the wall.

"I am, but not of painting, mine is a different art entirely."

"Why did you come here, then?"

"Jorgenson," her interest in the paintings now gone, she turned to regard him, "do you know you will die if the Temple finds your art bad?"

"What?"

"Listen to me; it is so, what I say. There are cycles of judgement, ten of them. Do badly, you die."

"Good Gods, why?" He moved away from her, scrabbling backwards until he knocked over his easel and the painting on it. "Now I know why Roul was afraid, you're the one who does the killing for the Temple—keep away from me, you bitch."

"Don't be stupid. I am no Critic, and I know too little of painting even if I were. I too, you must remember, have my art judged; I am not a Master, and stand in more danger than you do."

"It's crazy, that's what it is."

"No, merely custom. They will not even wish to see your paintings. You are not of our people." She slid closer to him, holding out her hands palms up, to show they were empty. "Do not worry yourself. There is no danger from the Temple for you, only for me—they will not judge you, I swear it."

"Uh, the Confederation—" he pushed himself out of the tangle of easel and painting to face her, tension tightly winding up his features. "Why don't they try to stop this? I mean, we can't have people running around killing each other."

"The Confederation 'protects' the native population. It took over our planet, it runs the government for us, and runs it well. Most important, they do not interfere with the Temple. And in return the Temple does not interfere with government. Simple, yes?"

"Well, I suppose so; the *orta* mines are important to ComFleet—but what about you? Aren't you afraid of the Temple yourself?"

"No. I asked to be judged. I said I was an artist. No one made me do so. It is well, I feel. Three more cycles, and I am a Master."

"All right. It's your life, I guess." He laughed shakily. "Thanks for warning me; I don't think I'll take my stuff to the Temple after all. I like living, and don't want to tempt them to take me on."

"That is most wise of you, Jorgenson."

"Maybe so, but I wonder what I'll find to do now; the next ship isn't due in for several days. It looks like I'm stuck on this crazy planet for a while."

Malequar touched his shoulder, and when he did not object she cuddled up against him, purring lightly, her fingers running up over his shoulder to scratch gently at the back of his neck. "Well, you have, after all, found me."

Malequar found it easy to make him forget the Temple and it's laws. She was skilled, her body sensitive to his needs. Jorgenson lay beneath her as she rocked her hips deeply into his, while her fingers twined in the soft black hair of his chest.

She moved rhythmicly, gently clawing at his ribs, bending forward to kiss him, then moving back as far as she could, speeding up the sensations, faster, faster still. His breathing was deeper, more labored, as he moved with her, matching motion for motion. "Malequar, aaah, Malequar," he groaned as she moved from hip to hip, pulsations rolling from deep within her body.

"Now, yes, NOW!" she screamed, his climax rising to meet hers, mind convulsing with his body; pleasures interlocking.

His head rolled back, presenting her with a clear view of his throat. Something cold inside her shifted, purpose remembered. Without any interruption of her movements, she reached for her robe lying heaped beside her on the bed. The dagger was there; ah, the shaft in her hand, yes, YES, NOW! deep and fast—done.

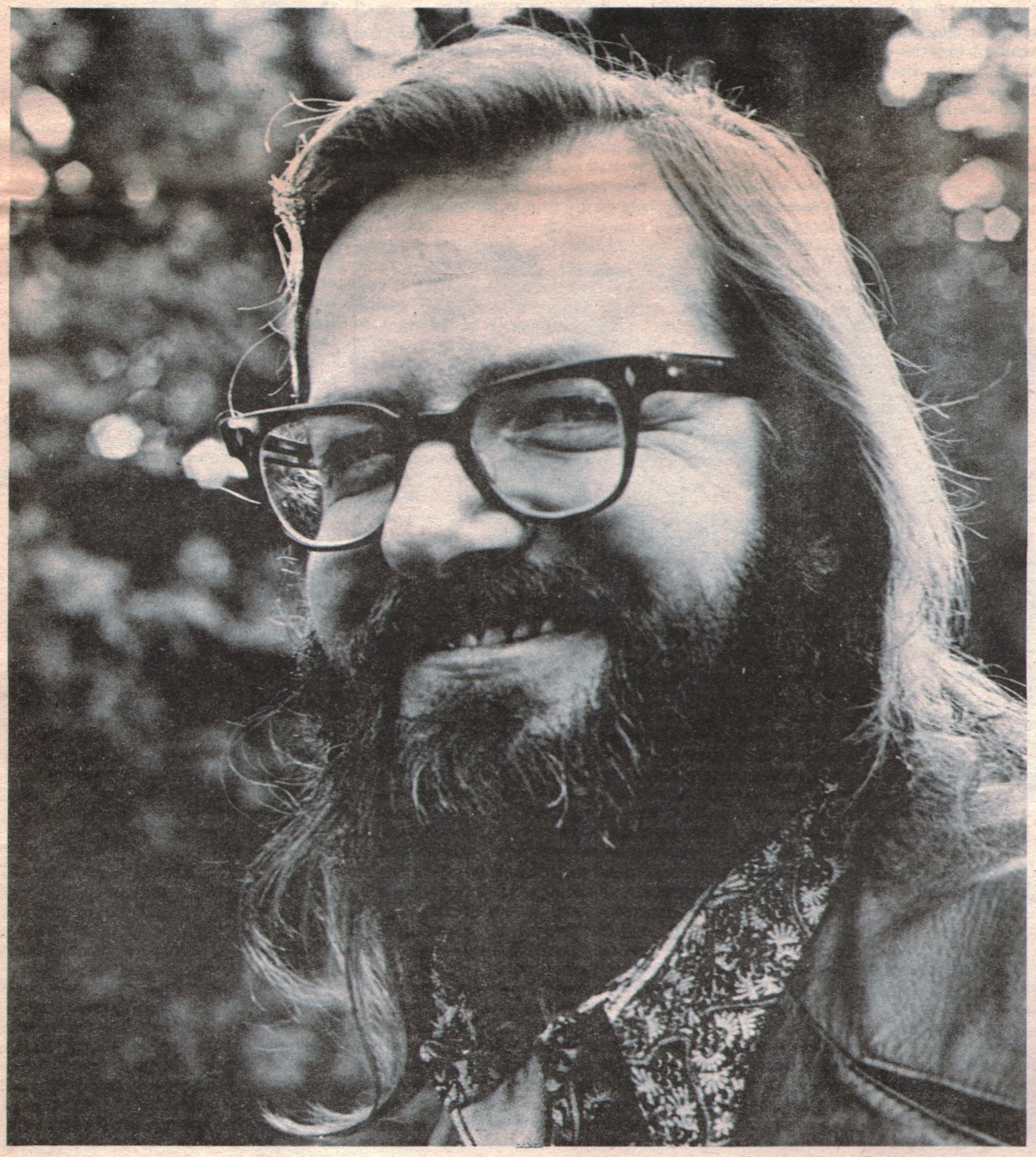
He climaxed with a sudden upsurge of power; a strong reaction to death, or his passion, she was not quite sure which. The thing was done as she knew it had to be. When he was quite dead she would report the possible

turn to page 29

"I love science fiction. I dislike most science fiction stories. I love the ideas of science fiction. I love what science fiction, when it is good, does."

interviewer/WILLIAM ROTSLER

VERTEX INTERVIEWS
TERRY CARR



Terry Carr is a writer, editor, and anthologist of reknown in the science fiction field. As an editor for Ace Books he conceived the "Science Fiction Specials" series. With Donald A. Wollheim he edited the *World's Best Science Fiction* series for a number of years. Since leaving Ace he has edited *The Best Science Fiction of the Year* for Ballantine Books, as well as the original anthology series *Universe* and other anthologies.

Terry Carr was born February 19, 1937, at Grants Pass, Oregon, and he attended the University of California at Berkeley. He won a Best Fanzine Hugo in 1959, and the Fan Writer of the Year Hugo in 1973. He is tall, with a beard and long hair. He is a jazz, rock, and comic book fan and is one of the informal "historians" of science fiction and science fiction fandom.

He lives in the Oakland Hills with a crazy dog named Kiowa, a cat named Max, and a beautiful wife named Carol in a house that looks out over a small pine forest. About a hundred feet up the road is one of the more magnificent views of San Francisco Bay.

Vertex Why are you a writer instead of something else?

Carr Because I wasn't able to draw well enough to become an artist. When I was a kid I was a big fan of Walt Disney, Hal Foster, and whoever it was that drew *Flash Gordon* after Alex Raymond. When I was six or eight I used to copy out drawings from comic books. Donald Duck, Captain Marvel . . . Captain Marvel was *really* tough to draw! Not tracing, but drawing freehand. I was always very insulted when people would say, "Boy, you can really trace good!" I'd always say, "No, I drew that *myself*, I was just looking at this thing here!" After awhile I realized I wasn't really able to do anything but copy.

Vertex Were you interested in the art or the stories?

Carr In the art. I liked the visual. Later on I got interested in the story, but I guess kids aren't really interested in the story as much as the action, the art. It was years before I gave up trying to be a cartoonist or an artist.

Later, when I started writing, and this is probably true of everyone, I copied other writers—Ray Bradbury, Simak's "City" stories. My first story was sort of a spinoff of the "City" stories. I was closer to the style than the ideas or the feeling of those stories. I am a compulsive keeper as you can see by this room. (His office is a very large room with walls filled floor-to-ceiling with books, s-f magazines, comic books, fanzines, and other things.) So when I re-read those stories I see where I got them. But I had no conception of *why* those things worked. It was just, "Gee, I like that scene with the dog. I'm going to write something about dogs."

Vertex Terry, do you expect to be treated seriously when all your readers read that you come out of those dastardly, low-class, no-good comic books?

Carr Well, I'm coming out of the same dastardly, low-class comic books that Ray Bradbury and Arthur C. Clarke came out of. In fact, some of those books were *written* by some people who are pretty famous these days.

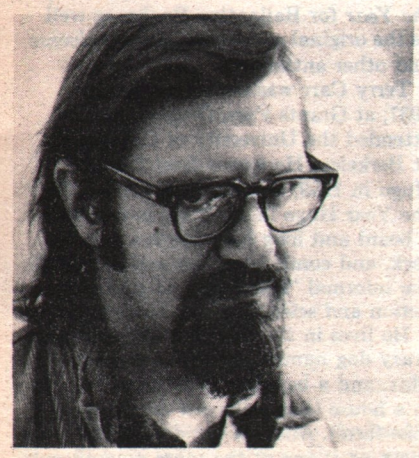
Vertex Fritz Lieber, Harry Harrison, adaptations of early Ray Bradbury stories. Harlan Ellison has written some fairly recently and is a big fan.

Carr Eando Binder used to write that stuff, too, and he was a big name in science fiction at one time.

Vertex How much do you think the comic books influenced your style?

Carr Hardly at all. You are talking about something that happened thirty

"I suppose if I hadn't read comic books or comic strips as a kid I wouldn't be doing what I am today."



years ago. I suppose if I hadn't read comic books or comic strips as a kid I wouldn't be doing what I am today. But that was just where I *started.* God knows I've gone through a lot of stuff since then. I hope there is a certain amount of overlay of later experience.
Vertex Your greatest fame in science fiction is as an anthologist and editor. Is that something that appeals to you, do you find it creative, or is it something done strictly for money?
Carr I do it for money, but as with anything that you do because you like it, you would do it anyway, even if you didn't need the money. But as I have a use for money I insist that people pay me. Sure, it's something I *love* to do and I think that anyone who loves science fiction, or any other art and has strong opinions about it—and I've always had strong opinions about what I liked and didn't—has a kind of dream to become an editor, to put stuff together in the *right* order and leave out the crap that shouldn't have been published in the first place.
Vertex "A lust for power!"
Carr Not really. Someone asked me that recently. Apparently Fred Pohl said, off the top of his head, that maybe the urge to be an editor is the urge to be god. I thought, "Yeah, well, maybe. But that's kind of a put-down. Like saying someone is on a power trip. I don't think it's so much a power trip as that you want to make something nice. You want to take the best stories you can get and put them all into *one* book. Obviously, that's how the "Best Science Fiction of the Year", gets started. You read all this stuff that comes out during the year and you say, "Boy, most of this is really forgettable, I hope." But there are maybe fifteen of twenty stories a year that are really good. It's nice to put them together into one book.
Vertex Obviously you seem to have done it well, and to the taste of many readers, because you are quite prominent in the field.
Carr I pay a lot of attention to the taste of the readers as a matter of fact. I'm always asking people and if someone says they liked a story I pay particular attention to that story because it obviously had something to turn someone on. I pay attention to things like Nebula recommendations. I read all the fanzines where they'll talk about what they are going to nominate for a Hugo. I think a lot of things that win awards are not necessarily very good, or in some cases, any good. By and large they are good choices.
Vertex You spoke of fanzines. You won a Hugo for Best Fanzine, shared with the late Ron Ellik, and in 1973 for Best Fan Writer. How has that affected your professional career? Was the writing and editing of fanzines a kind of rehearsal for professional work?
Carr Absolutely. I edited and published fanzines for about ten years before I began professional writing. If you look at the fanzines I did you will see a continuing development in terms of the amount of control that I exercised over what I did. Anyone starting out to publish a fanzine doesn't necessarily know what he's doing. He grabs stuff by his friends and sticks anything he can in it. After awhile you begin to realize that there are tricks to the trade. You write to the people you want to print and you give them a suggestion for something to write. You learn things like editorial balance, all those arcane things that I didn't know anything about when I was twelve. Fanzines taught me all that. Editing manuscripts, changing words, changing punctuation, all the little mechanical details. Because many writers, including many professionals, don't necessarily know how to handle the language as well as they might.
Vertex Thank god there are editors who can.
Carr I wish there were more. There is a great deal of illiteracy—what I call illiteracy because I'm a purist. If I see a comma out of place I say, "That guy is an illiterate!" There is a lot of just plain bad English that gets into professional print. It amazes me. I see people who *spell* things wrong. It gets through the editor who bought the story, it gets through the copy editor, it gets through the typesetter, and it goes right into print. That bothers me because I love the language. Maybe that's why I'm a writer. I really do love the words. I love what you can do with them. I love the sounds of the words, the cadences of the words. That's something you see in my writing, I work a lot with cadences and rhythms in language. I'm interested in music, too, and I like the musical quality of language. So I don't like people who mess it up.
Vertex I've seen you do the same thing in music. You anthologize the best cuts, things you like, by dubbing them onto tape cassettes so you have just the best parts of the albums.
Carr As I say, that's the reaction of a Fan, with a capital F, who wants to get all the really good stuff together. When fans get together they do this. When I was a kid I used to get together with a friend and we'd talk for hours on the phone, making up the contents of the ideal science fiction magazine. We'd make up the contents page, listing the authors, the titles of their stories, the artists, and so on. That's typical. Fans do it all the time. Aboue 1940 Don Wollheim (Former Ace Books editor, now editor of DAW Books) wrote about how he became a professional editor and it started out—quasi-quote—"Every science fiction fan worth his salt wants to be an editor." I think he's generally right.
Vertex Either that or a writer. Look how all of the . . . I hate to say "younger" because they are all in their late thirties or forties and Bradbury is in his fifties . . . almost all of the younger writers were once fans, almost to a man, or woman.
Carr It goes without saying that they all want to be writers, but it doesn't necessarily go without saying that they all want to be editors. Everyone thinks they can write, but not everyone thinks he can be an editor. That's mysterious. How do you get to be one? You know how to write. You just put words on paper and send it to your favorite editor. But how do you become an *editor?* Who knows who even the publishers *are?* Or how to get to them.
Vertex And what physically do you do with the manuscript to get it into print, with illustrations, to fit the standard size of the magazine and not fall short or run over or have blank spots?
Carr As a writer you just write the thing and send it off and the rest is the *editor's* problem.
Vertex Would you like to edit a regular science fiction magazine?
Carr Yes, I would like to do that. Editing the *Universe* series or any of the other original anthologies I do, the quality would seem to me to be higher than a regular magazine. Simply because it is only going to come out once or twice a year, or maybe just be a one-shot book. You are not going to have a second chance at the reader next month, so if a magazine editor gets a pretty good story by a new writer—and this is something I miss getting to do—he can buy that story and publish it and encourage that writer to send stuff to *him,* and guide or encourage him to get those later stories. When I'm editing something like *Universe,* where I try to maintain a high standard of quality, and I get something that's pretty good there is nothing I can do but send it back and tell the author, "This is pretty good and I hope you send me some more stories." But I can't get into the really *crucial* encouragement of sending him a check and publishing his story.
Vertex And that is the ultimate accolade, isn't it?
Carr Yes, but aside from that, it's effective. When you look at the editors in the science fiction field who have been important, they are the editors who developed their own stable of writers. *Crew* of writers; stable is an awful word. Azimov has written at length many times about the efforts that John Campbell put into making a writer out of him, effectively teaching him half of what he knows. Or so Isaac says. A lot of other editors have done that for other writers. Presumably most of those writers would have learned it anyway, but they would have been different, and some might have dropped out.
Vertex By not getting enough encouragement.
Carr Yes. And an editor is a kind of locus point for talent, not only his taste in terms of quality—like an editor who will only choose "A" and "B" stories and never "C"—that's easy. But there's a somewhat more subtle thing about editors where there's a Damon Knight kind of story, there's a Robert Silverberg kind of story, there's a Ben Bova kind of story, and there was a John Campbell kind of story. They gather those kind of writers together and kind of channel the efforts of writers into writing the kind of thing they like. They affect the thinking of the writers and affect the field. Campbell, with his psionics stuff, was not making a positive contribution to the field. But it was an obvious one, one you can point to and say, "Look at the effect he had there!" He caused a half a dozen years of psionics stories because he liked them.
Vertex Who are your favorite science fiction writers?
Carr I think there must be about 50 or 60 favorite writers in science fiction.
Vertex Any you *don't* like a lot?
Carr Yeah, about 150. I'm sure if I listed the writers I hate I'd miss some and make some enemies. Most of the people I like are predictable. Ursula Le Guin, Silverberg, Tom Disch, Zelazny . . .
Vertex How much does your personal and social relationship affect you with all the writers?
Carr Oh, a whole lot. That's something I should have said about an editor in a marginal position. All this stuff is something I learned, very valuable experience, as a fanzine editor. When you are a fanzine editor you have the lowest rates in the field, because you are not paying anything. So you have to learn how to get stuff from people for no money. And since I did that for ten years and got pretty good at it, got a lot of experience and published some pretty good fanzines, I learned how to go to people and get material out of them. Who I could go to, who would write for love. In a case like that it depends who your friends are, who you hang out with, who you have the contacts with. Simple propinquity is

"So the basic question science fiction writers should be asking themselves is 'Why am I writing this story?' "

"There are more young writers getting into SF in the Seventies, so a lot of people with superficial skills are getting into print."

very important. This is why so many writers go to New York. Because the editors are there. If you are around editors a lot things are just going to turn up, things are going to happen. You will hear that an editor is really getting annoyed because he hasn't had any stories submitted lately that take place after 1980. He might drop that remark at a cocktail party or somewhere and if there's a smart writer around who hears that he'll go home and either write a story like that, or if he has one, he'll send it to that editor. That'll happen. Also, if you are an editor, you'll *drop* remarks like that when there are writers around.

Vertex I know that very often an editor might have two manuscripts of equal value, either of which he can publish without regret—or five, or ten manuscripts—and he might well pick the work of an author he knows because he likes him, or knows needs the money, or because of any sort of reason. But only if the work achieves a certain standard, of course. I'd not expect any editor—and I number several as very good friends—to pick something of mine just because we were friends. Or maybe he does. You're an editor . . .

Carr Not if he has any brains he doesn't. Sometimes it is easier to reject something by a friend of yours than by a stranger, assuming that they are both professional writers who have egos that have to be stroked. If the guy is a friend of yours you know what his sore points are and you can let him down much more easily.

Vertex What about editors? Do they ever get their egos bruised?

Carr Oh, sure. Not in the same way that authors do, because authors are continually in the process of putting themselves on paper and saying, "Here, don't you love it?" It's up to the editor to say, "Yes, I do" or "No, I don't." It's a buyer's market. But it happens to editors, too, because after the editor puts out his magazine or his book the *reviewers* come, and then the fans start writing letters.

Vertex Tell me about your new novel.

Carr My new novel is my first novel in actual fact. I published a short novel, 33,000 words, many years ago. Under a pseudonym, which shall be forever nameless. This is the *real* first novel. The current *working* title is *Poems from Earth*. I'm sure it won't be the final title. It is set in the far future of Earth. Among other things, I hope it's funny when it's supposed to be funny. It has a *huge* cast of characters. They keep moving around a lot. I'll have a scene with two or three characters inter-relating and as I get to know them I wonder how this character would inter-relate with this other character over here. And yes, they get together and sparks start flying! That's very nice and it's a novel largely based on the characters themselves. There's a plot, basically a disaster plot. A disaster plot is open-ended. The thrust of a disaster plot is something really shaking happens to a lot of people. Beyond that it is who are the people, what does it do to them, how do they react? So this is how I handle this particular book, by getting some interesting characters and seeing how they react to the doom that befalls them.

Vertex In working with a large cast of characters, do you forget some, leave them behind . . . ?

Carr I would, except I keep notes. Each character's name, all the physical description of them, what they are wearing. I can remember their characters very well, but I have to keep notes on what they are wearing, when and where they change their clothes. It would be very, very easy to forget things like that if I didn't keep notes. In fact, I didn't for awhile, and I'd come around a second time to a character and I'd say, "Damn! Is she still wearing that jacket?" I just got tired of going back and looking it up. So on the second draft I made notes and, yes, I found I had forgotten some things.

You know those little quotes that appear in *The New Yorker* called "Our Forgetful Authors"? Well, I have nightmares about that. I don't want to appear in that damn thing and have someone show I had a brunette on page 17 who became bald on page 82.

Vertex I think something that readers forget, because they read a novel in an evening or a couple of evenings, is that it took the author days, weeks, months, even *years* to write.

Carr I can forget more easily than most because I write so slowly. I write about three pages a day. It's easy enough for me to forget what I wrote *yesterday*. Except I usually don't, because I go over what I wrote yesterday before I start writing any further.

Vertex Do you base any of your characters on anyone you know? There is a feeling that if you walk slowly past an author's typewriter you are likely to get into the story somehow.

Carr Never wholly. I don't think any writer in his right mind ever bases any character on anyone he knows, or will admit it, anyway. You can always get sued later on, even if you base it on your best friend. Wilson Tucker told me something once and it really turned me around. As you know, he's used names of friends for characters—changed around in some way—and it's a very in-group thing. Maybe a hundred people in the world know the connotations. It's very hard to resist. But Tucker wrote me a letter that made me stop doing it. He said, "You can do that with your friends and that's fine, but that story may be in print for the next fifty years and they may not be your friends for fifty years."

Vertex What's happening in science fiction that you've been thinking about?

Carr I've noticed that only about 20% of the science fiction stories I've read—and I'm just now finishing up my reading for *The Best Science Fiction of the Year*—take place off Earth or after the 20th Century. The rest deal with ecological crises, or with the failure of the cities, or near-future problems—*relevent* science fiction. It's heavily *in* these days, especially with the newer writers. The older writers are still writing the old space opera stuff. In the early Fifties we noticed the

turn to page 24

Let me tell you a story. Once upon a time . . .
Wait. Let Harlan Ellison tell his version first:

SCREEN GAME

by EDWARD BRYANT

". . . so permanently warped was Bryant's already twisted view of the universe that when I had a few dates with a young lady who is the current rage of the sexploitation films, he ran amuck and wound up at one of her film producers', and the next thing I knew he had a part in a class epic titled—are you ready for a consummate horror?—FLESH GORDON."

That passage is excerpted from Harlan's introduction to my story in *Again Dangerous Visions*, a book which has enjoyed considerable circulation. Quite a few readers have read that introduction to "The Ten O'Clock Report Is Brought To You By . . ." and it seems like almost all of them have buttonholed me to ask, "Hey, uh, I understand you were, er, in a movie called *Flesh Gordon* . . ." Now I, being about as virtuous and wholesome a writer as you'll find (never mind what that says about writers as a group), have waited three long years to set the record straight. To inform the reading public what really happened . . . Here it is. Unexpurgated.

***Flesh Gordon*, starring Jason Williams, Suzanne Fields, and Joseph Hudgins. Directed by Howard Ziehm and Michael Benveniste. Written by Michael Benveniste. Rated X.**

Once upon a time . . . about three years ago I was in Los Angeles, gratefully accepting Harlan Ellison's hospitality. I was staying in his home high in the Santa Monica Hills, about ten feet beyond the smog line, overlooking the scenic San Fernando Valley. At that time, Harlan was indeed dating a young woman named Maria, who, in fact, was an up-and-coming star in the sexploitation cinema.

One afternoon Maria and I were drinking coffee in the kitchen when she told me that some friends of hers were involved in the making of something quite out of the ordinary, so far as porn films go; a science fiction parody of the old comic strip, Flash Gordon. That struck me as an interesting premise.

And then I had The Idea. Recently I'd seen a George Plimpton TV special in which he'd reported on the making of a John Wayne western. In order to get an insider's view of the filming, Plimpton had inveigled a bit role in the picture. Inspiration struck—or at least lurched. A science fiction porno parody . . . It sounded interesting. And what did George Plimpton have that I didn't?

Maria made some calls and then I made some calls; and the next afternoon I visited a storefront operation on Melrose Avenue called Graffitti Productions. After a considerable wait in a lobby, watching a constant stream of weird and fascinating people pass through, I got to talk with a bearded young man with boundless enthusiasm named Mike Light. Mike was Graffitti's house director. Producers Bill Osco and Howard Ziehm would give him a certain amount of money and Mike would make a porn movie. He loved to make films.

It was the end of office hours by now, so Mike and I ended up at an organic restaurant down on Sunset. Over my avocado sandwich, Mike talked about the *Flesh Gordon* project. He was especially enthusiastic about this one for two reasons: 1) He had really loved the old movie serials, and 2) Osco and Ziehm were giving him a budget of something like $93,000, a virtually unheard-of amount for a porn film.

I outlined my plan to do a Plimpton number, stressing all the terrific publicity my stories would give the film. Mike was interested and asked me to come back. I did so, and got to see some of the preliminary casting, stage construction, and costuming for the picture.

Finally Mike gave me a tentative okay for a bit part. It would be in the observatory sequence early on in the film when Professor Gordon was being questioned by reporters. I would be playing the part of a reporter—fully clothed.

If you see the finished film, you will see the news conference scene. Be advised that I am not in it. I muffed my chance to be a star.

What happened was that the *Flesh Gordon* scenes, as with virtually all movies, were shot out of sequence. And my scene—note the proprietary attitude—was shot while I was in Boulder attending the University of Colorado Summer Writers' Workshop.

In retrospect, it occurs to me that perhaps I should have stayed in Los Angeles that June. For *Flesh Gordon*, you see, may become a cinema classic.

I don't know why the long delay, but *Flesh Gordon* has finally obtained a general release and is screening all around the country. It's rated X, but that seems to be because the makers have self-imposed the rating; there's very little in the picture that justifies it being moved out of the R category. I suspect the X is retained in order to draw in the crowds who think they're going to see something awfully dirty.

But *Flesh Gordon* is porn of the softest core. What it is, is awfully funny. It is the most perfect recreation I have ever seen of the 'thirties and 'forties Saturday afternoon cliffhanger serials. Everything is dead-on: the stilted dialogue, the baroque plywood-and-rubber sets, the rocketships trailing smoke and sparks, the vacuous hero. With some nudity and blue lines added.

turn to page 21

His job was not the one he wanted, but for the time, it was the only one which he could accept.

STARMAN OF FARAWAY STATION

fiction/**NEIL SHAPIRO**
artist/**RODGER MACGOWAN**

Station Master Klein knew that Faraway Station was, at best, only a dull and dreary stopover. Luckily for his usually uneven disposition, the station seldom attracted anything as *outre* as a tourist; especially a young, female student from one of the inner worlds.

"So, you see," he told the appallingly named Miss Apple, "that's all there is to it. We're just the furthest station on the line, no more than that." He tried his best to keep his voice level and subservient.

"If you'd like," and he silently prayed that she would, "I can pass you back through the Gate, back one stop to Aliens' Rest. They have a fantastic set of alien race ruins there. Also, three suns. Multicolored shadows. The works."

"Oh, no." Miss Apple shook her pretty, well-formed young head. "I've just arrived from there. It was just so," she hesitated delicately over the word, "commercial. Why, would you like to see a seven color hologram of the Ninth Ruin?" She began rummaging through her hand luggage.

"No, thank you," Klein assured her, "that isn't necessary." Gratefully, he watched her relatch her luggage. "Now, as to accommodations," he said, "we don't have any to speak of. The best I can offer you is a small room here, in the station building."

"But, according to my guidebook you have sixth class facilities." Again, she opened her luggage. This time she succeeded in finding the object of her search. She leafed hurriedly through the volume's brightly printed pages. She found the paragraph she sought and held the book accusingly out for his inspection.

He accepted the thick tome and flipped the pages back to the title page. He pointed silently to the printing date.

"Oh. A friend of mine went on a tour a few years back," she explained, much abashed. "It seemed silly to buy a new book."

Master Klein explained, "There haven't been sixth class accommodations on Faraway in three years, ever since they took a survey and found out there hadn't been an average of a tourist a year. They dismantled the hotel. They removed the holovision satellite from orbit."

"I'm so sorry," Miss Apple said, her soft features creased in sympathy.

"They were going to close down the atmosphere plant," he continued. "Luckily, my contract wouldn't allow me to wear deep space gear twenty-four hours a day."

"Well," she smiled, "at least they didn't close down the station."

"They would have loved to," he responded. How, he asked himself, could she have forgotten the simplest fact about the Line? "As you may know," he explained, "one single station cannot be closed down. The Gateways are the result of a field effect. It's all of them or none at all."

"I see," she said, though the station master doubted that. "Perhaps," she risked another of her bright smiles, "you could show me to my quarters? I've been through, oh, at least two dozen stations today."

"Certainly," he handed the outdated guidebook back to her, "just let me put the Gate on standby." He wondered why the girl was bringing out all of his latent hostility. The past eight years had certainly been none of her fault. Looking at her, he doubted if eight years ago she would have even been old enough to obtain a Gateway Travel permit.

He turned down the rheostats and flicked the switches, and tried to remind himself that a station master is always courteous and helpful. The Gate shimmered to a dark purple, then collapsed into a standby point of white light which hung motionless in the middle of the Gateway's weblike framework.

He led Miss Apple out of the Gateroom, into the

station. He helped to carry one of her bags. It was not, he was relieved to find, at all heavy. A year and a half ago, another tourist had arrived with a dozen full trunks. That one had been a true pain.

"How long do you plan on staying?"

"I really can't say," she replied. "I don't have a set schedule. I'm on sabbatical leave from my multiversity studies." She laughed. "A whole year to myself. So, I'm just moving around. There's so much to see."

"Well, you won't see it on Faraway Station, Miss Apple." He opened the door to the visitor's suite, a collection of tiny rooms. He set her bags down on the far side of the threshold and held the door open for her.

She walked silently past him. Her light blue eyes wordlessly accused him of rudeness.

"Dinner," he managed to say, "is programmed for eighteen hundred hours. Would you care to join me then, in the Gateroom?" He scarcely credited his own words. Why should he eat dinner with a tourist?

"I'd love to, Mr. Klein. See you then." She closed the door behind her and he was alone in the hall.

He walked the hallway to his quarters, which were utilitarian and sparsely furnished. When he had first moved in, after accepting assignment as a station master, he had expected the position to be only temporary. He had thought then that dressing up the quarters would only have been a waste of materials.

The first long year had slipped by. Then, the second, the third, one after the next. Living functionally became a matter of spartan pride.

He stretched out on the thinly mattressed bunk and stared up at the metal ceiling. He could feel his mind beginning to wander, and he let it, following it along. The path of memory was a well trodden road although not an overly friendly one.

He stood up and walked to the room's only closet. He slowly opened the door, torturing himself with his own thoughts.

A black and gold uniform, hung near the back of the closet, reflected the room's light from off bright, shining bits of metal insignia. The tailored cloth was very different from the dull blue fabric of a station master's official wardrobe.

Klein blinked, as if the reflected light were somehow stronger than the room light itself. For just a moment, he reached to the uniform and ran his fingers lightly over the cloth.

He sighed and slammed the closet door so hard that it vibrated on its hinges. He turned away and once more threw himself down on the bed.

He closed his eyes and slipped into an unplanned sleep. He dreamed beautiful nightmares of days years past. When he awakened, he glanced at the chronometer by the bedside and swore silently at the hour's lateness.

He hurried back to the closet and withdrew a uniform of plain cut, identical to the one he was wearing. He ignored the black and gold clothing. He changed into the clean, blue uniform and left his quarters for the Gateroom.

Miss Apple had arrived before him. She glanced up from the long table which was positioned near the Gate control board.

"Apologies for being late," he said to her. He walked across the Gateway controlroom to the automat wall. Opening one of the small doors, he withdrew a plate of synthesized food. The thermostats had maintained its steaming temperature.

He suddenly realized that he had neglected to reprogram the computer.

"Excuse me," he said, "I'll have your dinner ready in a moment." He punched at the food buttons, turning his head so that she wouldn't see his redly flushed face. It had been some time since last he had needed two dinners.

The synthesizers hummed smoothly, capably completing their unaccustomed double task. The second dinner was delivered. He set one of the plates in front of the girl and placed the other, for himself, at the other end of the long, rectangular table.

"It's hard to believe," Miss Apple chewed the almost flavorless food, "that I'm really here. I mean, this is the farthest one can get from the central worlds. There's no stop on the Line any further from Earth than this."

"That," Station Master Klein commented drily, "is why they named this Faraway Station."

The girl seemed to take no notice of his sarcasm. 'Do you think," she asked, "you might take me around outside the station?"

Master Klein made a noncommittal noise and they ate the rest of the meal in mutual silence.

After dinner, while he fed the dishes back into the synthesizer's maw to be broken back into their component molecules, Miss Apple moved to the large window opposite the control board. Klein glanced surreptitiously at her, as she looked out over the flat landscape of Faraway Station.

Her eyes seemed to dance with excitement, for what reason he could not guess. It was a forbidding, desert like world. The climate was always hot and dry, extremely uncomfortable. At times, it provided him with many a mental allusion to hell.

"It's not too comfortable out there," he told her.

She leaned closer to the window. She peered off into the distance where the flat, cracked ground blended into the sky.

"What's that?" she asked him, pointing at the horizon line.

"What's *what?*" he replied, as unhelpfully as he could. He finished dropping the dishes and the remains of the meal back into the synthesizer. He slammed the hopper door.

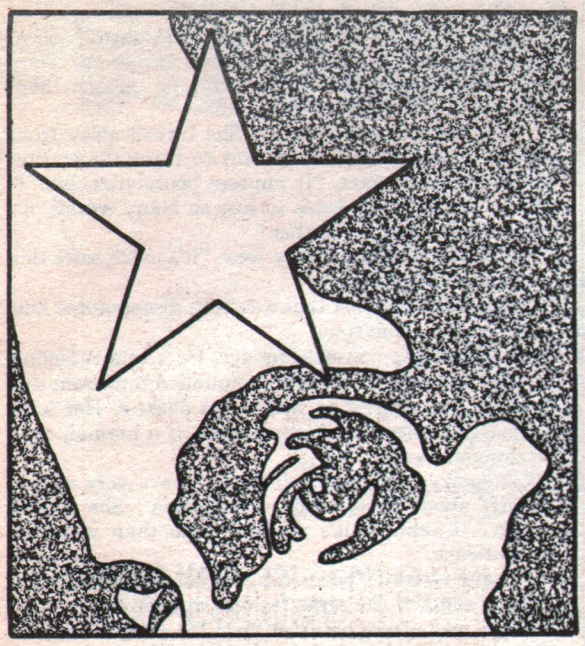
"That tower," Miss Apple replied. "Surely you know what I mean. Why, it must be an hundred meters tall to be seen from here. What is it? It's so bright. Silvery."

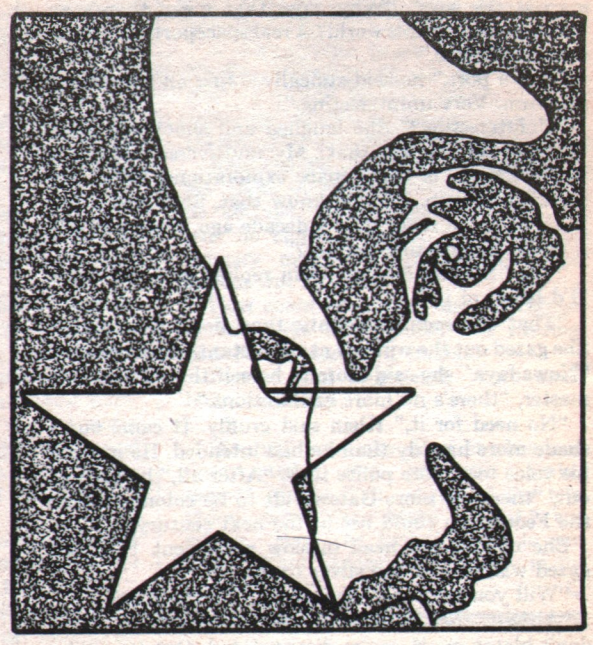
He answered in a low, inaudible mumble.

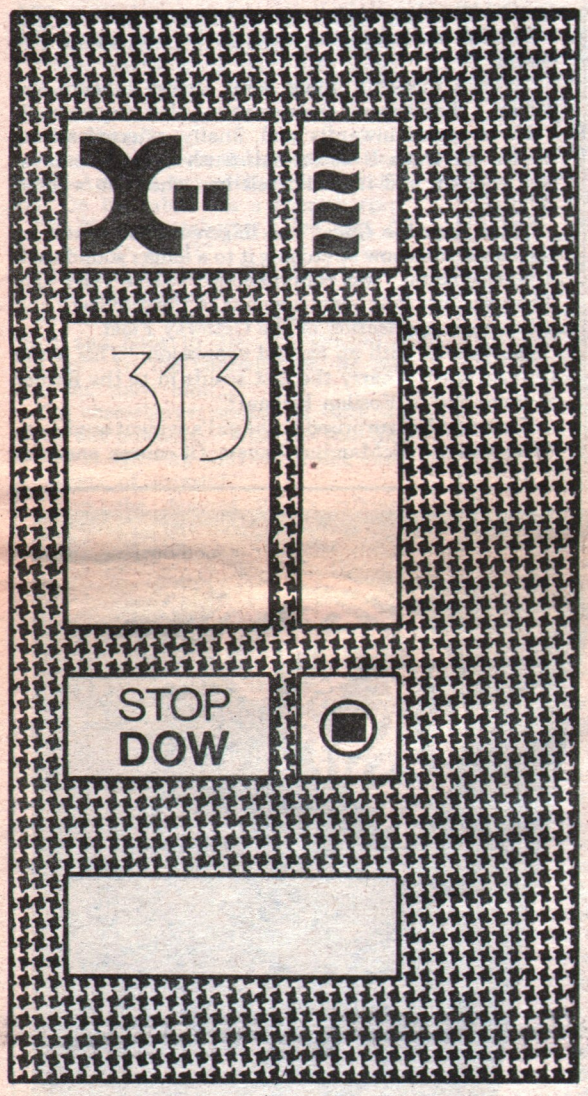
"I beg your pardon?" she said.

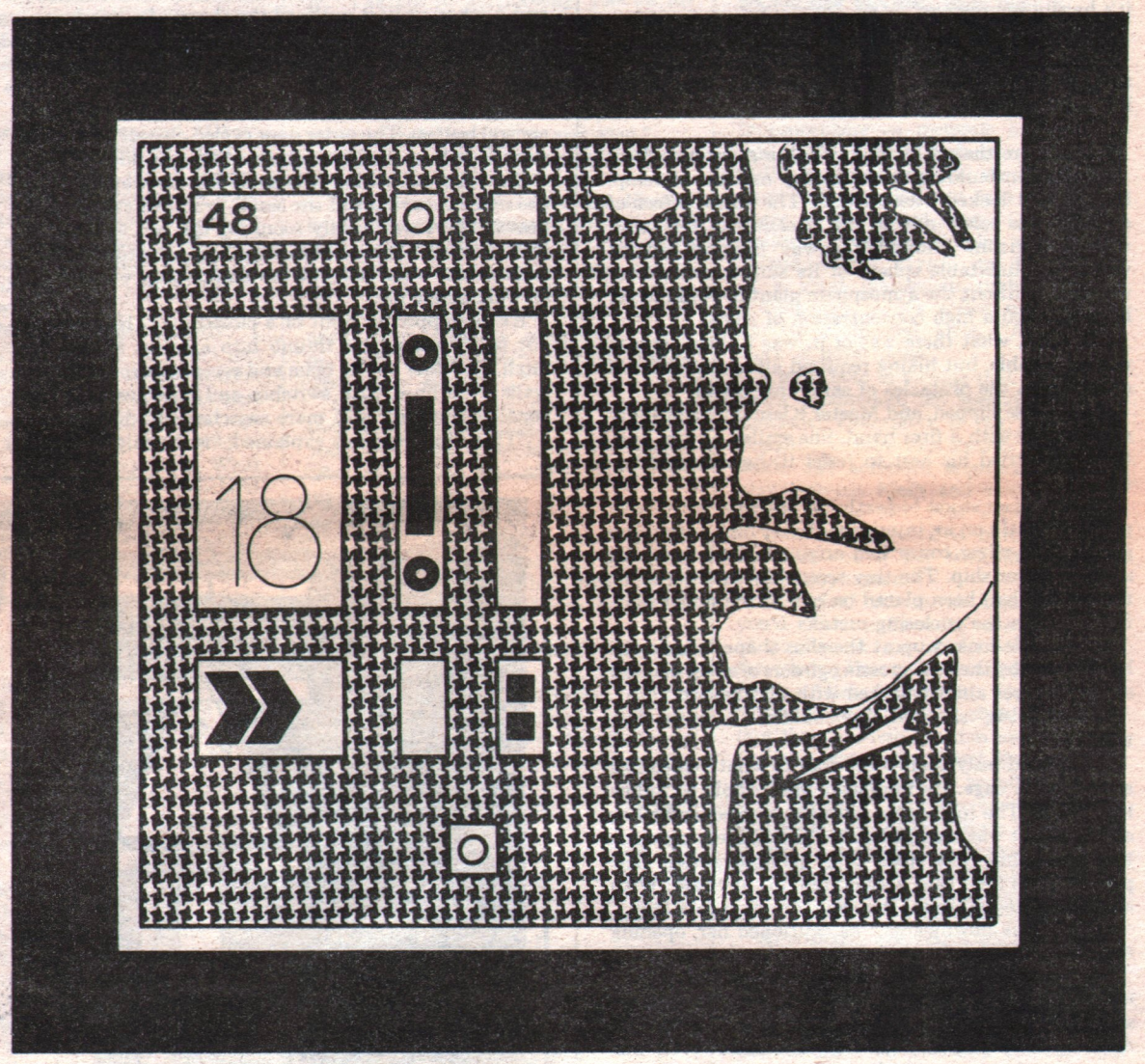
"It is a gantry," he told her, modulating his voice into a noncommittal monotone. "A gantry. That's all it is."

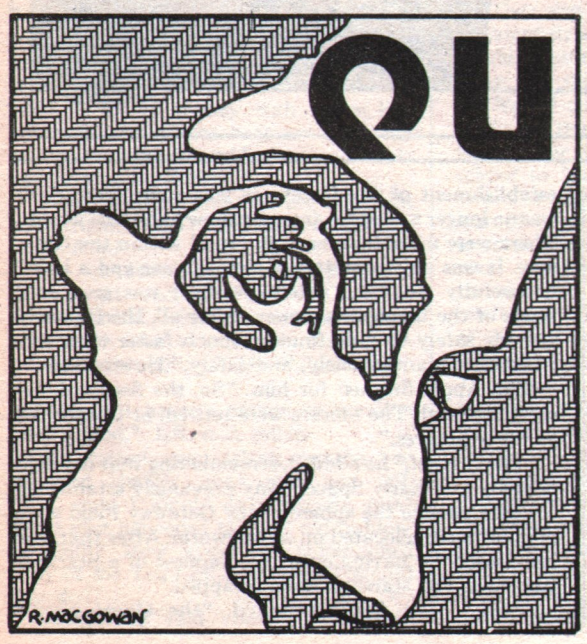
"A gantry?" She clapped her hands together, squeal-



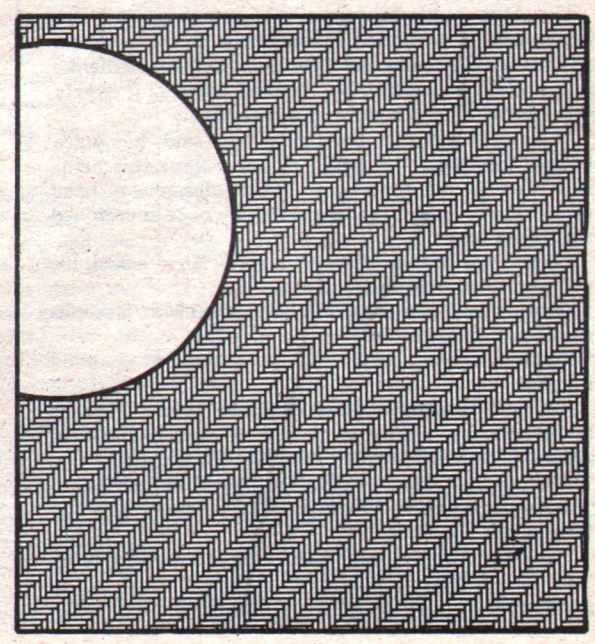



313
STOP
DOW


48
18


QU
R. MACGOWAN

EST



ing out the word. "Why, does that mean there's an old spaceport on this world? A real spaceport! I've never seen one before."

"Not a port," he said stoically. "Just one launching platform. Very uninteresting."

"Uninteresting?" She laughed and shook her head. "How could you say that? My multiversity Major is in the history of early space explorations, before the Gateway system. Do you know that, until just a few years back, no more than a decade ago, there was still a Space Exploration Service?"

"Yes," Station Master Klein replied in a low voice, "I'd heard of it."

"That was such a romantic time, don't you think?" She gazed out the window at the distant, silvery gantry. "Nowadays," she said more to herself than the station master, "there's no more explorations."

"No need for it," Klein said gruffly. It came out a shade more harshly than he had intended. He lowered his voice to a more polite tone. "After all," he pointed out, "there are more Gateworlds to be colonized than the Federation could use in the next century."

She nodded her head in slow agreement. Still, she gazed wistfully at the silver tower.

"Will you take me," she asked. "To the port?"

"Alright, then." He shrugged his shoulders, "But, don't blame me if you're disappointed. One lone ship, it's hardly impressive."

"But still," she insisted, "it *is* a starship."

"Yes," he said solemnly, "it's a starship." The word, as he said it, lacked the tone of import that Miss Apple had been able to imbue it with.

It was more than a kilometer walking distance from the station building to the gantry and the starship. Still, it had looked even further. The visual effect of distance was solely due to the closeness of the small world's horizon. Though Faraway Station orbited within the habitable sphere of its sun, it was a tiny worldlet. Without the atmosphere plant it would never have retained a high concentration of gases.

The road, what there was of it, was ill kept. It was not impassable, but hiking required all of the walker's attention to the obstacles of sand and gravel.

Miss Apple slipped, and Master Klein unhesitatingly steadied her with a firm hand. She smiled at him and, though he tried his best to resist it, he returned the smile.

Finally, they stood beneath the starship which was perched lightly on an interior platform high within the gantry. The silver tower had originally been built for a much larger ship. The tiny scoutship, in order to fit the gantry, had been placed on one of the upper platforms within the enclosing metal.

Miss Apple looked up at the slim shape, which was half-hidden by the criss-crossing girders of silver painted steel. Her eyes almost flashed with excitement.

"How I wish," she said, "we could see it closer than this."

Klein wordlessly opened the door to what looked like a steel mesh cage. He motioned Miss Apple to follow him inside. The high speed elevator worked as well as on the day it was installed and whisked them upwards to the starship. The steel, silver painted girders flew past them as their cage accelerated up the tower. With a shock of deceleration, the elevator came to a stop.

"Don't look downwards," he cautioned her, opening the door.

She stepped out onto a catwalk suspended eighty meters above the ground. Slim railings ran along either side of the metal pathway which led from the elevator door to the platform floor. The effect, however, was of a great, dangerous height.

Yet, Miss Apple might have been either firmly on the ground or a million kilometers high. It made no difference to her, she had eyes only for the needlelike shape of the scoutship. She walked towards it slowly and lightly, as if she were in a dream.

"I have to tell you the truth," she said. her voice hushed and soft, "I'd heard rumors about this being here. One of my professors, Doctor Josephson, head of the Early Space Age department, once mentioned this being here."

"What was that professor's name?" Klein asked, his voice curiously inquisitive.

"Josephson," she answered him, "Stanislaw Josephson. Do you know him?"

Klein shook his head. "No, the name just sounded familiar."

"I'm not surprised," Miss Apple told him. "He was a very famous man, not very long ago. A Starfleet Admiral, back when there used to be a Starfleet."

"Of course," Klein laughed a deep throated laugh, "that must be where I'd heard of him. Funny how one forgets, after a while."

"Anyway," Miss Apple's gaze never left the scoutship, "this ship is why I came here. It wasn't listed in the guidebooks so I didn't say anything when I first came through the Gate. I didn't want to look foolish, asking to see something I had only heard rumors about, that might not even have existed."

"It's not considered a tourist attraction," he explained to her. "Matter of fact, I shouldn't have brought you here. It's a matter of insurance, rather, the lack of insurance. The Company would rather not have tourists up here, in case of accident."

"Well then, thank you for bringing me. I do appreciate it."

They walked out on the catwalk towards the platform. The suspended pathway joined the circular ledge which ran around a point about one third of the way up the ship's gleaming hull.

"Have you ever been inside this?" She looked upwards along the line of the shining alloy hull.

"Yes." Master Klein's voice seemed to emanate from a place distant in space and time.

"You don't think that we might be able to get inside now, do you?"

"I don't see why not." He walked to the side of the ship and spoke directly into a small, metal grill in the ship's side. He spoke softly, in such a low voice that Miss Apple was unable to hear what was said.

The effect of his words, whatever they might have been, was immediate and sensational. A tiny crack appeared in the smooth hull. The crack widened further and further, until it outlined the shape of a hatchway. The hatchway door continued to swing open and they found themselves facing the inner chamber of the airlock.

They entered the airlock. Master Klein touched a control button. The outer door cycled closed. The inner door silently opened and admitted them inside the ship.

She followed behind him as he led the way through the narrow corridors of the small, cramped exploration vessel. There was hardly room for the two of them to walk abreast. Clusters of instruments pressed out from the corridor walls and, at a few points, they were forced to walk single file.

Klein stopped in front of a closed door. He reached out to it, pressed his thumb into a recess beside the latch. The door swung open and revealed a room whose walls were lined with switches and consoles, and the consoles speckled with more switches and displays.

"This," he needlessly explained, "is the ship's control center."

He walked in, Miss Apple right behind him. He stopped by the main control board in front of which were two thickly padded acceleration couches.

He ran his hands softly, caressingly, along the main control board and the banked rheostats, buttons, switches and lights. Yet, he was careful not to move anything and all the readout lights remained dark and unlit.

He glanced up, suddenly self-conscious. But, the girl had not seen his actions. She was too enthralled by the room itself to pay much attention to him. Her eyes moved back and forth over the collection of complex machinery. When she spoke, her voice was as hushed as if she were in a museum or a place of worship.

"Weren't those the days?" she asked, her soprano tones a light whisper. "They travelled not only *to* the stars then but out *among* them. Now, what do we have to take the place of that adventure?"

Klein retreated his hand from the control board. "Men died then," he said. "Nowadays, no one dies. They only have to step through a Gate and, presto, there they are. It's a much better system."

"But, it's a closed system." She turned away from regarding the control equipment to favor the station master with her gaze. "It imposes boundaries, limitations. The Gateway leads to just so many worlds, no more. So far and no further."

"Still," he said in a steady tone, "it's much safer this way than in those days."

She gave him a look that was both disappointed and angry at the same time.

He looked away, averted his eyes from hers. A feeling of deep, personal confusion confounded him from answering. She seemed to realize his distress. Her look softened and her tone became more of a normal, conversational banter.

"I'm sorry," she soothed, "but, I have very strong feelings about those early explorations." She smiled openly. "I suppose it's nothing more than youthful inexperience."

"That's alright," Klein coughed in embarrassment. "I have some of the same feelings, myself."

There was silence between them for a few moments. The girl continued to look about the control room, her eyes wide and curious.

Finally, she asked the question he had known she would.

"What's this ship doing here? Before I heard the rumor, I didn't think there were any left anywhere."

He struggled inwardly and, finally, rejected telling her the full truth. Even the half-truth would be impressive enough, and it would tell her what she wanted to know.

"This ship, the *Quest,*" he lingered a moment over the name, somehow stretching it to a longer sound than a monosyllable, "was commissioned twelve years ago. That was just four years previous to the discovery and subsequent application of the Gateway Field."

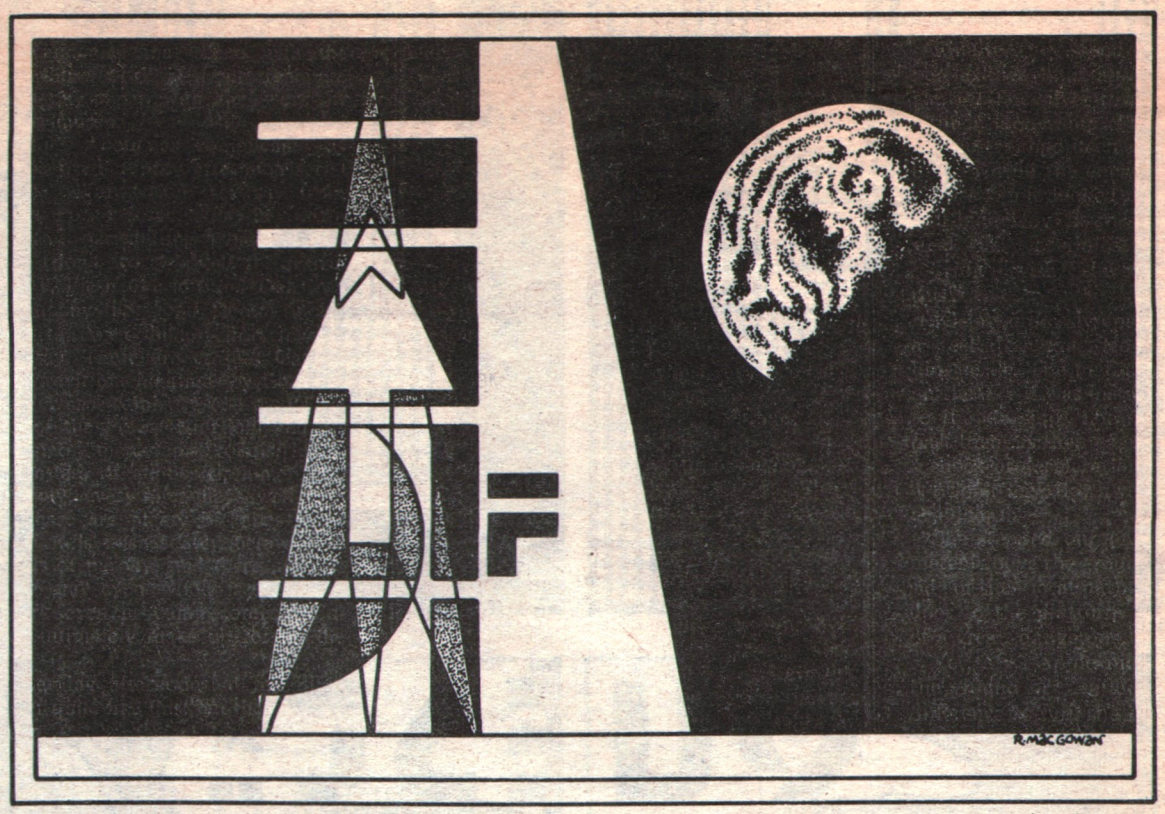
Her face lit with an excited expression. "This is the *Quest?* Didn't it carry the first scouts in to the Kepler System, and to Epsilon Eridani?"

Klein nodded, surprised at the girl's evident eruditien. "Yes, also the McMannus Planets. Of course, once the establishment of the Gateways was completed, there was no longer a need for any more new habitable worlds. There were more than enough found within the Gateway. It was only a matter of time, a year and a half," he ruefully recalled, "before Starfleet was seen as a waste of the taxpayer's money. After all, the Gateway got one safely to a destination much faster than any starship; instantaneously, and safely." He stopped.

Miss Apple finished for him. "So, the fleet was decommissioned. The officers were retired, or transferred to other services."

"That's right," he nodded, remembering that her field of study was Early Space. "Any previously established colonies outside the sphere of the Gateway Field were discontinued, relocated on a Gateworld. After that, the last reason for having even the remnant of a Starfleet vanished. The starships were scrapped."

"Still," Miss Apple prodded, "the *Quest* wasn't



scrapped. Why not?"

He sat down in one of the padded acceleration couches and motioned for Miss Apple to take the other one. "No," he said, "it wasn't scrapped with the others. They decided that at least one ship, a scout vessel, should be kept in a serviceable condition. A lot of reasons were given but, in reality, it was only a milksop gesture; a crumb, thrown to those who felt that the Gateway Field wasn't enough. It was something less than a token gesture, it was nearly an insult."

He paused, listening in some surprise to the anger in his own words. He thought he had gone beyond mere emotions. He leaned back into the cushioned acceleration couch. He raised his hand to touch a small control panel which was suspended off a metal rod to hang in front of the ship's piloting officer.

"So, the *Quest* has been out here for eight years," Miss Apple mused. "Missionless, waiting for a call that will likely never come."

Klein nodded silently, his words were more for himself than the girl's ear, "It's a long time, eight years."

For the next hour, Klein showed his student tourist about the inner workings of the small but complicated ship. They worked their way from the hydroponics section in the bow to the Cherenkov generators in the stern.

As he explained to her about the astrogation computers, he suddenly realized that he should not have taken her to the ship after all. Emotions and memories that he had thought vanished long ago reawoke within him. He felt as if the weight of the past years had finally caught up with him in one swift and terrible blow. He was struck to the core of his soul by the helplessness and, yes, the ludicrousness of his position.

He stumbled through the remainder of his explanations and ended the spur-of-the-moment tour. In the elevator, riding back down the gantry, he resumed an uncommunicative attitude.

They re-entered the station building and he made lame excuses to cover his retreat back to his spartan cabin. Alone behind the closed door he felt himself attacked. The threat came from within himself.

He stretched out on the bunk and tried to think of anything, anything at all but the past. He was terribly unsuccessful.

He sat up with his legs over the cot's side, his head bowed and his forehead cradled on his clenched fists. "Duty," he mumbled to himself. "Responsibility." He rubbed hard at his forehead as if against the pain of a splitting headache.

He breathed out sharply, catching the air between his teeth. In a softer man, it might have been described as a sigh.

He walked with steely precision, and ramrod straightness, across the room. He swung the closet door open and reached deep within. He hesitated and his hand shook. He steadied himself and firmly grasped the finely woven cloth.

He changed out of the dull blue uniform of a station master and into the other, which was nearly gaudy in its plainness. The material was a deep black, its satiny surface reflected softened highlights. Golden threads were finely woven around the lapels and the trouser cuffs.

He smoothed the fabric against his legs and arms, feeling the almost forgotten, once so familiar, tightness of the uniform's cut. He turned then to a cabinet built into the inner closet wall. He slid one of the small drawers partially open. He lifted two pieces of shiny brass from the drawer and pinned them carefully in place. The two golden starships rode high, one on each lapel.

He left his quarters and softly closed the door behind him. He walked slowly down the silent station hallways. He left the building and walked along the rough hewn pathway.

He reached the gantry and rode the cagelike elevator up to the interior platform on which rested the slim shape of the *Quest*.

It was nighttime. He had not looked up at the beauty of the stars in literally years. Faraway Station had no moon and the night was black and as deep as space. The stars stood out like a scattering of diamonds. He tilted his head far back and with his eyes he drank in their twinkling light.

He walked the catwalk to the side of the ship and spoke into the metal grill in its hull. This time, he did not mumble the words but nearly shouted the short formula.

"Star Captain R. Klein, Exploratory Service. Identification: Priority One."

As before, the hatchway opened at his voice. He entered through the airlock into the ship. He walked slowly down the short hallway to the heart of the vessel, the control room.

He seated himself in the pilot's couch and moved it to its upright, chair position. He settled himself into it, sinking into the deep cushions meant to take some of the brunt of quick accelerations.

His hand moved as if it had a life of its own and came to rest on the main control board. He lightly flicked one of the switches. The displays scattered over the surface of the panel glowed into electronic life.

The hum of operating computer tape transports, an aura of functioning machinery, cascaded almost visibly about the room. The ship partially awakened from its sleep.

He had spent the greater part of his life in such small rooms, hurtling his way across a void of terrible, empty immensity. In a way, he was at home.

He opened a small hinged door, no larger than his palm, on one side of the instrument panel. Two simple throw switches were mounted in the recess beneath that door and within the control board. He threw the first one to ON, then the second one. He reclosed the small door. The door's outer surface was painted with diagonal red lines to set its gray, baked enamel finish off from the rest of the metal panel.

Set beside the striped door was a button. He firmly depressed it.

The entire ship shook. Air-tight bulkhead after bulkhead slid downwards from recessed niches in the ceilings of all the ship's interior corridors and rooms, dividing the inside of the vessel into half a hundred tiny, airtight compartments.

Bright words flashed onto the green face of a cathode-ray display screen.

EMERGENCY/EMERGENCY/EMERGENCY
AIR SECURITY
COMPARTMENTS MANUALLY INITIATED

A red flashing light stood out brightly on the control board. The sound of a piercing siren filled the control room. He ignored both, and hardly glanced at the flashing word display.

He reached out again to the myriad of switches on the panel.

He touched a round knob, hesitated. Then, he turned it once to the right and once again back to half its original position. He pushed in on the shaft until an internal mechanism fell into place. The sound of the siren alarm was joined by a stridently ringing bell. More lights flashed red all across the board.

She came to Faraway Station as a tourist, in search of a rumor. What she found was a man with the dead husk of a once-proud dream.

EMERGENCY/EMERGENCY/EMERGENCY
NOXIOUS GAS REPORTED
ACTIVATE CONTROL ROOM VENTS

For all of his efforts to do so, he could not stop his hand from a slight trembling as he again reached to the control board. He placed his fingers atop a switch labeled VENT:ACTIVATE.

The siren, the ringing bell, the flashing red lights spun around him and, in some way, he revolved about them. No longer a stimulus and response relationship, he had become an integral part of the cacophonous environment. His vision tunneled to a shaft of sight, centered on that final switch.

Ten seconds after he activated the vents, he knew that it would be over. The small control room was now completely enclosed by airtight walls. Such a small volume would be easily vacuum pumped and vented within that time. The noxious gas drill called for the wearing of spacesuits. He would not wear one. Death would be inexorable.

Duty. Responsibility.

He pulled his hand away from the VENT:ACTIVATE switch. His ragged breathing slowed and returned to a normal respiration. He wiped the sweat from along his forehead. He ran his hands swiftly along the length of the control board.

STANDBY/STANDBY/STANDBY
SITUATION NORMALIZED

Once more the ship vibrated as the bulkheads now lifted from the receiving recesses in the decks and retracted to their storage position. The siren dwindled away. The bell stopped its ringing. Red lights flickered momentarily to amber, then shaded to green.

STANDBY/STANDBY/STANDBY
SITUATION NORMALIZED

He stood up from the pilot's chair and turned away from the main board.

"So many times," he mumbled to himself, his psychic tension causing him to speak outloud. "Why do I never go through with it?" The last question was a shout, punctuated by a loud slamming of his fist into the unyielding wall of the control room.

STANDBY/STANDBY/STANDBY
SITUATION NORMALIZED

He growled at the uncomprehending display. He slapped at the large, red enameled switch in the center of the board. The green display faded into a blank, glassy stare, as did the other displays. The readout lights dimmed to darkness. The noise of the ship's machineries was stilled. Only the roomlights remained operative on their own power supply.

He was, as before, no longer in a starship. He sat within a deactivated museum piece and he knew himself to be no more than that

He straightened as best he could into a military posture, a position that was no longer second nature. He smoothed the wrinkles in the deep black uniform, brushed at the golden threads.

He left the ship, stepped down from the hatchway onto the platform ledge. It was night, dark and dreary. It was always dreary. Nothing ever changed.

"Oh!" The sound came from the shadows.

He turned quickly at the noise, and surprised Miss Apple with her hand to her mouth. Her eyes were wide as she stared, astonished, not at him but at the uniform he wore.

"What are you doing here?" he asked her, though he couldn't bring himself to care in even a dry, official sense.

"I'm sorry," she said, discomfitted. Her gaze was riveted onto the two golden starships pinned to the lapels of the black and gold uniform. "I have to get back tomorrow morning, through the Gate and back to my studies. I wanted to come out here one more time. I didn't think you would mind, Station Master." She flushed, and corrected herself, "I mean, Star Captain Klein."

"What I used to be," he told her, "has nothing to do with anything now. Station Master is the proper title." How, he wondered, could he end the conversation, get back to the station? He had to get away from the *Quest,* away from the memories and the threat of those memories.

The young girl paused and, when she spoke, her voice took on new tones of near hero worship. "Star Captun Klein," she said, *"the* Star Captain Klein. Aldebaran. The Coalsack Affair. Order of the Federation. Commander of the X4 Fleet." Suddenly her blue eyes seemed to bore to within his soul. They softened with a new understanding.

"You took this post as a station master hoping that they'd send you back out on the *Quest,* didn't you?" She stopped, at a loss for anything more to say as she suddenly realized what inner turmoil must be raging beneath Klein's calm exterior.

"Allow me to walk you back to the station," Klein said to her in a low and harshly controlled voice.

They walked back in complete silence. They did not speak again until the following morning, just before she stepped into the Gateway to be whisked through non-space back to the central worlds and her multiversity.

He monitored the displays as the Gateway Field grew from a point of white light to a purple, glowing aura that filled the spidery framework of the Gate. He motioned for her to enter.

She looked up at him. He was once more dressed in the usual garb of a station master. Yet, once having seen him in the black and gold of space he didn't look properly attired in the dull blue.

"Someday," she told him, "they won't be able to extend the Gateway Field any further. Or, perhaps they will just realize that man has to explore, that he can't accept any set boundaries, no matter how distant or far. They've scrapped the ships and the fleet. They can't scrap the dream and the dreamers, too. There'll always be those dreamers."

Her eyes, as she stepped into the Gate, pleaded with him for a word, any word to show that he forgave her for having discovered him on the gantry the night before.

She stepped into the purple aura. His hand reached to the activating lever. She looked at him.

He smiled at her and pulled the lever. As she left, he called out to her and echoed her own words back to her. "There will always be the dreamers," he told her, "standing by."

It is dull and dreary on Faraway Station and the station master seldom glances up to the stars.

O

No action takes place alone, and no heart longing to be free can avoid hurting another in the search for that freedom. Especially when the hurt cannot even be shared.

fiction/**MILDRED DOWNEY BROXON**

Title from "The Stolen Child," copyright 1886 by William Butler Yeats

TO THE WATERS AND THE WILD

Anne Kerry felt hot and sticky; baths were given on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and this was a scorching Sunday afternoon. It was pleasant to be off the ward; she watched shimmering tree-shadows dance across the pools, and listened to the man drone on in words she'd never heard. Had she ever been outdoors before? She could not remember.

She writhed, shifting position, and her head sagged forward. Her hands clutched the arms of her wheelchair. If she weren't tied in—

"I don't know, Kate," one of the aides said. She was young, and her uniform was white and crisp. "Why have the volunteers started taking these kids on trips? Some of them I could see, but Ward B?"

"Don't complain," said the other aide. "You *could* be back on the ward changing linen, or feeding." She had a run in one of her white stockings; her white shoes were scuffed, and a tag of grey lace peeked from beneath her yellowed uniform. "Count your blessings. Way I figure, field trips are as much for staff as anybody. Keeps us sane." She stepped behind Anne's chair and released the brake, keeping a firm grip on the handles. "Come on, let's take the tour."

Anne's head bobbed and her jaw worked as the chair jounced over the ground. When her head fell forward she could see her legs poking sticklike from beneath her faded dress. There were creases on the skirt, and the lace trim on the bodice was flat and shiny. It had been pressed, quickly and carelessly, in an institution-style mangle. On her thigh she could see the bulge where her catheter drainage bag was strapped. She didn't like to look at her body; she raised her head and looked instead at the trees, at the green and yellow coin-dots of sun and shadow rustling above her. The chair's rubber wheels scoured over gravel.

"Do you get the Fourth off, Kate?" the first attendant asked.

"Nah, I'm on swing. They can't run the place without me." Kate laughed. "Sometimes I dunno why they bother."

"Hush," the first attendant said, "They told me the kids might understand, even if they can't talk."

"I doubt that," said Kate. "Not Ward B."

Anne tried not to listen to the two women—she heard them, or others like them, every day of her life. She concentrated instead on what the man was saying. What were "fish"?

The chair jounced, and her head bobbed forward so that she looked down again at her thin legs. The breeze had blown her skirt up, uncovering her catheter bag. Anne tried, with wide, jerky motions, to brush her skirt back down over it. Her urine was cloudy again, she saw. They always got excited when it was cloudy, and made her drink lots of water and take medicine. She couldn't swallow pills, so they ground them up in applesauce. They must think it disguised the flavor; she always tried to spit it out, but she never managed. Maybe if they didn't notice—

Her arm bumped the chair, hard. No use. Her hands weren't going to work today. She gave up and looked around again.

Most of Ward B was here, except the kids with the big heads, who were hardly ever moved. The fresh air smelled funny: green, like cut grass, brown, like hot tar from the road, and a cool blue water-smell. It was all different, milder somehow than the yellow disinfectant-over-urine odor of the ward.

Her legs twitched and her toes turned inward; one of her heavily-shod feet lodged between the metal footrests, scraping and scuffing on the gravel. The chair stopped.

"Damn," Kate said, "Why can't they quit flopping around?" She repositioned Anne's foot. "Hold *still,* now," she said, giving her ankle a light slap.

They stopped near one of the concrete tanks. The sides rose as high as Anne's waist. Kate set the brakes on the wheelchair, checked that Anne was securely tied in, and stepped away for a smoke.

The man stood on the edge of the tank. "These salmon were hatched this spring," he said. He was trying not to look at the kids.

Salmon? Hatched? Spring? Oh, of course, Spring: Easter-bunny mobiles on the ward ceiling, and stale egg-shaped candy. Anne leaned forward for a better look.

Hundreds of dark-grey spindle shapes seethed through the water, racing the length of the tank with one or two smooth tail-flicks, then turning, darting, dancing.

The tank was big, much bigger than the hydrotherapy tank. Anne remembered the light floating feeling she had when people held her—oh, so carefully—in the water and moved her arms and legs Her head bobbed to one side; she tensed her neck muscles and forced it upright. She saw silver flashes where the fish turned, and ripples when they jumped. Back and forth in the tank they surged, swimming for joy, freedom, beauty.

"We'll turn them loose in a few months, and they'll swim out to sea," the man continued.

Fish, Anne thought. *Sa-mon.* She tried to say it, but her mouth produced only a weak wavering cry. She jerked her arm up to brush away tears. Her arms flailed and she swayed from side to side, uncontrolled.

"They'll fight their way back upstream in three years, to spawn and die."

The fish flicked quick and silver in the tank. Anne leaned forward and watched them. This was better than feeding herself, better even than walking. She closed her eyes and wept with wanting, wept for wasted years and years to be, wept to be quick and sleek and lovely, and to *move, to move*—

A small fish rose to the surface and looked at her. Anne stared at its gleaming eye, wanting, wanting—

She was in the green depths, and the surface was a wavering mirror high above. She felt the water sweep past her silver sides, churning oxygen into her gills; she was, at the same time, aware of the limits of the tank, the position of her smooth, tapered body, and of hundreds of others like herself.

She hovered, weightless, then darted forward with a flick of her tail. She gulped water; her eyes saw above and below, ahead and behind her. She rose to the surface and flung herself, joyous, into the sunlight. The air burned her skin, and she welcomed the cool soothing rush of water over her once more.

She could swim, she could fly, she was whole and perfect; she was—she had been—She stopped a moment, gulped water, and tried to remember. *To remember what?*

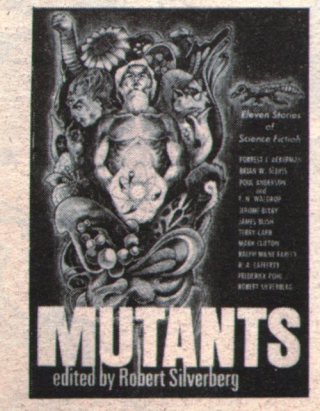
Her companions flashed above and below her, silver needles aimed at one place. From where she was she could taste food in the water. She sped toward the end of the tank, hungry.

In the wheelchair Anne's body gasped and thrashed; Kate rushed toward her. "She's convulsing. It's too hot out here for her." She wheeled her back into the shade. "Shouldn't take these kids out anyway. They get sick so easy."

Anne's eyes were glassy and bewildered, and her mouth opened and closed. She held her arms close to her body, flopping, then hung limp against the safety straps. Her skirt had blown up over the catheter bag again, but she did not notice. She stared at the sky and the trees in dumb terror. What had happened to her world?

○

VERTEX LOOKS AT BOOKS



Mutants
Robert Silverberg, Editor
Thomas Nelson, $6.50

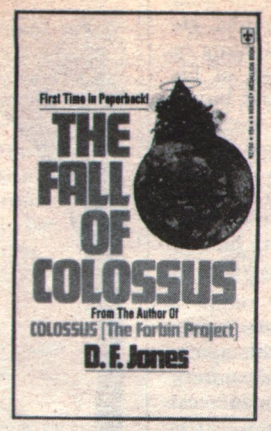
Eleven stories by some of the best authors in science fiction, all dealing with mutants or mutations, make this one of the better anthologies received thus far this year. Contributing heavily to that, as is usual in his collections, are the introductions to each story written by Robert Silverberg, some of which are actually **better** than the stories. Some of the stories are quite old and familiar, some are parts of books, such as **Hothouse** by Brian Aldiss and **Watershed** by James Blish, but all are excellent examples of mutation stories. Recommended.

The Forever War
Joe Haldeman
St. Martin's Press, $7.95

Far and away the best book received by **Vertex** so far in 1975. The novel is built around four stories which originally appearing in Analog, with some rewriting, and together are much more effective than they were separately in the magazine. It's interstellar war without heroics in the Heinleinian sense, bloody and pointless. And it is quite easily and most obviously the best thought-out book we've read in years. Where most authors sketch in backgrounds with a broad brush, Haldeman paints details in very fine line, but at no time does he let his attention to detail detract from the progression of the story. He covers a 1200 year-long canvas with social and military and personal development that, quite simply, has to be read to be believed. **Highly** recommended.

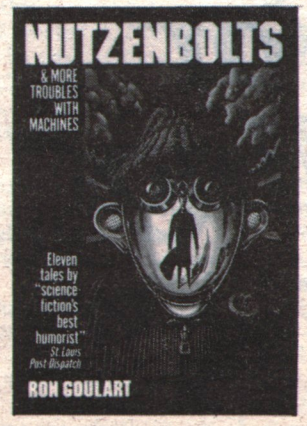
Venus on the Half-Shell
Kilgore Trout
Dell, $.95

The note, in red ink, on the back cover, says **"Venus on the Half-Shell** — Available for the first time without lurid covers!" The cover shows a rather dumb-looking man clad in shorts and a space helmet, in space, holding some sort of ray gun, and an almost-nude woman standing next to him, without helmet. Inside you'll find a character who wears levis, wanders around the universe in a Chinese spaceship, has a ball with assorted females including an alien queen in heat, and whose companions are a dog, an owl, and a female robot with some unusual sexual programming. Who (or what) Kilgore Trout may be is one of those questions that no one will believe **any** answer to, and it really doesn't matter. Whoever he (she, it or they) may be, they're written a book that answers a major need in science fiction. The screwball thing is **entertaining!**



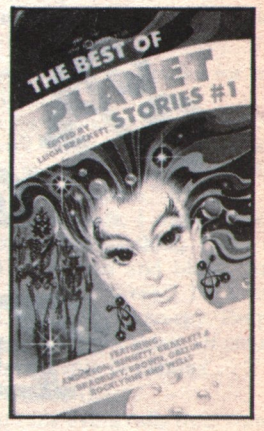
The Fall Of Colossus
D. F. Jones
Berkley, $.95

My first reaction to this book was, "You've got to be kidding." Successful books (stories, films, TV productions) commonly spawn sequels, and very seldom do they even approach the quality of the original. Thankfully, though, seldom are they as bad as **The Fall of Colossus.** The original **Colossus** (subtitled **The Forbin Project** in the TV production), was a not-bad book, obviously mainstream oriented since the concepts, indeed the very plot, were so old as to be cliches in science fiction. A giant computer, designed to solve all of mankind's problems, ends up taking over the world. In this sequel, there are two groups. Those who are glad the computer took over, and those who want to destroy it. Another old-hat S-F plot, which could have been the basis for another TV production. But at the end Mr. Jones rings in a set of, would you believe, **Martians!** Who are also being taken over by the computer. And, quite naturally, the author stops the whole ridiculous mess before there is any resolution of the situation. Making way for the inevitable sequel to the sequel. Such a waste.



Nutzenbolts
Ron Goulart
MacMillan, $6.95

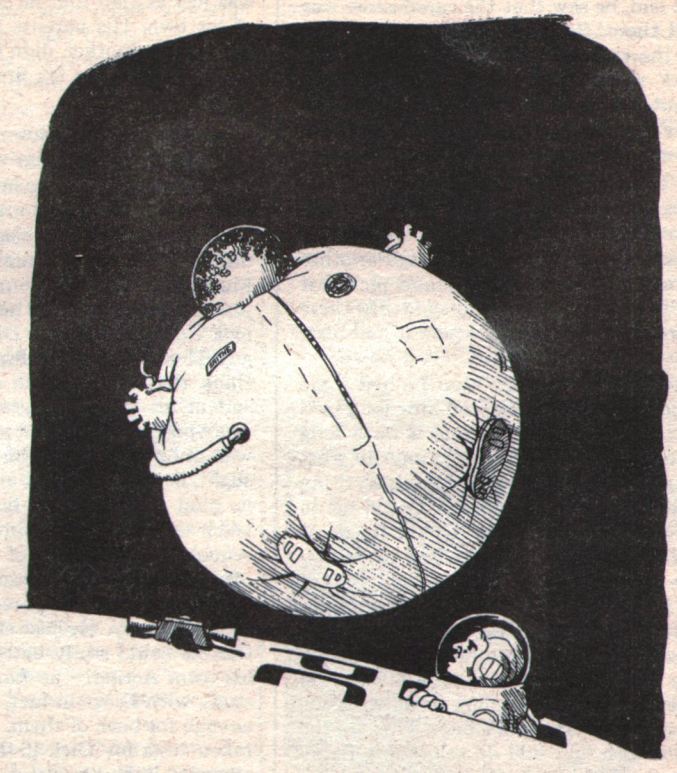
I doubt if there's a person in our technosociety who hasn't, at one time or another, been bitten by a machine. There is some perversity of the mechanical world that seems to be saying, "You may be my master, and you may get a full course meal out of me, but I'm gonna get me a sandwich." Well, Mr. Goulart, probably the best humorist in science fiction today, has put together a collection of short stories that shows just how ridiculous the attempted interface between man and his machines can be. There's not much in the book that we'd call **memorable** science fiction, but there are some good stories to pleasantly while away the hours. Unless you're a bound-volume collector, though, you might find waiting for the paperback to be a better buy.



The Best Of Planet Stories
Leigh Brackett, Editor
Ballantine, $1.25

Planet Stories was a magazine that wasn't ashamed to admit they were publishing **adventure** stories. What, at the time, was sneered at as being **escapist** literature. Well, some of the best science fiction ever written, and the **best** space opera stuff appeared in **Planet,** and seven of the stories that Leigh Brackett liked best are in this volume. Included are one of the best "proud to be an Earthman" stories of all time, **The Rocketeers Have Shaggy Ears,** and **Lorelei of the Red Mist,** written half by Ms. Brackett and half by a young (then) writer named Ray Bradbury. We'll leave it to you to read the story and try to decide who wrote which half. A good book for those who still like some fire and romance and, above all, **action** in their science fiction. ○

"Same plan as usual. We jump to their planet via time warp drive. Descend on mini-retro rocket sleds. Assemble via power jumping belts. Then attack with swords, spears and arrows."

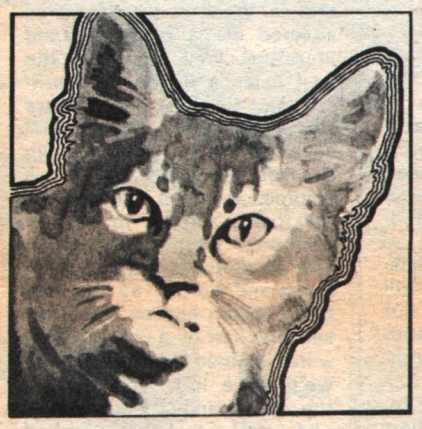


"Gesundheit!"

Homer wanted to do something to really impress Elinor, and now, with his new-found talent, he was sure that he could give her whatever her heart desired.

A Kitten For Elinor

fiction/**Georgia F. Adams**
artist/**Alicia Austin**



Homer went over the events of the past few moments in his unbelieving mind. He had picked up the marble candlestick from the left end of the mantel and had put it down on the right end. When he happened to glance back to the left end, he saw that the candlestick was still there. His eyes pingponged. It was on the right end, too. He stood further back so he could see both ends of the mantel, and there was no doubt about it. There were now two candlesticks, and moments before there had been only one.

"What did I do?" he asked himself. "I picked it up and put it on the other end. I remember now. Before I picked it up I held it and said, 'I *wish* I had another candlestick just like you,' and picked it up and put it down, and suddenly there were two of them, one where it had been sitting and one where I put it down."

It was clear to him that he had some kind of gift. He wondered how long he'd had it. He might have had it for a long time and hadn't duplicated anything because he hadn't wished for anything under the right conditions. Could he do it with just anything? Could he do it indefinitely? In stories he had read, people sometimes had three wishes. Is that all he had? He was tempted to try duplicating something else, just to see if it would work again, but he might foolishly use up a precious next-to-last wish. He knew what he was going to do with the second wish—impress Elinor. Then for the third wish he could do something really spectacular, like duplicating a Mercedes. That would surely impress her and would be a bonanza for him in itself.

Elinor's bored, detached manner was both frustrating and challenging to Homer. He had been wanting something that would change her attitude toward him—to change the way she looked at him, and this just might be it. He didn't know of anyone else in the whole world who could do what he just did—not even Steve Conway, the only person who seemed to be able to turn Elinor on. If Homer but knew it, it wasn't so much Steve himself that took away that look of boredom from Elinor's face as it was Steve's airplane and his father's money. Steve also intrigued Elinor because he rode a motorcycle.

Homer tried very hard to be the kind of man he assumed Elinor admired. He bought a crash helmet. It now hung in a noticeable place on the wall of his apartment. He knew he couldn't buy a motorcycle so he occasionally borrowed one from a friend. He didn't really *mind* riding a motorcycle, but deep down he was just as glad that he couldn't get one of his own. His parents couldn't afford it, and his mother didn't want him to take a job during his first two years at college.

He thought his parents were pretty nice. They had let him rent this apartment instead of living in the dormitory again, even though the apartment cost more. In his freshman year he was a little unhappy. He had roomed with Dick Murphy, a six foot four inch football player whose size made his five foot seven look even smaller, but Dick was a great guy. Homer's amiable disposition let him think that anyone who didn't actually spit in his eye was a great guy. Homer was a positive kind of person and thought well of himself and of his body. Though slight, he was muscular and kept himself in good condition. He had been on the track team and the tennis team in high school. But the sight of so much flesh, often bare, had made him feel smaller.

He hadn't told his parents that he had been unhappy. He just stressed the fact that he could study better in a place of his own. Actually he *had* been able to study with Dick—in fact, he had studied enough for both of them. He would have taken tests for Dick if they could have arranged it. But he figured it would have been hard for him to pass himself off as Dick, unless he had lied about his size.

So he had found this apartment. What

he had was a room. To qualify as an apartment it had a hot plate and a small refrigerator. The really great thing about the place was that it had a fireplace.

Homer was still standing in front of that fireplace after the candlestick episode, thinking about Elinor. He was thinking how wonderful it was to make love to a girl in front of a fire. In truth, that was the only place he had made love to a girl, and the girl was Elinor. He was willing to believe it was great to make love anywhere, but he thought it was especially nice in front of a fire. He found it incredible that she had let him make love to her. It wasn't incredible. Unknown to him she had granted that favor to many young men and some men not so young. When she was in his bed it had been heaven for him, but later he wondered if she had really put her heart into it. He had no basis for comparison, of course, but from what he had read about girls and heard from the other fellows . . . Oh, well. Next time it would be different.

He knew he had to call her and get her over to his apartment right away. He was relieved when she answered the phone. He had memorized her schedule, but he couldn't count on her being in just because she didn't have a class.

"Oh, I can't. I've got Art Appreciation in an hour. It's a drag, but I have to show up once in a while. I've cut the last two classes."

"Take a taxi," he said. "You'll have time. It's very important. I have something to show you."

"I've seen it, and frankly I'm not impressed."

"What?" he asked.

"I said I've seen your apartment." Even Elinor had a limit as to how mean she could be to Homer.

"Please come," he begged.

"Oh, all right. I'll be there in a few minutes."

He straightened the apartment while he waited. He smoothed the madras spread, patting it fondly, because *she* had been there. He was pleased with the place, especially since he had decorated it. He had found the marble candlestick in an antique shop and thought it would be just the right touch for his mantel. The pair really set it off.

Elinor came in, wearing a long, brown, fur-trimmed coat that reached her boots.

"You'll have to pay for the taxi," she said. "I haven't a dime." She had been looking carefully through her purse, everywhere but in her wallet. Her lipstick fell out and rolled across the floor. Homer gambolled after it like a faithful and exuberant puppy. He gave it to her, then reached in his pocket.

"How much was the taxi?"

"Two dollars."

He handed her the bills.

She said, "Well, really, the least you can do is go down and pay it."

He obligingly went.

When he got back she was looking even yummier than when she came in. She had divested herself of her coat and thrown it on the bed. Although she didn't like to do it, she could, when the occasion demanded, take off her own coat. She had a mass of reddish hair, green eyes, and a slim, voluptuous figure. Even in freezing weather she wore the briefest of miniskirts with her tall, sleek boots.

His eyes and his thoughts wandered, but he tried to bring them back to the reason for his call.

"Elinor, I've made a candlestick." It was difficult to know how to begin.

She looked disappointed—even scornful. "I didn't know you did ceramics. I have an aunt who's made fifty six candlesticks. Can you imagine? She got tired of making bowls. She's an arts and crafts freak. Now she's doing macramé. D'you know what macramé is? It's tying knots in string. Imagine! Over and over, knots in string!"

"My mother does macramé. She made me this owl." He pointed to a white owl with button eyes hanging on the wall. "I'm going to bring in an old dead bough and take his feet off this little twig and put them on one of the branches."

"That'll be just darling."

His ear of love didn't detect the dryness of her tone. He liked her voice very much. It was surprisingly tiny, considering the pair of lungs that she must have under her ample exterior equipment. She spoke in a babyish whisper—somewhere between Marilyn Monroe's and Jackie Onassis's—when she remembered. Although he liked her voice, he didn't like the way the conversation was going, and he tried to get back to the point.

"No, it isn't ceramic. It's marble. Just like this one." He showed her the original candlestick.

"You sculpted it?" That was almost impressive.

"No. I bought this one, and I made this one—that is, I created it. I brought it into being—just by wishing for it."

"You're kidding," she said, examining both candlesticks. "Why, they're just alike, even this little crack." She really looked impressed.

He swelled with pride.

"Think of the money you can make."

He hadn't thought of that.

"Yes, I guess I could make things and sell them."

"Sell them? Why bother? you could actually make *money*. I mean duplicate it."

"That would be counterfeiting. That's against the law."

"But if it were done as perfectly as this, it couldn't be detected."

"Even so, it would be against the law."

She looked at him in wonder. What a weirdo! She sometimes wondered why she was attracted to him. Other times she knew. He did have a good body—sort of like that statue of Michelangelo's David. While she didn't know much about art, she knew what she liked. She liked bodies—male bodies. Her Art Appreciation teacher had talked about the statue the last time she was in class. She wanted to see it again. Maybe she could earn some Brownie points by comments made from a first hand examination.

"Say, Homie, where's that statue of David you had here?"

With one sentence she had touched on two sore points. He used to wince when she called him Homie, but he was getting used to it. His mother had a classical but not perceptive turn of mind and had given him the name of Homer, which was hard enough to live with, but Homie was even worse. The other sore point was the statue. His mother had brought it back from Italy a few years before and had recently given it to him for his apartment. His father was glad to have it out of the house because he didn't like the contrast between his developing paunch and that trim young physique. His grandmother was glad to have it out of the house because, according to her, the young man was showing everything he had. Homer was sensitive about it because the first time Elinor came to his apartment, she picked it up and said, "I should think that a man would rather have a statue of a girl—Venus, or somebody."

His words had come tumbling out. He knew a good line when he thought of it. "For my taste Venus is a little overweight." He knew how proud Elinor was of her slim figure.

"But a statue of a man—are you some kind of queer?"

Homer had proved pretty well that day that he wasn't.

He wasn't interested in the statue at the moment. In answer to her question about where it was, he said, "I don't know. It must be around here somewhere."

"Forget it. Make something for me."

"Okay. What I had in mind was to replace the jade earring you lost by duplicating the one you have. Do you have it with you?"

"Oh, sure, I always carry around one earring. No, I don't. Make me something else."

They were interrupted by a plaintive mewing that came from behind the bed. A little black and white kitten came into sight.

"Oh, Homie, you have a kitten. It's precious."

"She followed me home one day, all the way up the stairs." Actually he had to carry the kitten up the last two flights. "Can you believe it?" He wondered if she could. After seeing Steve's boxer he didn't want her to think of him as a kitten fancier.

"I know what you can make for me, Homie. A kitten!"

"You can have this one," he said eagerly. "I don't think my landlady will let me keep it anyway. I was just keeping it until I found it a home," he lied.

"No, that one's yours. I want *mine*."

"I don't know if this thing I can do would work with flesh and blood. And if I could, I'm sure there'd be a law against *that*. Anyway, it's creepy. People just can't *do* that sort of thing. Of course there are experiments in cloning . . ."

"Cloning, what's that?"

"Well, you take living cells from something and try to duplicate the thing it came from."

"But you don't have to do that. You can do it just by wishing."

"I don't think I can create a living thing."

"A mother cat makes five or six at once. Surely you can make one little kitten."

"A mother cat has advantages."

"I'm not sure I believe you can duplicate things. Did you find my earring? I think you were just going to pretend to duplicate it and give me back the one I lost."

"No, honest. Remember that crack in the statues? That proves they're identical."

"Well, maybe. You're always saying you'd do *anything* for me. And now you won't do the first teeny thing I ask of you," she pouted. "Come on, Homie, make me a kitten."

Homer struggled with his conscience. This scene wasn't going the way he had visualized it. He didn't want to try to duplicate the kitten, but somehow he had to regain the ground he had lost.

"Well, all right," he said reluctantly. "I'll try. But remember, it might not work. Sit here."

She sat in a straight chair near the kitten. He wanted to see her eyes if he were successful.

He curved his fingers around the kitten's body and said, "I *wish* I had another kitten just like you."

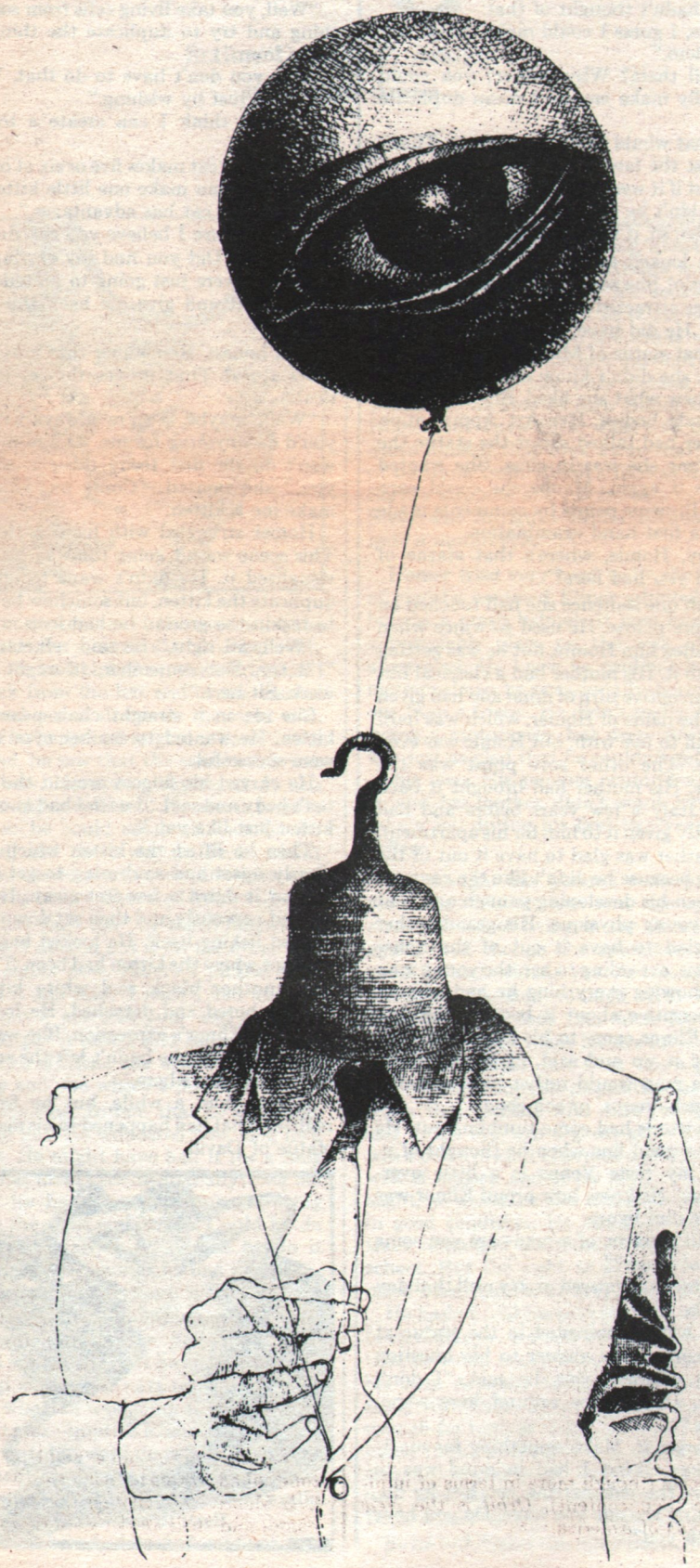
Then he lifted the kitten which was clearly upset and squirming to get free. He put it down a few feet away. It ran around nervously and then sat down and started licking itself. He looked back to the spot where the kitten had been. There was another black and white kitten, looking bored and detached. He looked up to see Elinor's expression. She wasn't there. He knew she hadn't left the room. She wasn't anywhere.

It took him a while, but he finally realized what had happened to his marble statue of David. ○

Science fiction is going through a revolution in style and content, and not even the revolutionaries have the slightest idea of where their creation is headed.

BREAKING WAVES

article/ **EDWARD BRYANT**



"I hope that when the New Wave has deposited its froth and receded, the vast and solid shore of *science fiction* will appear once more."

—Isaac Asimov

Surely there is no one reading this essay to whom the name Isaac Asimov is not instantly familiar; Asimov, along with Arthur C. Clarke and Robert Heinlein, is one of the big three superstars from within the SF field whose novels sell in sufficient quantity to flirt respectably with the *New York Times* bestseller list. Author of the *Foundation Trilogy* and the well-known Laws of Robotics, Asimov embodies all the good, gray virtues of traditional science fiction.

"1960? A New Wave? For 14 years? Do you know what a wave would look like, hanging around a beach for 14 years? Naw, waves keep coming in and going out, and we're all just specks of foam on the shining face of western literature."

—George Alec Effinger

So who is this irreverent Effinger? According to such critic/writers as Theodore Sturgeon and Harlan Ellison, George Alec Effinger is just possibly the best new young writer of speculative fiction to come down the pike in years. His first three books have garnered an amount of critical attention older writers might find unseemly in one so young.

But what this article is *not* about is either the careers or personalities of Asimov and Effinger; rather, what it *is* about are the changing attitudes embodied in the two statements quoted above.

There is, you see, an on-going controversy in SF (Science Fiction, Speculative Fiction, Speculative Fabulation, or whatever other definitions seem to fit the increasingly broad range of the acronym SF) which seems never to fail to stir the contentious ire of critics, readers, and practitioners. Though probably to be considered tempest teapot-scaled in comparison to either the death of the printed word or the imminent collapse of Western Civilization As We Know It, the issue of the New Wave in science fiction is just as vital to SF people as Governor Tom McCall's drag-'em-kicking-and-screaming into-the-twentieth-century program was to the population of Oregon. That last analogy is not without considerable validity.

Valid, that is, if the New Wave actually exists, or ever actually existed at all. Some writers have heralded the New Wave as a banner to be waved, the cutting edge of a literary revolution; others dismiss the whole issue as a masturbatory literary fantasy; occasional attempts to appear *au courant* by the wholesale lifting of James Joyce's literary techniques circa 1919. Whichever, no one has a definitive answer. And no matter how many critical stakes are driven through literary hearts, the undead shade of the New Wave keeps returning from the grave in the manner of such legendary creatures as the vampire, werewolf, and honest politician.

For the sake of not simply truncating this article right here, let's assume that the New Wave is a legitimate umbrella label for a number of relatively new characteristics SF had not notably exhibited before about fifteen years ago. In *More Issues At Hand,* James Blish concisely lists what he conceives the New Wave to be:

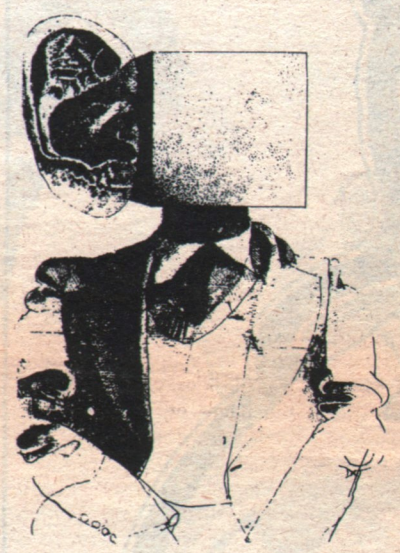
(1) Heavy emphasis upon the problems of the present, such as overpopulation, racism, pollution and the Vietnam war, sometimes only slightly disguised by s-f trappings; (2) Heavy emphasis upon the manner in which a story is told, sometimes almost to the exclusion of its matter, and with an accompanying borrowing of devices old in the mainstream but new to science fiction, such as stream of consciousness, dadaism, typographical tricks, on-stage sex, Yellow Book horror and naughty words; (3) Loud claims that this is the direction in which science fiction must go, and all other forms of practice in the field are fossilized; (4) Some genuinely new and worthy experiments embedded in the mud.

Or to put it in a somewhat different way:

. . . the theoretical basis for the new speculative fiction: a merger of speculative content with inventive form; the notion of "non-linear" fiction that would free itself from traditional sequential plots and straight-line structure; allusive prose instead of literal-mindedness; and honesty and openness in dealing with the realities of man as a political, social, and sexual animal.

—Norman Spinrad, from *Modern Science Fiction*

I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's backtrack a ways to get this whole New Wave thing into some sort of historical perspective. Literary historians have a field day tracing the roots of speculative fiction down through Lucian of Samosata, Homer, Aristophanes, Rabelais, Thomas More, Swift, and a host of other writers. *We* won't even go so far back as 1818, the landmark date (the publication of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*) Brian Aldiss convincingly cites in *Billion Year Spree* as the beginning of modern



science fiction. Nor will we linger later in the nineteenth century, considering the major contributions of Jules Verne and H. G. Wells. Chopping aside a considerable quantity of underbrush, we will conveniently date the starting point of our examination of the New Wave at April, 1926.

That is the cover date of the first issue of the first serial publication devoted solely to science fiction. *Amazing Stories* was the creation of Hugo Gernsback, a New York radio experimenter and inventor. Rather than science fiction, Gernsback termed the stories he was publishing "scientifiction." He explained the word in his first editorial: "By 'scientifiction' I mean the Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, and Edgar Allen Poe type of story—a charming romance intermingled with scientific fact and prophetic vision." Gernsback wished to print stories that were predominantly scientific essays in the sugar-coated guise of fiction. He saw his scientifiction as a fine vehicle for educating the masses to the achievements of technology and the future wonders to come.

The first few issues of *Amazing Stories* were primarily filled with reprints of such authors as Wells, Poe, and Verne. Then original submissions began to come in as both accomplished and would-be writers realized there was now a consistent market for what their contemporaries called "pseudoscience stories". *Amazing Stories* soon spawned companions, successors and

competitors; and by 1929, Hugo Gernsback was calling the stories he was publishing "science fiction."

This early science fiction is remembered with a good deal more fondness than it probably deserves by those who read it first. Taken in hindsight, incorporating a little literary and artistic perspective, the Gernsback brand of SF was really, most of the time, pretty awful stuff; the vaunted scientific content was most often used simply to jurytig flashy props, which were then added to dress up the standard, tired, hack, pulp plots. Yes, true, there were flights to other planets, alien invasions and warring space fleets; but those were different only in stage setting from familiar treks to the inner Amazon Basin, Indian attacks, and tales of derring-do between privateers and the Spanish Armanda. And that tried-and-true fiction formula remained good: boy meets girl, girl is menaced, boy rescues girl. There really wasn't all that much new under the sun, be it Sol or Betelgeuse.

(It should be noted at this point, for future reference, that the readership of *Amazing Stories* and its peers was almost exclusively male, white and middle-class. Male, because the fiction was presumably science-oriented and the sexual chauvinism of the time precluded most females from having any serious association with the hard sciences. White and middle-class, possibly because that socioeconomic group had the money to spend on lesser luxuries such as science fiction magazines.)

The 1930s brought with them a two-decade revolution for SF, all embodied in the person of one man: John W. Campbell, Jr. Campbell had already made for himself a fine reputation as a writer, both with stories published under his own name and somewhat more meditative mood pieces published under the penname Don A. Stuart, when he assumed the editorial chair of *Astounding Science Fiction* in 1937. Virtually single-handed, he ushered in the so-called "Golden Age of Science Fiction."

Part of what falls into Campbell's Golden Age was his 'discovery' and development in the pages of *Astounding* of such giants in the field as Robert Heinlein, Theodore Sturgeon, L. Ron Hubbard, A. E. VanVogt, L. Sprague DeCamp, and Isaac Asimov. But just as important as the new writers themselves was Campbell's insistence that *Astounding's* stories fuse elements both scientifically valid and human; he required his writers to think and speculate as far as was humanly possible about the scientific ramifications of their stories. Further, he demanded that the writers carefully treat the cause-and-effect and feedback relationships between science and the people acted upon. Stories from *Astounding* soon became known for being hybrids far beyond the well-intentioned Gernsbackian didacticism, or the mindless, melodramatic entertainments of the space-opera. Campbell retained his editorship until his death in 1971. He probably has had a greater influence on SF than any other single editor.

Though not so obviously dramatic as the Campbell regime, two significant editorial happenings of the 1950s should be noted. First was the appearance early on in the decade (in 1949, actually) of the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction,* edited by Anthony Boucher. *F&SF* was a highly successful attempt to leave behind the cruder pulp origins of modern SF and publish literate (and more than occasionally literary) science fiction. Presently, under Edward Ferman's able editorship, *F&SF* remains one of the half-dozen SF magazines still surviving into the 1970s.

Second was the founding of *Galaxy,* under the editorship of H. L. Gold. *Galaxy* soon became the prime outlet for sociological science fiction, dealing more with the software of the social sciences than the 'hard stuff' appearing in *Astounding.* Early on, *Galaxy* published such works as Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (the anti-intellectuals take over), Pohl and Kornbluth's *Space Merchants/Gravy Planet* (the ad agencies take over), and McCann's *Preferred Risk* (the insurance companies take over).

Galaxy, the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction,* and the heritage of John Campbell—three ingredients (but only a few of many) in a bubbling ferment.

And thus we leap to the 1960s:

Item: "Between 1960 and 1965 an unusually large number of new writers began publishing their speculative fiction within the science fiction genre: Thomas M. Disch, Samuel R. Delany, Roger Zelazny, Piers Anthony, Michael Moorcock, James Sallis, Larry Niven, R. A. Lafferty, Barry Malzberg, Keith Laumer, myself, and at least a dozen others."—Norman Spinrad, in *Modern Science Fiction.*

There had not been so heavy an infusion of new talent all at once into the genre since the Campbell heyday of the late 'thirties and early 'forties. But there was a clear difference in what these newcomers were writing about. Admittedly a generalization, but close enough to the truth to be worth asserting, the focus of the new writers seemed to be moving from outer to inner space. Again quoting Spinrad: "These new writers simply were drawn to the reading of all types of speculative fiction—William Burroughs to Theodore Sturgeon, Philip K. Dick to *E. C. Comics,* J. G. Ballard to Anthony Burgess—the fiction of the might-be, which cut across the arbitrary marketing definitions of 'science fiction' and 'mainstream.' Naturally, when readers went on to become creators, they continued their interest and began to write speculative fiction." This phenomenon peaked during the 'sixties in *New Worlds* in England, and in *Dangerous Visions* and Damon Knight's *Orbit* series in America.

To be sure, not all the new writers of the early 'sixties were radicals, revolutionaries, or even innovative or eclectic in their reading and writing. Keith Laumer, for instance, primarily wrote adventure fiction often superior to its predecessors, but not startlingly different. And Larry Niven fell heir to leadership in the spanner-and-grommet school of *Astounding* science fiction.

Item: In the summer of 1964, Michael Moorcock took over the editorship of *New Worlds,* a venerable and venerated London-based science fiction magazine. "The new *New Worlds* seized on an essential truth: that the speculative body of work contained in the sf of the past had been directed towards just such a future as the mid-sixties: the Sunday colour mags, proliferating LP's, drugs, promiscuity, cheap jet flights, colour TV, pop music that suddenly spoke with a living mouth—and the constant threat that the Middle East or Vietnam or South Africa or Somewhere would suddenly blow up and end the whole fantastic charade forever and ever amen—this actually *was* the Brave New World, nor were we out of it!"—Brian Aldiss, in *Billion Year Spree.*

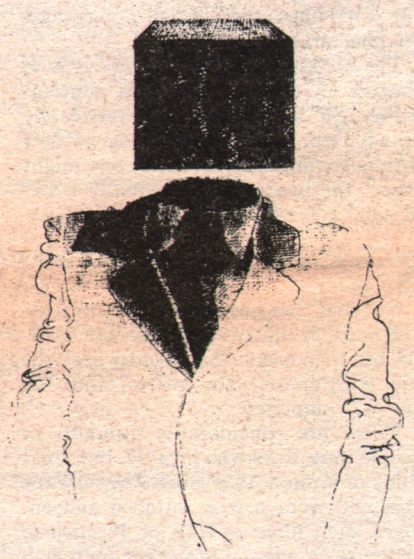
Under Moorcock's inspired tutelage, *New Worlds* rapidly became science fiction's showplace for the avant-garde. Fine writers flocked to the banner of what was about, finally, to become known as the New Wave: Pamela Zoline, Charles Platt, Langdon Jones, Norman Spinrad, Thomas Disch, M. John Harrison, John Sladek, James Sallis, Hilary Bailey, Michael Butterworth, Graham Charnock, and many others. Perhaps the 'star,' though, was J. G. Ballard, whose nonlinear narratives and condensed novels were to bring joy and fury to slightly bewildered science fiction readers.

A literary storm-center of controversy, *New Worlds* reflected and refracted the mid-sixties London that had become a symbol of the frantic change and evolution that seemed to be occurring everywhere.

Item: Back in 1955, writer/critic/anthologist Judith Merril had gotten together the first annual volume of what were to be twelve editions of *The Year's Best S-F.* The final volume, titled *SF 12,* appeared in 1968 and covered what Ms. Merril considered to be the outstanding speculative fiction pieces of 1966. All through the 'sixties, Merril's editorial taste had grown increasingly eclectic and idiosyncratic. Thus the contents page of *SF 12* contained not only such names familiar to SF readers as R. A. Lafferty, Fritz Lieber, Samuel R. Delany, and Katherine MacLean, but also such bylines as Tuli Kupferberg, Günter Grass, Donald Barthelme, William Burroughs, Hortense Calisher, and John Updike. This was speculative fiction at its broadest.

It was at this time, during the mid-sixties, that Judith Merril became (or appointed herself) the foremost exponent of what she dubbed "the New Wave". Her 1968 anthology *England Swings SF* is a showcase.

Item: In 1965, American writer Harlan Ellison had the idea for what he planned would be a taboo-smashing anthology of all-original, never-before-published SF stories. The book, *Dangerous Visions,* turned into a gargantuan project, spawning a lengthier sequel, *Again Dangerous Visions,* and an even larger third volume, *The Last Dangerous Visions.* After enormous expenditures of money and effort, *Dangerous Visions* appeared in 1967. It contained two hundred and thirty-nine thousand words and thirty-three stories



by a broad spectrum of SF writers ranging from J. G. Ballard and Carol Emshwiller, to Robert Silverberg and Poul Anderson.

Ellison lead off his introduction to the book with: "What you hold in your hands is more than a book. If we are lucky, it is a revolution." Although a bit hyperbolic, Ellison's words did, in a sense, become prophecy: since this article has already listed several 'most important influences,' it should be stated that *Dangerous Visions* is probably the single most influential science fiction anthology. It has had an incalculable influence in giving SF writers in all markets a chance to paint their visions on a wider canvas than ever before possible.

Item: Antedating *Dangerous Visions* by a year or two, the first volume in Damon Knight's *Orbit* series of original anthologies had appeared in hardback in the United States. Soliciting stories written especially for *Orbit,* Knight has edited (and continues to edit) some fifteen volumes to date, published variously by G. P. Putnam's Sons and Harper & Row.

If any single factor became a hallmark of the 1960s' *Orbit* titles, it was editor Knight's preoccupation with stories revolving around the membrane-thin interface between fantasy and reality, between what is real and what is not, and how easy it is to confuse the two. In many respects (though more in terms of influence than content), *Orbit* is the *New Worlds* of America.

Orbit and *Dangerous Visions* had an additional effect in that both stimulated and helped greatly, to expand the market for all-original anthologies. This publishing phenomenon has mushroomed in the 'seventies to the point where a majority of the really good short science fiction is being printed in the original anthology series such as Robert Silverberg's *New Dimensions* and Terry Carr's *Universe,* rather than in the magazines.

Now, take a deep breath and attempt to synthesize all the information that's been presented thus far in the article. No, rest assured there won't be a multiple-choice quiz on this. This is just a time to take a break: get up and go to the john, brew a fresh cup of coffee or tea, eat a chocolate chip cookie or maybe a tuna sandwich.

All the while, try reviewing the lengthy quotations about the New Wave by critics Blish and Spinrad back toward the beginning. Okay, ready?

What *I* think about the New Wave, in summary, is this: Yes, there was such a phenomenon, however amorphous and unclassifiable in definitive shape and content. And yes, the New Wave has had profound impact upon the entire field of science fiction (or speculative fiction).

There are those readers, writers, and critics who have expressed hysterical fear that New Wave partisans intended their movement to drive a curare-tipped dart through the throat of some moss-bound dinosaur labeled 'traditional science fiction.' Not that there aren't some followers of the New Wave who have wanted to do exactly this. Luckily, though, in SF there is rarely coordination, cohesion, or homogeneity. At least now, in the 'seventies, there is no internal plotting to destroy the field, no cabals, no conspiracy.

What the influence of the New Wave has come to mean is that now there are many more options for science fiction, a field which theoretically was gifted with infinite diversity in the first place. Now a higher proportion of that potential can and is being realized. The New Wave, in conjunction with the times themselves, has indeed conspired to break down barriers of style and presentation and subject matter.

Science fiction can now deal with anything.

But does it? A partial answer follows in my consideration of the 1970s.

Let me wrap up this section by again quoting Brian Aldiss, from *Billion Year Spree.* Carrying on the metaphor of seas and tides, Aldiss answers the Asimov quotation heading this article:

> What the New Wave deposited was much needed alluvial soil on that overtilled strip of shore. For the New Wave is but one of many tides and comes much nearer to the source and impetus of creative writing than did the pulp formulae. Its heroes did not swagger around in magnetised boots. They were generally anti-heroes, their destination more often bed than Mars.

It is now 1975 and the decade is half gone. Are there any overriding hallmarks to the SF of the 'seventies? Yes, of which two in particular I want to discuss: the broader market for speculative fiction, and the wider spectrum of writers serving that demand.

Diversity. This is the latest look of SF.

I mentioned earlier in this article the traditional propensity of science fiction for attracting both readers and writers who were male, white, and middle-class. That monolithic composition of membership has not yet really been broken up, but the process has accelerated in recent years.

(SF has never *totally* been male. The 'thirties and 'forties, for example, saw two top-ranked writers in Leigh Brackett and C. L. Moore. Note, though, that both their names and their works were thoroughly

androgynous in nature. In the 'fifties, the most visible female SF writers were women like Zenna Henderson, Margaret St. Clair, and Judith Merril. Their work fell predominantly into the category of what is now remembered, and not too kindly, as 'women's magazine fiction.')

All right, let's take sexual bias first. Things are changing. In his introduction to Joanna Russ' Nebula Award-winning story "When It Changed" in *Again Dangerous Visions,* Harlan Ellison could say (in 1972): ". . . as far as I'm concerned, the best writers in sf today are the women." That was after his 1967 introduction to *Dangerous Visions* in which Ellison thanked the reader for having bought the book and "rewarded the men who had these dangerous visions," despite the fact that three of the included writers were female. How embarrassingly and rapidly times can change.

A startlingly original and talented group of female voices are presently speaking within the field. Please indulge my fondness for lists and let me tell you some of the names worthy of your investigation: Kate Wilhelm, Sonya Dorman, Carol Emshwiller, Ursula K. Le Guin, Joanna Russ, Josephine Saxton, Angela Carter, Pamela Sargent, Suzette Hadin Elgin, Vonda McIntyre, Doris Piserchia, Marta Randall, Lisa Tuttle, Suzy McGee Charnas. Let me re-emphasize: these are only *some* of the names.

I confidently predict that four of the major science fiction novels published in 1975 will be *The Female Man* by Joanna Russ, Pamela Sargent's *Cloned Lives, Clouds Return* by Vonda McIntyre, and Marta Randall's *Dust.* Additionally, something splendid for which to watch should be the Vonda McIntyre and Susan Anderson co-edited anthology *Aurora: Beyond Equality,* a book for which stories were solicited with one proviso—each tale must take place in a future in which sexual equality has already been achieved.

Don't get the idea that this is all a political defense of feminism in science fiction. More important than the circumstance that they are women is the fact that most of those listed above are simply damned fine *writers.*

As an example, read the Le Guin novels *Left Hand of Darkness* and *The Dispossessed;* then compare them with other contemporary novels you may recently have read. I predict most of you will decide that Le Guin comes out light years ahead.

While women are doing just fine in the speculative fiction of the 'seventies, nonwhites can't claim the same dramatic progress. There are about four hundred and fifty members of the Science Fiction Writers of America. Of these, I believe four are black: Samuel R. Delany, James Nelson Coleman, Jesse Miller, and Estelle Butler. Okay—Orientals? Uh, well, there's Laurence Yep. How about Chicanos? Well, er . . . Does Lester del Rey count? Amerindians? Russell Bates and Craig Strete are injecting some red consciousness into their stories. There's no way around it; science fiction may be increasingly female, but things are still pretty white on the Galactic Frontier.

One group of writers certainly not being discriminated against are the young—or for that matter, the new writer of any age. SF prides itself, and rightfully so, on being one of the few prose markets which still welcomes the novice writer. Most SF editors, I suspect, have the hardly disguised desire to discover the New Heinlein or the New Delany. Look at Damon Knight's *Orbit 12,* for example. The contents page includes Ursula Le Guin, Brian Aldiss, Kate Wilhelm, and Gene Wolfe; but it also lists names like Michael Bishop, Steve Chapman, and Mel Gilden. Knight believes in giving chances to new writers he deems good.

Another List: this time supplementing the names of the newer female writers on the last list. Jack Dann, Michael Bishop, Spider Robinson, Gardner Dozois, Gordon Eklund, David Gerrold, James Sutherland, Arthur Byron Cover, Dave Skal, Robert Thurston, C. L. Grant, Alan Brennert, and many more. And perhaps the best of them all, George Alec Effinger.

An innovation of the past seven years which has aided and abetted the influx of new talent has been the Clarion Workshop concept. Inaugurated in the summer of 1968 at Clarion State College in Pennsylvania by Robin Scott Wilson, the Clarion Workshop has reappeared annually in incarnations at Tulane, the University of Washington, and Michigan State University. A six-week session, the Workshop puts approximately twenty would-be writers into an intensive and stimulating environment with a half-dozen professional SF writers doubling as teachers. The Clarion Workshop does not teach writing; what it does do, hopefully, is to give each student concentrated experience in learning to criticise their own work and that of others, and to work with whatever their own peculiar shortcomings as a writer might be. Unique among all other writing workshops, Clarion has produced three anthologies of fiction and criticism which were published by New American Library. But more importantly, founder Wilson says that the initial percentage of selling writers coming out of the workshops is typically around fifty percent—though that tapers off over the years to perhaps fifteen or twenty percent who remain regular writers. Compared to other types of literary workshops, the Clarion percentages are phenomenal.

The bottom line of all the above is to observe that the inputs into contemporary SF are diverse and terrifically broadbased. With the variety of new writers coming into the field, one might expect the product to be equally eclectic—and generally it is.

Science fiction has never been more popular.

Not that that has made an appreciable difference in the net incomes of SF writers, but then hasn't that usually been the case with artists? The last to profit—an age-old complaint.

There are considerable numbers of people these days who love SF, but don't think of it under that label. They are the men and women who watched and enjoyed such films as *2001* or *Westworld* or *Phase IV,* viewed *Star Trek* on television, listened to albums like the Jefferson Starship's "Blows Against the Empire," dug underground comix such as *Skull,* read Michael Crichton's thrillers, or Ira Levin's *This Perfect Day,* or Nabokov's *Ada.* They experienced all these things and more, never thinking they all fall under the umbrella of speculative fiction.

Other publishers, scenting the profits of mass sales, are preparing similar ploys. Ballantine Books plans to release a series of SF classics, starting with *The Space Merchants.* According to a news report in *Locus,* the book will be packaged like a major best seller, have a printing of over 200,000, and have major publicity. Not too long ago, Avon Books did a similar thing by re-releasing Norman Spinrad's SF novel *Bug Jack Barron* in a lead fiction package without a single science fiction label. If these experiments succeed, one can expect to see many more "hardcore" SF books slipped like Q-ships into the mainstream market.

Another aspect of the growing mass appeal of SF has been the proliferation of academic interest. The Modern Language Association has a continuing seminar in science fiction. The Science Fiction Research Association is peopled with members having impeccable academic credentials. Dr. Jack Williamson of Eastern New Mexico University has compiled a listing of more than 240 SF courses taught on a college level. This does not count the courses being presented in elementary and high schools. James Gunn of the University of Kansas estimates that the true number of science fiction courses may approach one thousand.

All these courses require texts, both of and about science fiction. Critical texts and text-anthologies have, of course, mushroomed. A separate article would be required to even begin to sort them out. Avon Books has begun an ambitious program called Science Fiction Rediscoveries, designed to bring back and keep in print several dozen popular SF classics. All are in a large-size, quality paperback format, easily adaptable to the classroom. Perhaps the ultimate criterion of "making it" has been achieved: Cliffs Notes has issued an *Introduction to Science Fiction.*

Allied with the academics in their wholesale and enthusiastic adoption of science fiction are the futurologists. SF got one of its best promotional boosts in Alvin Toffler's immensely popular *Future Shock:*

> We do not have a literature of the future for use in these courses of futurology, but we do have a literature about the future, consisting not only of the great utopias but also of contemporary science fiction. Science fiction is held in low regard as a branch of literature, and perhaps it deserves this critical contempt. But if we view it as a kind of sociology of the future, rather than as literature, science fiction has immense value as a mind stretching force for the creation of the habit of anticipating. Our children should be

> studying Arthur C. Clarke, William Tenn, Robert Heinlein, Ray Bradbury, and Robert Sheckley, not because these writers can tell them about rocket ships and time machines but, more important, because they can lead young minds through an imaginative exploration of the jungle of political, social, psychological, and ethical issues that will confront these children as adults.

As an educational tool, SF has considerable promise. I've talked with a junior-high teacher in the Denver area who reports SF as an ideal "hook" to give slow readers a renewed interest in the printed word. Her students seem to find some intrinsic fascination in science fiction they do not discover in other varieties of literature.

On a higher academic level, a friend of mine teaches composition at the University of Colorado. She tells me the greatest failing of her students is the simple inability to apply logic to any situation—they seem to have no real conception of ramifications and what it means to follow through. Perhaps SF might adapt itself to this situation as an instructional aid. Science fiction, after all, is a literature cored by extrapolation—logically estimating or building a conclusion based on the extension or projection of known information.

And one final, fascinating item along this line from the wonderful world of cybernetics. A recent anthology called *Survival Printout* is, as the editors put it, "the result of a two-year dialogue between the editors and Illiac 4, the Burroughs Corporation's giant general-purpose computer." The editors programmed this question into the computer: "What natural language input would supply the optimal data base for connecting social systems under stress with the reality of their own experience?"

After taking into consideration such indices as symbol recognition, bisociative thinking, structural organization, scientific knowledge, and adaptability potential, Illiac 4 answered: "Science fact-fiction."

Would you care to argue with a giant computer?

It seems safe to guess that SF will remain an important educational adjunct of the 'seventies, it not a considerable time longer.

What next? Damned if I know. This is what I'd *like* to see happen, though:

In spite of my enthusiasm for the form, I cannot ignore the fact there are still innumerable areas in which speculative fiction needs to innovate and progress. When accomplishment is weighed against potential achievement, SF is still not in anything so warm and secure as a new "Golden Age".

SF is not treating as completely as it could many of the softer sciences; but particularly the revolution in human reproductive biology that threatens to have at least as great an effect on everyday human life as the development of nuclear power. Genetic engineering, cloning, AI, ectogenesis . . . None of these are getting the attention they deserve on the printed page, or, especially, on film.

Another sample: Of all forms of literature, science fiction is the most ideally suited to set a stage upon which could be depicted a completely sexually egalitarian society. SF rarely does, or even makes the attempt—possibly because most SF writers find themselves affected in insidious ways by the unconscious prejudices of the society in which they've been reared. Yet sexual equality is a good deal more than a merely topical issue. It requires—indeed demands—examination and dialogue. Science fiction could be the forum.

Still another example: In SF, despite all efforts of the New Wave, literary values are still not fully fused with scientific reality. There are occasional breakthroughs such as Ursula Le Guin's work, but still all too few.

Where is the first-line poet who will use the metaphor of pulsars, black and white holes, quasars, and time dilation? I am eager to encounter him. Or her.

Between fits, starts, and slow, hard trudging, we're still moving toward a maximum fusion of people and ideas—but then ought that not to be the goal of *any* form of literature? All of which combines to say: as much as SF is now achieving, it *still* has a bright and promising future.

SOME ADDITIONAL READINGS OF INTEREST:

Aldiss, Brian W.; *Billion Year Spree;* Doubleday, 1973; Schocken Books (paperback), 1974.

Amis, Kingsley; *New Maps of Hell;* Ballantine Books, 1960.

Atheling, William Jr.; *Issues at Hand* and *More Issues at Hand;* Advent, 1964, 1970.

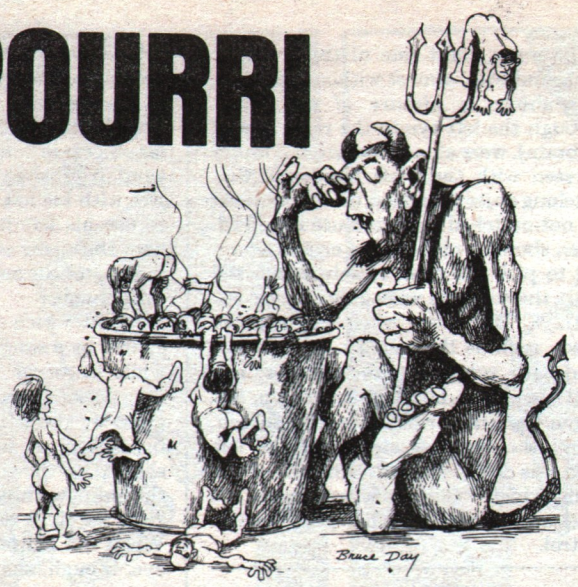
Clareson, Thomas D., Ed.; *SF: The Other Side of Realism;* Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1971.

Knight, Damon; *In Search of Wonder;* Advent, 1968.

Spinrad, Norman, Ed.; *Modern Science Fiction;* Doubleday Anchor Books, 1974.

O

POTPOURRI



INTERLUDE IN AN ANT COLONY

by Scott Edelstein

When Jeff walked in he found his roommate, Art, talking to himself.

"Hey, what's going on?" Jeff asked.

Art turned around in his chair. "Come here," he said tersely. 'I want you to look at something."

Jeff walked across the room and stood beside Art. Art was pointing at the tabletop. On the table was a cheeseburger.

"So it's a cheeseburger," Jeff said. "Is that bad or good?"

Art shook his head. "It's God."

"Are you tripping?"

Art crossed himself. "No. Cross my heart and hope to die, I'm straight as can be." To the cheeseburger, he said, "Go on, show him."

The cheeseburger spoke. Its voice was quiet, but powerful. "What do you want to see? A lightning bolt? A burning bush? A plague of locusts?"

"Jesus, the damned thing's talking," Jeff said, pushing his long black hair behind his ears.

The cheeseburger chuckled. "Blasphemy, my son, blasphemy. Control your language."

"Watch what you say to Him," Art instructed. "He's a nice guy, but he doesn't take shit from anyone."

Jeff turned to his roommate. "How did you get ahold of this?"

"I went down to Wick's Sandwich Shop and bought it. I was going to eat it, but then it started talking, and I found out who it was."

"A gimmick," Jeff said. "Some kind of miniature transmitter. We're probably on some radio comedy show right now."

Art shook his head solemnly. "I think it's really Him. He created another hamburger for me, out of dust."

"I figured that if he paid for a hamburger, then he ought to get to eat one," the cheeseburger said.

"Did you put cheese on it?" Jeff asked.

"I forgot," the cheeseburger said sheepishly. "What kind of cheese do you want, Art. I'll make you a piece."

"Screw the cheese," Jeff said. "You know, whoever you are, you do some pretty convincing shit. We could all make a lot of money with tricks like yours. It would sure beat wracking my brains, studying for mid-terms and finals and playing intellectual."

"Jeff," Art said urgently, his eyes wild with fright. "Don't you understand? It's really *Him!*"

The cheeseburger chuckled again. "Don't get excited. I'm not here to throw mortal fear into anyone. I just wanted to take a look around and see what's happening with My children these days."

"You still haven't proven to me that you're God," Jeff said mildly.

The cheeseburger sighed; the top bun quivered slightly, then rose and fell. "You want I should do a miracle, huh? What ever happened to good old-fashioned faith? How about an autographed copy of the Ten Commandments? Would that do?"

"Sure," Jeff said uncertainly. "Yeah. That'd be fine."

There was a quick flash of light and a paperback book appeared on the table beside the cheeseburger. Jeff picked it up. On the cover, in gold lettering, were the words: *Jehovah's Guide to and Modern Interpretation of the Ten Commandments (ninth edition, revised).*

"Satisfied?" the cheeseburger said.

"Yeah. I guess so." Jeff paused. "Okay, so you really are God. I'll buy that. I used to be an agnostic, but I believe now. Just a couple of questions I want answered. Like, for instance, if you're so kind and wonderful and good, how come you flooded the whole Earth except for Noah and his family and a bunch of animals?"

The cheeseburger trembled slightly. "I really am sorry about that. It wasn't me. It was my cousin Sid. My second cousin. He gets kind of out of hand, sometimes. You know, bad upbringing, parents separated, things like that. We finally had to put him away, poor old psychotic. What happened was, he slipped some knockout drops into my Shirley Temple, and when I woke up the rains had already started. It was all I could do to warn Noah about it all. Don't worry; it won't happen again. I've got a food-tester working for me now."

"If you're so all-powerful, though, how come—"

The cheeseburger throbbed. "That all-powerful stuff is a pile of elephant shit. I never said I was anything of the sort. I'm just an average guy with a planet to look after, that's all. It's like having an ant farm. You folks are kind of fun to watch; you help me relax. I take care of your planet so that it doesn't collapse or fall apart, and if things ever get hairy enough, I'll stop by some weekend and fix things up again."

"You mean," Art said, "that you don't have anything to do with what happens off Earth?"

"Goodness, no. My brother-in-law built your solar system one week in his basement and gave it to me for my birthday. You folks are only a hobby."

"Then you can't tell us anything about extraterrestrial life, or universal physics, or the creation of the universe, or anything like that," Jeff said.

"Well, I don't know much about those kind of things, but that's because I wasn't ever in college. I went to trade school to become a computer programmer. The answers are known, but I never learned many of them. I just wasn't very interested in them. I'm more of a family man, you know? I leave the science to the scientists. I do know that there are intelligent beings on one of the planets of Alpha Centauri—I forget which—but they wouldn't interest you much, anyway. They're still in the Middle Ages, worshipping vending machines and non-stick fry pans, you know, things like that."

"Wait a minute," Jeff said. "This is making less and less sense. What made you choose the form of a cheeseburger in the first place. If you had to be some sort of food, why couldn't you be caviar, or at least a steak, or maybe a roast duck? That would be more godly, don't you think?"

"I try to practice humility," the cheeseburger said. "Status is for you humans, not for me, If you want glitter, go to Las Vegas or go see the Pope, that's what I always say. I may be able to move mountains, but I still have to pull my pants down to take a dump, if you see what I mean."

"Far out," Art whispered.

"You can't stay a cheeseburger for too long," Jeff pointed out, "or you'll start to rot. Flies will eat you."

"Have you ever seen a list of ingredients for hamburger meat?" God said. "I'm half rotted already. Believe me, when I made Art that hamburger out of dust, he was getting a treat. Most hamburger joints use stuff that's a lot worse than dust. Give me cottage cheese and a nice fruit salad anytime."

"It *was* a pretty good hamburger," Art said.

"But let's not worry about Me," God said. "It doesn't take me too long to get a good glimpse of what's happening."

"Listen," Jeff said. "Is it true—"

"Enough," the cheeseburger said sternly. "I've got to get moving; I'm on my lunch break. One of the things I wanted to tell you folks is that you really should start to do a little praying. Nothing fancy, no specific requests. Just a few *we thank thee, O Lords,* or a couple *blessed be thy names* every now and then."

"Will you answer our prayers?" Art asked.

"Of course not. But everyone likes to know that they're wanted. We all need our ego's bolstered once in a while. I mean, that's the reason you have pets in the first place, for companionship. How would you feel if your family dog ignored your existence completely. Come on, now, repeat after me, our father, who art in heaven . . ."

Jeff picked up the cheeseburger and took it into the kitchen. "Hey, what are you doing?" the cheeseburger demanded? "Put me down, you wimp. What's the matter with you?"

Jeff ran the water in the sink and turned on the garbage disposal. With one quick motion, he stuffed the cheeseburger into the disposal. There was a grinding sound and the sandwich was shredded.

A small voice said, faintly, "Ungrateful wretches!"

Jeff turned off the disposal, stopped running the water. He strode back into the living room. Art was hunched over in his chair once again, mumbling to a candy bar.

"What now?" Jeff said. "Is He back already?"

"No," Art said, "It's not God. It's this Baby Ruth I bought on the way home. It speaks with kind of an accent so I can't be sure what it's saying."

"Who is it this time?"

"I'm not sure," Art said, "but I think it's supposed to be Buddha."

SPECIMEN

by Gary D. Douglass

Arn skillfully manipulated the controls of the scanner-console with his third and fifth arms. For seventeen long hours Arn had been searching this small planet to find a specimen. His problem was not merely finding a human (for certainly this planet was swarming with them), but in finding a human in a violently emotional state. Arn had discovered some time ago that his teleporter would deliver onboard his star-vessel only those humans who were emotionally stimulated. Now it seemed that his luck had changed as Arn located an entire group of emotionally excited humans.

Arn selected one set of human readings and proceeded to teleport that being aboard his space craft.

He remembered with a shudder the time he had teleported a giant vegetable from Targonia aboard. The huge plant had attacked Arn and nearly succeeded in making a meal of him. Since that time Arn always took great care that the specimens he teleported aboard were not vegetables.

A dim outline began forming in the teleport chamber. Just a few moments and he would have a human for his collection! With a human, he would have the finest collection in all . . . !

Arn slapped two claw-like hands to his chest in horror! With another two he covered his eye, and with the last pair he clutched at his side where the primary muscle of his cardio-vascular system was located!

How could he possibly have teleported a terror like this aboard? The readings had been those of a human!

Puzzled and frightened, Arn's small body went limp.

"So, will you take door number one, door number two, or door number three?" Monty Hall, emcee of the television show "Let's Make a Deal," was asking. "Hey!" he looked about in surprise, "What happened to the guy in the carrot suit?" ○

SCREEN GAME, *from page 9*

I went to the film not expecting to enjoy the humor. But I found myself laughing like an idiot at scenes such as the phallic rocketship passing through the moronosphere—a meteoric hail of vitamin pills, Lipton teabags, and Lucky Strike packs; at lines like the Dr. Zarkov-equivalent stepping out into the atmosphere of the planet Porno (the Mongo-analog), breathing deeply, and saying, "Good, there's oxygen on this planet"; or a giant malevolent rubber creature complaining as it's called upon to annihilate Flesh and Dale, "A monster's work is never done."

I must note in passing that, for a shoestring production, the special effects are fantastic. *Everything* is not calculatedly designed to look like shoddy 1939 serial work. The animated sequence of swordplay between Flesh and a metal insect-creature, and the final scene with the monster whose work is never done are excellent—on a par with the work of Ray Harryhausen.

The plot? About as complicated as you'd expect a Saturday afternoon serial to possess. A mysterious sex ray from the planet Porno is wreaking havoc on Earth. After parachuting from a Ford Trimotor (don't worry about the transition there), Flesh Gordon and Dale Ardor accompany the Good Doctor in his stratoship to Porno in an effort to destroy the ray. There are crashes, battles, swordplay, evil machinations by Emperor Wang the Unspeakable, rescue by Prince Precious of the Forest Kingdom and his band of merry men, rapist robots, loathsome monsters of all description.

Amazingly, everything plays well.

True, there are plenty of times when the acting falls unspeakably below even the bounds of parody; and there are bits and lines and even whole scenes that don't work even as camp comedy. But the gems ultimately make up for all the gravel.

No, Saturday afternoons at the Bijou were never quite like this; but they should have been.

UP THE TUBE

Contemporary network television lurches along. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* (ABC) has been rescued from an early grave (as has, apparently, at least one character in each episode) and refurbished to add a more comedic tone. It works, I think, and maybe the series will survive. But the true saving grace is still Darren McGavin as Kolchak, that ace wire service investigator of the supernatural. McGavin can breathe more life into cliches than can any other current TV actor who comes to mind.

Currently in Release and Recommended:

DARK STAR
A BOY AND HIS DOG
THE LAST DAYS OF MAN ON EARTH
THE STEPFORD WIVES
FLESH GORDON
YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN ○

THE MIND SPLITTERS, from page 1

was telling the truth when it said that no lights had been flashed.

The next test, once it had been determined that the right side of the brain actually *was* a brain, was to test the two sides for emotional reactions. Again using the split screen to show something to only one eye at a time, a series of pictures was flashed to the right eye (left side of the brain), including, in the center of a series of mundane articles, a photo of a nude woman. When the photo was flashed the subject laughed, and when asked what was so funny, commented on the out-of-place photo of a nude woman.

When the same test was run, only flashing the pictures in front of the left eye (right side of the brain), the subject again laughed. But when asked what was so funny, the subject commented on the "funniness of the machine." The right side of the brain saw the nude, saw the same humor that the left side had seen, but again could not put the reaction into words.

Another test, this one to determine whether or not the right, mute, side of the brain had any language abilities, involved putting some blocks with raised letters under a screen, where they could be touched only by the left hand. The letters used in each test would spell only one word (examples: cup, love, pie), and the subject was simply told to spell a word. The subject was able to sort out the letters to spell the word, but when asked, was unable to *say* what word he had just spelled.

More tests were run in the same area in an attempt to gauge the intelligence of the mute, right side of the brain. It was found that, almost without fail, subjects shown a picture of an object (through the left eye to the right side of the brain), were able to feel around under a screen with their left hand and find matching objects. Indeed, even associated but not-matched objects could be found. When shown a picture of a cigarette and told to pick the most closely associated thing, the subjects were able to pick out ashtrays. But even when holding the object, such as the ashtray, in their left hands, the subjects were unable to say what they were holding. Again, the left side of the brain, which controls speech, hadn't the slightest idea what the left hand was doing, and the right side of the brain, which knew quite well what it's hand was holding, had no speech center control.

Other tests in the language area showed that when a word was flashed on a screen to the right side of the brain, the subject was able to sort through a pile of dissimilar objects to find the thing matching the word. And when the subject held an object with his left hand, he was later able to use his left hand to point to a card with the name of that object written on it, situated among many other cards with other names.

A test which was designed to be answered by a simple yes or no showed that while the right half of the brain could not speak, it could influence the answers given by the left half of the brain. Two lights were set up, red and green. When showed to the right eye, the left half of the brain was able to answer the question, "was the light red?" correctly each time. When the lights were shown to the left eye, though, the randomness of the answers showed that in each case the left side of the brain was simply guessing whether it had been a red light or a green light. For a while. Before long though, the answers started becoming steadily more and more correct, until eventually the left side of the brain was consistently identifying the correct color being seen by the left eye.

Initially it was thought that some sort of pathway had been formed to let the right half of the brain notify the speech center in the left half what color light was on. But further testing showed that the right half had simply found a way to *cheat*. A light would be flashed to the right side of the brain, and the left half would be asked if the light was red. The left half would say yes, and if it was, that was all there was to it. A correct answer. But if the light was green, the left half would say yes, and the right half, unable to speak, would frown and shake the head, whereupon the left half would realize the true color and say "Oh, no, I meant it *isn't* red." The two halves of the brain were acting as *separate* intelligences, with one side cueing the other on answers!

After all the tests were run, the researchers were sure they were dealing with two completely separated minds, each capable of functioning as a total mind with the exception of the noted speech skills. In effect, one side of the brain was a complete, "normal," mind, primarily oriented towards symbol identification (speech, writing, etc.), while the other side of the brain, again a complete mind, was oriented towards "artistic" or visual/tactile identification. And neither of these minds is significantly less able than the total mind. Tests showed that a split-brain subject was able to deal with twice as much information in a given time as a non-split subject, and that a split-brain person is able to carry out two tasks as fast as a normal person can do one.

All the available evidence indicates that it is entirely possible for two *complete* persons, two totally independent minds, to occupy the same skull. That a person who had undergone the grain separation operation at an early enough age might, literally, be able to look at both sides of a given problem, simply because there would be *two* of him to look at that problem. Two people with totally different orientations.

There has been speculation that personality traits are developed through influence by separate brain halves. A person with a dominant left half might be a practical, logical, pragmatic person. A person with a dominant right half would be an artist, a dreamer, an idealist. Most people, with their brains firmly connected, are a bit of both. Imagine, though, the mind split in infancy, so *both* personalities could grow to maturity. Next imagine a youth trained to integrate those two personalities living inside his head—what an outlook on life he would have. That was the basis of Silverberg's *In The House Of Double Minds,* and the possibilities for future speculation are almost endless. ○

ANNOUNCING VERTEX-2 COLLECTOR'S BOUND VOLUME OF VERTEX

TRULY AN HISTORIC EDITION

- **The complete second year of Vertex, plus one extra issue! This extra issue is the last bi-monthly Vertex in its original size format. Starting with volume 3, issue 2, Vertex became a monthly in its new, larger tabloid size format.**
- **The art, fiction and features in VERTEX-2 contains more award-winning material in science fiction than any other periodical through this publishing period. And all is now magnificently bound into a hard cover library volume, the complete content of the original issues.**

VERTEX-2
Complete 1974 year of Vertex, volume 2, numbers 1 through 6, plus February 1975 issue, volume 3, number 1.

☐ **LIMITED COLLECTOR'S EDITION $16.95**
Edition limited to 1,000 numbered copies. Gold foil edge paper and imprint, black cloth binding.

☐ **EDUCATOR & LIBRARY EDITION $12.95**
Standard silver imprint, black cloth binding.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING YOUR ORDER OF VERTEX-2 AND VERTEX-1
Both editions will be shipped on a priority basis to orders received with payment. Purchasers of VERTEX-1 have been given first priority to permit them to obtain a matched set of the numbered Collector's Edition. These numbers have been registered and should be indicated on your order form. After these orders have been accounted for, orders will be accepted until the entire edition is sold. A few copies of VERTEX-1 are still available, so you will note an opportunity to order both on the order form. However, VERTEX-2 is restricted to a more limited edition than was VERTEX-1 and we expect this volume (along with the remaining copies of VERTEX-1) to be oversubscribed. We urge your early response.

PRIORITY RUSH ORDER FORM

MAIL TO: **VERTEX MAGAZINE**
8060 Melrose Avenue
Los Angeles, Calif. 90046

Dear Sirs:
I wish to order VERTEX-2 only. Please send the following.

☐ **VERTEX-2: COLLECTOR'S EDITION $16.95**

Note: If you have already purchased collector's edition of VERTEX-1, please print limited edition number here so we can send you matched set.
Limited Edition Number VERTEX-1: _____

☐ VERTEX-2:
EDUCATOR & LIBRARY EDITION ... $12.95

I do not have VERTEX-1 and wish to purchase both volumes. Please send the following.

☐ VERTEX-1 & VERTEX-2:
COLLECTOR'S EDITION $33.90

☐ VERTEX-1 & VERTEX-2:
LIBRARY & EDUCATOR'S EDITION .. $25.90

Enclosed is $ _____ ☐ check, ☐ currency, ☐ money order, payment in full for above order. California residents please add 6% tax. Overseas orders, $1.00 additional per volume for postage.

Name _____

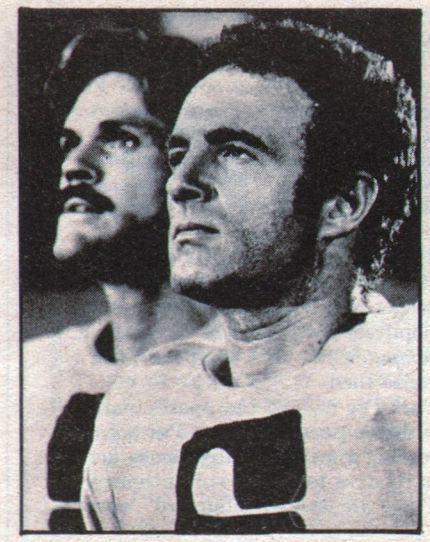
Address _____

City & _____

State _____ Zip _____

FILM PREVIEW

ROLLERBALL



James Caan stars as Jonathan E., top player on the Houston Rollerball team. Rollerball (below) combines the rollerderby and motorcycle racing, with no holds barred, and death just part of the game.

Next month (June), a new science fiction film will be opening in theaters all around the country. A film which blends S-F, an increasingly popular genre for the filmmakers, and sports, which will always sell tickets. The film is Norman Jewison's production of **Rollerball.**

The action takes place in the year 2018, in a world which has come under the control of the major corporate conglomerates. Not a popular idea today, but the film presents a world where hunger, pollution and overpopulation have been virtually eliminated, along with militant nationalism, crime and political corruption.

Rollerball takes its title from the most popular sport of 2018. A sport watched by audiences between 2 and 3 billion via Multi-Vision. Each major city has a rollerball team, playing under the colors of the conglomerate with which the city is allied.

Houston is the energy capitol of the world, and is also the home city of the world champion rollerball team. And the star of the team is Jonathan E., played by one of the hottest actors in films today — James Caan.

Jonathan is a bit too much of a star, though. He's becoming a bit too popular with the masses, and the powers that be ask him to retire. Out of loyalty to his team, Jonathan refuses, and the big-shots start making some rules changes in the playoffs, which are pretty much guaranteed to retire Jonathan — permanently!

The short story written by William Harrison which formed the basis for the movie never really described the game, so Rollerball, in effect, had to be invented for the screen. Harrison, who wrote the screenplay, collaborated with Jewison and four-time Academy Award winner John Box to create the game.

Rollerball is played on a circular indoor track some ⅜ mile in diameter by two ten man teams, each consisting of three men on motorcycles, five skaters and two skating catchers who wear heavily padded mitts.

The game begins with a compressed air cannon firing a steel ball about the size and weight of a shot-put around the perimeter of the track. As the ball loses momentum, much like a roulette ball circling a wheel, the catchers try to field it. The catcher who has caught the ball passes it to one of the team's forward skaters, who in turn grabs on to the pull-bar on the rear of one of his team's motorcycles. The rest of his team goes on defense, preventing the opposing team from interfering with the ball carrier. The man with the ball has to go around the track until he reaches his goal, then make **another** complete circuit of the track, then throw the ball into his goal, located high on the rim of the track. At the same time the defensive team is using **any** means short of guns to stop him. Smashes from steel-studded gloves, body blocks, kicks, judo, kung fu — all are allowed. If the man on attack misses his goal or drops the ball, the cannon fires another one out, and another free-for-all starts, during which deaths are considered "the breaks of the game."

The film centers around the three final games of the championship playoffs. The quarter-final game between Houston and Madrid was a normal contest won by Houston, played in regulation quarters of 20 minutes each and with substitutions allowed for injured players. The semi-final game, between Houston and Tokyo, was a bit rougher, since the rules were changed to outlaw substitutions. Even though they were physically punished almost beyond endurance, Houston won behind Jonathan's inspired playing, and went on to meet New York in the final. Again the rules were changed, with no quarters, just one long game, and no substitutions allowed.

Norman Jewison, asked during filming if he felt rollerball could actually become a sport, cryptically answered, "God, I hope not. Of course, all of the ingredients of an exciting sport are present in any high-speed game with two teams, a ball and a goal to put it in. But I would hate to see rollerball played, even with rigid rules governing fouls and body contact. It wasn't meant to be anything more than an illustration of the theme of our screenplay. I can't see any way it could avoid becoming the most vicious and brutal game ever played."

Imperial Rome, which quite naturally comes to mind, had its games, its Christians and Lions. Will our world, thirty years from now, have Rollerball? You'll probably answer yes, now. See this film, then ask yourself that question again. ○

TERRY CARR

from page 9

atom bomb stories, the after-the-bomb stories, because they were new, but they were maybe 5% of the field.

Most science fiction *used* to take place on other planets. It was mostly "space" stories, in fact, that's what I thought science fiction was then—adventures on other planets. But that's no longer happening. I think that's a pity, because I think it loses a lot of the color of science fiction, the unexpectedness, the excitement you find in space. You are not going to get very imaginative about the next thirty years on Earth.

Vertex I don't know about that. Go back thirty years in our own future and look ahead.

Carr I know, but how many people came close? Go back to the late Forties and early Fifties and read those stories, set mainly in 1975 and tell what happened after the atomic war or whatever. See how imaginative they seem to you these days. They all fall short, way short.

Vertex I just read a 1942 Lester del Rey story in which he kept calling this gadget by various names, such as "analyser", when it was obviously a *computer,* but that word wasn't in vogue then.

Carr I've noticed that, particularly with computers, because I've been reading a lot of Forties science fiction in relation to a different anthology. There are usually "standard" words used in science fiction that are commonly used: hyper-space, flyer, slidewalk, lander. And there used to be a word for computer. Calculator, I think, or "brain" or cybernetic brain. Where do you see "cybernetic" anymore? Very big word in the 1950's.

Vertex Okay, what's your working day like?

Carr My working day is in two parts. I write in the morning. I write until I reach three pages or until I can't write any more, which is usually the same. I've found that if I write four or five pages in a day, the next day I write one or two and I'm finished. I steal from the next day. This usually takes me until about twelve-thirty or one. I knock off and have lunch and I spend the afternoon reading manuscripts or magazines. I'm a writer in the morning and an editor in the afternoon. Sometimes at night, too. Alex Panshin once wrote that every winter Terry Carr vanishes into his bedroom with a suitcase full of peanut butter sandwiches and all the science fiction magazines published during the year and is not seen again until he is finished reading them.

Actually, I read as many as I can during the year when they come out, whichever captures my interest. I'll read a Zelazny or Bester or a new Silverberg. A few like that I'll read immediately. I make notes. I have a card file. Whenever I read a story that I think is worth anthologizing, whether or not I think it is going into the *Best of the Year,* I'll make up a file card. I'll list all the pertinent facts and a short synopsis of the plot. At the end of the year I go through and pick out the best 100,000 words to make *The Best Science Fiction of the Year.*

The other stories that aren't picked will go into the Honorable Mentions at the back of the book. Then they go into my standing, basic card file for future anthologies. I learned this at the Hydra Club in New York, years ago. That was a club for professional science fiction writers. I went there once with Ted White, who talked with Groff Conklin, and afterward Ted said, "My God, that's terrible! Do you realize what he *does?* How he edits his anthologies? He reads everything and makes *cards* on anything he thinks he can anthologize. Then when he gets a contract for an anthology he just goes through his card file and he picks out some stories he thinks will make a good book! What a *mechanical* way to do it!" Mechanical, hell! What a sensible way to do it! How else are you going to do it? Rely on your memory? No way.

Vertex How do you feel about science fiction art?

Carr It's beginning to come into its own. Some interesting things are happening. There is a new magazine in England, called *Science Fiction Monthly.* It's tabloid size. It's about 75% artwork in full-color, blowups of cover paintings from British paperback science fiction. Those are *nice* paintings. There are a lot of good artists there. Their circulation just *zoomed!* They have incredible circulation on that thing! They publish a certain amount of fiction, some of which is bearable. It's what *Planet Stories* used to be for people just getting into science fiction, coming from comic books or movies. Mostly from movies and television these days. These are people still oriented towards the visual aspects of science fiction rather than the printed word. It has a huge appeal.

Vertex The *National Inquirer* of science fiction?

Carr I've thought of it as that, as a matter of fact. It's going very well there and I'm sure a large amount of the appeal of *Vertex* lies in the fact that it has more art work and better art work than any other science fiction magazine currently published, or ever published. It's an astonishingly good looking magazine, through use of color and imaginative layouts, with a lot of space on a page so it can be done. This hasn't happened in science fiction until now and I think it will happen more in the future because science fiction *is* getting more popular. Through *Star Trek* and all the other things on television, through movies. There are a lot of fans who don't *read.* This hasn't been true in the past, except perhaps for comic-book fans and they didn't count because they were too young to buy science fiction magazines. But today there are a lot of science fiction fans in their teens and twenties who go see *2001* twice a year. Less people are reading . . . or *can* read . . . so more people are turning towards the *visual* medium. We've become a society which watches a lot of television . . . with the sound *off!* People are coming into science fiction from that direction these days. I think to appeal to these "converts" you will first need the *covers,* then interior illustrations.

Vertex If tomorrow some far-sighted publisher said, "Here, I want you to create a science fiction magazine of an excellence beyond belief, but within a realistic budget," what sort of magazine would you publish?

Carr I'd publish a magazine that relied a lot on visual writing, the kind of thing Roger Zelazny does so well. Zelazny was *immediately* popular as soon as he began to write. His words *sparkle* on the page, there is more color in his prose as almost anybody else's writing. Most of the other writers who have been popular in the last ten or fifteen years are people like Sam Delaney, whose prose sparkles . . . Cordwainer Smith . . . you can *see* those sailing ships between the stars that he writes about. And a number of other writers. That's what bothers me, when I was talking earlier about so many stories being set on Earth in the next thirty years or so, the pictures that I see when I read them aren't very interesting.

Vertex No "sense of wonder"?

Carr Not only that, no color. If I imagine a movie being made from these stories the colors aren't interesting, the shapes aren't interesting. I think that's something that is gradually fading out of science fiction. I think the readers notice it and I certainly know the *artists* have noticed it. I've talked to people like Jack Gaughan and Kelly Freas who say that so many of the stories that they get to illustrate there is nothing there to *draw.* That's going to happen anyway in a lot of stories, but when it becomes the *norm* then it's a problem.

Vertex So in editing this hypothetical magazine you would search out those writers whose prose sparkles and get their work or encourage them or trap them. Then what?

Carr Then I'd buy their stories, get presumably the right artists to illustrate, and publish them. It's easy enough to read a story and imagine whose art work you'd see illustrating it. It's important who you have available, who is free, and so on, and do you have time to get so-and-so to illustrate it. In addition, I think I would be encouraging people to think more about what they write, in terms of where are they writing it. Rather than just, "Here is a story of something that happened to some people in the future." That seemed to him like a plot, it followed some plot skeleton that he's figured out. But the heart of fiction isn't the plot skeleton, it's what it does to you. It's an *experience,* particularly in short stories which is basically what we are talking about

vertex
BACK ISSUES
LIMITED ONE EACH PER ORDER DUE TO SCARCE SUPPLY

A limited number of back issues of Vertex have been retained for collectors who wish to establish a complete sequence of Vertex. These copies are now being made available on a first-come-first-served basis. We request that you limit your order to no more than one copy of each issue to allow as many as possible to take advantage of this offer. Thank you.

We've had the SUPERSTARS! Poul Anderson / Piers Anthony / Richard Ashby / Dr. Gregory Benford / Ray Bradbury / John Brunner / Ed Bryant / F.M. Busby / Terry Carr / Philip K. Dick / Scott Edelstein / Larry Eisenberg / Harlan Ellison / Roberto Fuentes / Stephen Goldin / James Gunn / Harry Harrison / Robert Heinlein / Frank Herbert / Walt Liebscher / George R. R. Martin / Larry Niven / Rachel Cosgrove Payes / Dr. Jerry Pournelle / William Rotsler / Joanna Russ / Neil Shapiro / Robert Silverberg / Norman Spinrad / James Sutherland / A. E. Van Vogt / and Ted White

VERTEX ORDER DEPARTMENT • 8060 MELROSE AVE., LOS ANGELES, CAL. 90046

Enclosed is $_____ payment in full for the following issues of VERTEX magazine @ $2.00 each. Please send my order at once.

☐ VOL. 1, NO. 1 ☐ VOL. 1, NO. 2 ☐ VOL. 1, NO. 3 ☐ VOL. 1, NO. 4
☐ VOL. 1, NO. 5 ☐ VOL. 1, NO. 6 ☐ VOL. 2, NO. 1 ☐ VOL. 2, NO. 2

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

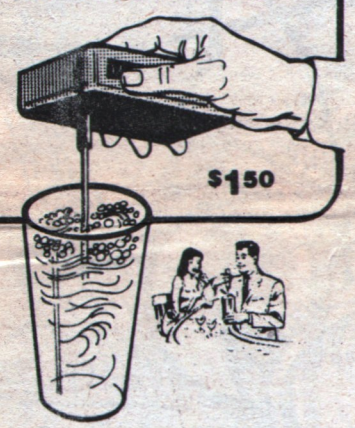
EDITORIAL STAFF
Editor: Donald J. Pfeil
Art Director: Andrew Furr
Advertising Director:
Elizabeth Wold

ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES
Mitchell Napier & Associates
342 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10017
(212) 986-0625

VERTEX MAGAZINE, Volume 3, Number 3, July 1975 Issue. Published monthly by Mankind Publishing Company. Business offices: 8060 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, Calif. 90046. Nothing may be reprinted in whole or in part without written permission of the publisher. Printed in the U.S.A. VERTEX welcomes contributions but can assume no responsibility for such unsolicited material. Return postage should accompany all manuscripts, drawings and photographs submitted if they are to be returned and no responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. All rights in letters, articles, personal reports and fiction are treated as unconditionally assigned (unless otherwise specified) for publication and copyright purposes and as subject to our unrestricted right to edit and comment editorially. Any resemblance between people and places depicted in fictional material and actual people or places is strictly coincidental. Price per copy $1.00. Subscriptions in the United States and possessions, $8.00 for 1 year (12 issues), $14.00 for 2 years (24 issues), $24.00 for 4 years (48 issues). Add $1.00 per year for Canada and $2.00 per year foreign. Second class postage paid at Los Angeles, California and additional mailing offices. Title registered U.S. Patent Office.

CORDLESS-ELECTRIC BATTERY
COCKTAIL MIXER

Create a real "stir" among your friends at your next party with this battery-powered cocktail mixer. Press the button—presto! Your drink mixed in an instant. Ideal for milk shakes, gravies, soups, etc. Any standard "C" type battery provides full power for months of party use. A great gift! Send $1.50 for this ingenious and useful bar accessory to: **NATIONAL SHOPPER, Box 69804, Los Angeles, CA 90069.**



FREE
HISTORY OF THE ACADEMY AWARDS

40 years of great nostalgia in 191 pages complete with a visual feast of hundreds of rare photos, plots, biographies, best picture, best actor, actress, supporting players, directors, writers, fashion, art, music, short subjects, etc. Enjoy a visual and historic trip into Hollywood's golden era. A collector's gem from camp sex symbols, heroic plots, to rare genius. Includes an introduction by "Mr. Academy Awards", Bob Hope . . . an Award Publications special and yours **Free!** as a special 'thank you' to the loyal readers of this magazine.

AWARD PUBLICATIONS
P.O. Box 69690, Los Angeles, California 90069

Dear Sirs:
Enclosed is $1 to help cover the cost of shipping and handling. Please send me Hollywood and the Academy Awards — a true collector's item — as a free gift.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE ZIP

here. The plot for a short story is like the title of Joseph Heller's latest book, *Something Happened.* Or to be more precise; *one* thing happened. If you try for more than one thing in a short story you are usually in trouble, unless you are really good.

Beyond that, it shouldn't be just "something happened" but something *interesting* happened. The thing the author has to know and the editor and reader have to recognize is "Why is it interesting?" *Is* it interesting, *why* is it interesting, has the author gotten out of it all that is to be had? You have an idea and you write a story, creating a world and some characters who, inter-relating, are going to illustrate that idea. That, I think, is how a short story works.

There are more young writers getting into science fiction in the Seventies than ever before, so a lot of people with superficial skills are getting into print. They can create a scene and move a plot from scene to scene but they don't necessarily understand what they are doing. They are not, in my terms, mature writers. I'd like to encourage writers, and I would with a magazine, working with them over a long period of time. And I hope I could get people to think about *why* they are writing a story, and why I should read it, why anyone should read it, or pay *money* to read it. They'll pay money to enjoy it, but why are they going to enjoy it. It's easy to say, "All fiction must be entertaining." That's obvious—except to a few critics and the academics. Okay, but *why* is it entertaining? Because it makes you think. Okay, but does it make you think about things you've already thought? This is what you mean when you reject a story and say, "It's an old story." People have already gone through thinking about that, already gone through those experiences vicariously. They need something else going on these days.

I don't want to give the idea that what I'm talking about is that stories must be relevent to our current lives or any of that literary cant. That isn't what I'm talking about when I say there should be a reason to write a story or a reason for people to read it. The reason should be *entertainment.* The reason for the entertainment is because it makes people think. Now *why* should they read it in science fiction rather than somewhere else? I think stories that are published in science fiction magazines have to go to the heart of the field rather than fiddling around at the fringes, which I think a lot of science fiction has been doing.

The basic appeal of science fiction is thinking new things and experiencing new things. The basic idea of science fiction is something really quite new in the world. A lot of people don't realize it, but until the late 19th Century, until about the time of the Industrial Revolution, 99% of the people in the world were firmly convinced that tomorrow was going to be the same as today. They didn't really have any concept of *change* ongoing.

But with the technological revolution, the Industrial Revolution, it became quite clear that science was just turning the entire world upside down and just changing *everything!* A lot of people were sold on the idea we were approaching Utopia. But on the other hand there were a lot of doom criers, who said that science was going to ruin everything. But at least they got the idea that things were happening in the world, that the world was not going to be the same in the future. Some, at least, started to get curious about how it was going to be. Some of the reputable—but less imaginative—scientists in the 1880's thought that "Everything to be known is known and it only remains to work out the decimal points." Which, of course, turned out to be one of the most monumentally stupid things ever said. When that became evident to people, that their lives *were* being changed, then they began to wonder about the future. Significantly, I think, that was the time of Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, Edgar Rice Burroughs, H. Rider Haggard and all the people who began to write imaginatively and became popular doing it. And science fiction was born as a coherent art form.

I think today it is beginning to lose coherence. You see a lot of articles in critical magazines saying, "Science fiction seems to be in a *phase,* but we don't know what the phase is. It's just changing. It's fragmenting. We can't seem to get a picture of where the focus is going to be five years from now." I think it's true that science fiction is fragmenting because a lot of people are coming into the field who are new to the field. There are more minds associated with science fiction and they all have their own ideas of what science fiction is. People are coming in, through movies and television, or through *Rolling Stone,* through rock music sometimes, and these young people *have* gotten the idea that science fiction is the most interesting and the most vital fiction form today. But going on from that, they seem to have the idea that science fiction is the *only* fiction form today, that anything you are going to say you can say and should say with science fiction. That, I think, is wrong. That's the reaction of somebody with myopic mental horizons who just doesn't realize there is such a thing as mainstream short stories that don't take place in the future and which will tell you about the human condition today and will tell you about current ecological crises. You don't *need* to set it ten years in the future to tell us we are going to have trouble with beercans littering the highways, or that whales are going to die out. That doesn't have to be told in science fiction.

So the basic question science fiction writers should be asking themselves when they sit down at a typewriter is, "Why am I writing this story?" And its corollary, "Why am I writing it as science fiction?"

When you get to that point you *usually* get right to the center of the idea. Either that or you discover you don't have one. It might be nice that people discovered *before* they wrote the story that they didn't have one.

Vertex From the standpoint of the reader who goes down to the newsstand and plunks down his money, what would this hypothetical magazine have that might be particularly appealing? Beside the entertainment, is it going to teach him anything? What is going to make it different than any other science fiction magazine?

Carr I think the most important thing an editor has, besides his taste, is his vision, which is very tightly tied up with his taste. You could call it the shape of his taste. It's what his ideas are about what fiction is, particularly what *science fiction* is. There have been a number of science fiction magazines and anthologies published where you couldn't tell who the editor was. Almost invariably those things have failed. Whereas there have been a number of magazines where you could *always* tell who the editor was. John Campbell is the Number One example of anything in science fiction to do with editing. He went through many phases in a brilliant career, but in the Fifties, for instance, in his psionics period, it looked as though he was casting around for new things to think. He published a lot of really *bad* fiction, but you could always tell it was Campbell fiction and it continued to sell, because people knew what was there. It was almost a matter of labeling your product.

Vertex Well, what do you think will happen to science fiction?

Carr I think it will continue to grow, to get more new readers into the field. I think it will fragment a lot simply because they have new ideas about what they want. Unless something like a depression comes along that really kills science fiction publishing.

Vertex Do you *like* science fiction?

Carr I *love* science fiction! I *dis*like most science fiction stories, but I love science fiction. I love the ideas of science fiction. I love what science fiction, when it's good, *does.* ○

BACKGAMMON
HOW TO PLAY AND WIN

A GREAT GAME AND A GREAT BOOK FOR BEGINNER EXPERT ALIKE!

Whether you want to play for fun or money or both, this guide will teach all you want to know about backgammon — the most action-packed, exciting and challenging game of skill and chance ever devised.

The game dates back at least 5,000 years and was truly the sport of kings. One emperor wrote a book about it; another is said to have played the game at $15,000 per point. Today, with a resurgence of interest in the game on an international scale, backgammon is being played for fun in living rooms and for money in plush casinos across the globe. And this book will allow you to compete with the best players — and win!

Includes: Nearly 100 easy-to-follow diagrams • rules for playing • back and running game analysis • dice lore, numbers & probabilities • diagram of a complete game, from opening move and reply to end game • tournament play • glossary.

BH438
$1.50

HOLLOWAY HOUSE PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 69804
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90069

Gentlemen: I enclose $_____ ☐ cash, ☐ check, ☐ money order, payment in full for books ordered. I understand that if I am not completely satisfied, I may return my order within 10 days for a complete refund. (Add 25c per order to cover postage and handling. California residents add 6% tax. Please allow three weeks for delivery.)

☐ **BH438, BACKGAMMON, $1.50**

Name_____
Address_____
City_____
State_____ Zip_____

On sale now at your bookseller or send order above

HOLES

fiction/ **ALBERT C. ELLIS** *artist*/ **MONTE ROGERS**

He had his duty, and he also had a desire to remain sane. Which was fine, until the two came into conflict.

Edward Bronson stood on the bank of a too perfect stream. He allowed the pine-scented breeze to caress his tanned and naked body, permitted it to play gently through his long black hair. His arm slipped around Gwen's waist and she stepped closer. Her nude side pressed lightly against his, sending a flush of pleasure coursing through him.

Paradise was beautiful.

The air was clean and clear. Its crystal purity made everything stand out sharp, separate. The edges of leaves and individual blades of grass, even the soft curves of the distant mountains were defined with unbelievable clarity. Each element of the scene before Bronson was totally of itself. Together they formed a landscape of graceful symmetry.

The colors were calm yet vigorous: the azure sky, the brown earth, the green forest, the violet mountains. No color was harsh. Nothing drew attention because of its color or hue. Yet every element in the scene commanded attention.

Bronson gazed into the stream, watching several large trout swim lazily against the current. The world was fresh and clean around him. It filled him with a mysterious emotion, a primeval love. It felt good.

Gwen led Bronson to the large oak in the center of the clearing. A crude bow and quiver of arrows leaned against the trunk beside a primitive fishing pole. Nearby a fire-pit smoldered, its thin tongue of smoke licking at the sky.

Bronson stretched out in the grass, pulled Gwen down, kissed her. Her small breasts pressed lightly against his chest, their nipples hard and erect with anticipation.

He placed his lips to her ear, breathed in the mild but intoxicating woman-smell of her. "I love you," he whispered.

"And I love you." Gwen raised herself slightly, flipped brown hair out of her eyes with a toss of her head. She ran her fingers through the coarse hair on Bronson's chest, tracing invisible patterns.

I wonder how long we will have this time, Bronson thought. *Not long enough. Never long enough.*

Bronson knew this was paradise only because it was his concept of what paradise should be. It was what he wanted. It could just as easily have been a crowded metropolis or a luxury-filled palace. Bronson did not want those things.

One thing that could never change, as long as this was *his* paradise, was Gwen. For someone else, Gwen would not exist. She would be different for each individual in Bronson's place. He was sure in some instances she would not even be female. But there would always be someone like her—someone to insure the caretaker made the checks.

Bronson programmed Gwen from minute to minute with his every action, word and thought. If he wanted a hunting companion she became a skilled tracker and expert marksman. If he felt dominant she was meek and pliable. If he wished to make love, as he did now, she was eager and versatile.

But always she was Gwen. That—more than anything else—was what Bronson wanted, what he needed.

An insistent buzzing filled his head. He looked up into Gwen's eyes, imagined hurt and disappointment in their blue depths.

"Damn! There it is. I won't answer it this time." He clutched her tighter to him.

"You must," Gwen said over the buzz. Her voice pleaded softly. "You know you must."

"Yes, I know. The training. But what would happen if I didn't go?"

"Maybe nothing, but you can't take that chance. I won't let you."

Gwen pulled away as the buzzing suddenly became louder. Fear widened her eyes, tightened her face muscles. Her lower lip began to quiver and she bit it hard.

"Yes," Bronson said, "I'm coming." He sat up and shook his head forcefully.

A sudden puff of antiseptic air assaulted Bronson, fogging his mind. The rich earth-smells were gone. In their place were artificial chemical scents. He was strapped securely into a contoured chair, facing a computer console. With a violent thrust of his hand he slapped the alarm off. Then he sat and watched the flashing lights, the changing numbers, trying to clear his head.

The light pressure of clothing made him uneasy and his thoughts drifted to Gwen—his Gwen, his wife—so many years ago. Quiet nights on the beach making love on the sand beneath the stars, making plans to journey together to those same stars.

They volunteered for the colonization program.

Then pain. Gwen in the hospital, dying slowly from the inside of a hyatidiform mole, a tumor of the placenta. To Bronson she was being devoured by a child who would never be born. And her last constricted words: "Please, remember me as I was, strong and healthy."

Bronson pushed the thought from his mind and unstrapped himself with shaking hands. He removed the feeder tube from the plastic vein shunt at his wrist—a tube that not only supplied nutrients to his body, but also special chemicals to prevent tissue atrophy during his periods

The computer had built him a dream world to maintain his sanity on the long, lonely voyage. A world where his every wish came true, until he began to wish for too much.

in paradise. He ran a hand down his pain-lined face. The checks always hurt. They tore him away from Gwen in paradise, brought memories of the real Gwen he could not face.

But he knew the checks had to be made.

He got up unsteadily, walked to the basin on the far side of the cabin, splashed cold water over his face. He tried to will himself to want to make the checks, but he could not. He dreaded them.

Leaving the cabin, Bronson stumbled down the short corridor toward the vault. He thought again of Gwen as he worked the hatch open. Her long slender form, her clear blue eyes. The clean earthy smell of her always waiting when he returned, but always insisting he go—making him face a reality that continually tore at him from inside his skull.

A chill sliced through Bronson's light clothing as he swung the heavy hatch back and entered the vault. Goosebumps rose on his skin. But the chill was more than a purely physical sensation. This place was a tomb.

Row upon row of steel coffins stood on end in their racks, each labeled with the name of its frozen occupant, each studded with dials and gauges. Three hundred twenty in all. Near the top of every coffin was a small glass window. Faces peered out in blank stares.

The faces were grotesque nightmares—too white and immobile, lacking emotion. They reminded Bronson of Gwen's face, in the hospital on Earth, blank with drugs ineffective against the pain. They brought back the unwanted memories. Again Gwen whispered her choked plea.

These colonists could not talk. They were incapable of caring. Every molecule of water in their bodies was gone, replaced with a liquid fluorocarbon. They were cold, frozen—4.2 degrees above absolute zero—xenon hydrate protecting against freezing damage.

For Bronson, they were dead.

Sometimes he imagined himself as Charon, eternally ferrying the dead across the black river Cocytus. His situation was similar. More often he cast himself in the role of Aeneas, descending on a regular schedule into the infernal regions. But *he* was denied his Sibyl.

Bronson knew he should care about the colonists. They could not care, so someone had to. But he could not. The only reason he made the checks was because of the training—and Gwen.

He checked the dials methodically, made changes where necessary. The training was still effective, hours of computer regulated hypnosis. But when he came to the livestock vault, he gave its instruments only a cursory glance. Everything *seemed* all right there, so everything *was* all right. He had to get back to Gwen.

Bronson returned to the cabin and sat in his chair. He strapped himself in, reconnected the feeder tube. Closing his eyes, he felt the mental *snap* as the micro-relay embedded in his brain clicked closed.

Depression fell away.

Gwen sat beneath the oak, her back to Bronson, her knees drawn up to her chin. Bronson sat down beside her. The cool grass felt good beneath his buttocks. But there was a slight chill in the breeze as it blew off the mountains, and it was stronger than usual, gustier.

He put an arm around Gwen's shoulders. She stiffened under his touch, and her skin felt cold and waxy.

"What's wrong, kitten?"

She turned toward him, a pouting, brooding expression shadowing her features. Her eyes were a dull blue-gray, lacking their usual brightness. "You know what's wrong," she said.

"No, I don't. Not unless you tell me."

"The livestock vault." She turned away.

"Christ, Gwen. They're just animals."

"Just animals!" she snapped. "How can you say that? They are important animals. They could mean the lives of those people after the ship lands. People, Ed. Real flesh-and-blood people."

Bronson cupped her chin in his hand, turned her face toward him. "What is this?" he asked, noticing that still more color had bleached out of her eyes. "Just what are you trying to do?"

"It isn't what I'm doing. It's what you are doing. Look." Gwen pointed toward the mountains where a small black spot hung in the sky. It was scarcely visible, yet its irregular shape filled Bronson with fear. It looked threateningly out of place in its surroundings. Bronson had never seen anything like it in paradise—or anywhere else.

"What is it?"

"It's what you just did. It's your lack of caring." Gwen brought her arm down and hugged her knees tighter against the chill. "It's your training beginning to break down."

"But what *is* it?" Bronson asked again.

"A hole." She stared out at the black spot above the mountains.

"A hole," Bronson repeated. "I did that?" Gwen nodded without looking at him. "Can it be fixed? Can I repair it?"

"Go back there and check the livestock vault thoroughly." Gwen's voice, too, held a chill.

"That will fix it?"

"Yes, this time. But I'd like to know it won't happen again. Can I be sure of that?"

"You know I can't answer that." Bronson shook his head violently.

And woke in the cabin. He unstrapped and disconnected, stumbled out of the cabin. He entered the vault and the iciness hit him like a fist, sending shivers up his back. He marched past the coffins, to the livestock vault. Carefully, he checked it, double checked each gauge reading and dial setting. Everything was in order.

"Damn!" he said aloud, en route back to the cabin. A dream had told him what to do. But that dream meant everything to him. He had been living the dream for five years—and would continue to live it for another thirty-three years, until the ship landed. That other world was now more real to him than the steel and electro-fluidics of the ship.

The relay in his head, that was what had warned the computer. Not only did the relay make Gwen and the other life in paradise possible, it also gave the computer complete access to his conscious thoughts. In effect, Gwen had read his mind. From another world, from paradise.

Once the rot had begun, once his dream became a nightmare, only stark reality was left for him.

The term *paradise* had originated as a joke among the technicians on Earth, something to humorously describe the electro-fluidic mind tricks they were attempting to create. But after its first test the name lost its humorous connotation. The ingenious computer program did, in fact, create an individual paradise—a highly addictive one. The name stuck.

After Gwen's death Bronson was still in the colonization program. The directors of the program came to him, asked him to volunteer for the position of caretaker. They explained he needed the position and the program needed him in it.

Bronson took the job. He had no one waiting at the end of the journey, and nothing to remain on Earth for.

And now he again had Gwen.

He reached the cabin, strapped himself in, inserted the feeder tube. Then he closed his eyes and felt the *snap*.

The chill was gone from the air, the black spot no longer in the sky. Bronson thought he saw a slight discoloring above the mountains where the hole had been. Or was he imagining it, seeing what he expected to see?

Gwen stood and smiled as Bronson approached her.

"I checked it. Everything was fine there. And here?"

"Fine now." She nestled into his arms, kissed him. Her eyes were bright again, but not quite as bright as they had been before. Somehow Bronson knew they would never regain all their luster.

"Will it happen again, Ed?"

"No."

"Are you sure?" She looked into his eyes, searching for truth. "Can you fight the memories?"

"Yes, I'm sure. I can't go through that again. I love you too much."

"Good. I have a surprise for you."

Bronson looked down at her, puzzled.

"I thought I'd wait until it showed, but I can't. Not now."

"You're pregnant?" There was the hint of horror in Bronson's voice. The image of Gwen, pale and thin in a hospital bed, flashed through his mind.

Gwen nodded, smiled. "It's all right, Ed. Nothing can happen. I promise you."

"But. . . ."

"You just start thinking of a name, I'll do the rest."

Bronson hugged her tighter to him so she could not see his face. It was a tortured mask of pain. "When?"

"Not for some time yet. My program is based on reality."

"This is positive reinforcement, isn't it? A reward for going back to check the vault."

He felt Gwen's nod against his shoulder and cheek. "That's part of it. Do you mind?"

"No," he said in a steady voice, "not

With a paradise to live in, why should Bronson worry about the job he had chosen, the duty he owed, the mission that depended upon his devotion?

at all."

His stomach was tied in knots of fear.

Twelve months passed in paradise. Bronson watched in dread as Gwen became large with child and her breasts heavy with milk. Apprehensive, he helped her through morning sickness and labor pains. Gwen was programmed to be soothed by his small attentions, and gradually his fear dissipated. Often, Bronson placed his hand lightly against her stomach, felt the child kicking. And finally he helped with delivery.

They named their son Jason.

Bronson was careful to assure his shipboard duties did not suffer during the year. He checked everything more methodically than ever, and did not complain when the ship called. He feared upsetting Gwen during her pregnancy, and he could not shatter their immense joy after the birth.

The memories and depression did not return. He blocked them from his mind with thoughts of Gwen and Jason in paradise while making the checks. And paradise itself acted as a block while he was there.

But a few months after Jason's birth, Bronson began again to resent the call of the ship. The ship seemed to always call at the most enjoyable times—those intimate moments a family should share. He went back to his old hurried checks. They were thorough, but he took shortcuts whenever possible. The memories returned despite his efforts to block them.

Bronson was stretched out on his back in the grass, his hands behind his head, looking up into the fleecy cloud-patterns. He moved as little as possible; his son was curled up on his chest, asleep.

He raised his head slightly, looked at Gwen. She sat beside him, her back against the trunk of the oak, watching them.

"Isn't it about time you got us some dinner?"

"Not until after you feed Jason."

"You enjoy watching that, don't you?"

"Yes," Bronson said.

"I'll feed him now, if you like. Were you going hunting this afternoon?"

"No," he said, lifting the child and handing him to Gwen. Jason came awake in his arms and began crying softly. "I don't want to go far. I'll catch a few trout from the stream."

Suddenly, the buzz started in his ears.

"Damn!" Bronson pounded the earth with his fist.

"Please, Ed, don't start that. You know it has to be done. So much depends on it."

"I know. But why now?"

Gwen took a deep breath, let it out slowly. "No matter when the ship calls it will interrupt something. You have to learn to live with that."

Bronson got slowly to his feet.

"It's the memories—they're back, aren't they?"

"Yes, they're back. But I can handle them."

"You're sure?"

"I said I could."

"Ed, Jason can wait until you get back." Gwen's eyes pleaded softly, tears forming a wet outline around them.

"No," Bronson said over the buzz, almost a scream. "Go ahead and feed him."

Bronson made the checks quickly. And again the memories crept into his mind, weaving their web of depression.

He fought them, tried to push them aside with thoughts of Gwen and Jason waiting in paradise. But it did no good. The mental picture of the real Gwen's pale, pain-distorted face superimposed itself on the window of each cryogenic coffin. The child they never had blossomed in his mind, like a fungoid growth, a deformed caricature of Jason. The memories and nightmare fantasies became harsher, clearer. They branded themselves deep into his mind.

Bronson returned to the cabin, weak and shaking. He sat before the computer console, watching the lights and dials, the steadily changing numerals—hating them and the reality they represented. He knew it would happen again. During the most beautiful moments in paradise, he would be called back to this. For what? To insure delivery of a cargo of flash-frozen protoplasm to a distant ball of dust.

There was a way to stop the ship from calling him. His training, so many years ago, had included the fluidic circuitry in case repair became necessary. He could easily disconnect the alarm. But Gwen would never forgive him.

But if she did not know—if he could somehow keep it from her. . . . She could read his mind. But if he could keep it out of his conscious thoughts. . . .

Don't think of it, he told himself. *Drive it from your mind. Do it but don't think. . . . Think of Gwen, think of Jason. Make them so real, so vivid, that nothing else can exist in your mind.*

Bronson bent to the tool cabinet below the console. He slid the door back, reached in and withdrew a screwdriver. *Gwen, naked in the grass . . . Gwen, soft curves, warm lips. . . .* He stood, began unfastening screws on the front panel of the console.

Gwen, beautifully gross with child . . . New life kicking inside her body—struggling desperately to be born, without knowing why. . . . He lifted the cover, set it aside, scanned the interior. *Schematics, fluidics, relays, valves. . . . No! Don't think it. Do it.*

Jason, wet and sticky with bloody after-birth . . . Jason, hairless, ugly—but beautiful. . . . He reached into the tangle of fluidic connectors, pulled out a small plastic chip: the valve that controlled flow to the alarm. *Jason at Gwen's breast, sucking hungrily . . . His hand rolled into a tight little fist, resting on her other breast. . . .*

Bronson threw the chip to the floor, ground it beneath his heel. A slight crunching sound.

Finished, he thought. *I'm finally free of. . . . No! I can't think it. Gwen and Jason, mother and child . . . Life nourishing life . . . Both becoming a mystic one, and merging with the earth. . . .*

Bronson sat in his chair, strapped himself in without thought, inserted the feeder tube. He closed his eyes. *Gwen and Jason . . .*

In paradise. . . .

Tears and gashes filled the sky from horizon to horizon, large rents filled with a blackness that sucked at Bronson's mind. White knives of lightning sliced through the air around him, accompanied by earth-shaking claps of thunder. The wind blew from the forest in hard, cold gusts that threatened to knock him from his feet. It carried the strong, sweet odor of decay. The grass beneath Bronson's feet was brown and dry—dead.

He stood beside a bend in the stream. Its flow was almost still. Foamy patches of scum floated on the surface, the water beneath was brackish. Trout lay on the banks, their bodies bloated in death, their eyes bulging milky-white.

"Gwen!" Bronson called, running to the oak. "Gwen, where are you?" There was no answer. Only the harsh cry of the wind.

The oak was dead, leafless, eaten through as if by insects. Bronson's bow, arrows and fishing pole lay in the dirt, shattered. Bronson walked around the tree, calling for Gwen and Jason. On the far side of the oak he found them.

Gwen sat with her back against the rotting bole, her skin a sick gray-white pulled tight over protruding facial bones. Her hair stood out in matted patches among wet, infected sores. And her eyes! They were like dull, pitted globes of steel—no white, no iris, no pupil. Bronson felt their cold metallic stare.

She nursed a misshaped Jason.

Gwen smiled, a death's-head grin, then coughed violently. A thick mixture of blood and mucus flowed from her mouth and nose, ran down her chin, splashed over the grotesque child at her breast. The child paid no attention. He continued to feed—savagely, uncaring. He tore with long nails, bit, until blood covered both mother and child.

"Please, Ed," Gwen whispered, her voice a hoarse parody of its former softness. "Remember us as we were."

Bronson tried to push the nightmare image from his mind, to reprogram the computer with his will and bring Gwen and Jason back as they had been before. But there was only one world possible now—a hell that filled him with hate and fear.

With shaking hands Bronson wiped tears from his eyes. He shook his head.

The relay in Bronson's brain snapped him back to reality with merciful and brutal finality. ○

DOOR TO MALEQUAR

from page 6

passing of her eighth cycle, that of death in pleasure; for on Burson's World, assassination, too, was considered a fine art.

The engines howled, a torque scream indicating that the ship was past the non-time of the hyperjump. The intercom came to life, nattering to itself. Jorgenson, relaxed, no longer feeling the need for a blade, reached up to idly play with the knobs of the squeaking box. He was hit by a blast of white noise, then the in-com loudly announced, "Griffen Spaceways, originators of the Hyper-Griff Drive, hope you have had a pleasant flight from the positive past to the positive future; avoiding the merely probable and the only possible."

"Silly commercial; that's even worse than the travelog," he muttered, reflex action causing him to reach for his blade case as the green OK light began flashing. "Positive past to positive future, ha, nothing to it, jump here, jump there, end up in the right timeline, that's all. Easy as can be; space is nothing but a big Swiss cheese."

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

The stewardess was back, and starting to unfasten his seatbelts for him.

"I said 'Space is a Swiss cheese', that, my dear, is my philosophical remark of the day; remember Swiss cheese, that's very important." He grinned up at her, a lopsided smile sliding off the corners of his mouth. Hyperdrive always made him feel disoriented, and, for a few minutes, quite high.

"Yes, sir," the stewardess had been trained to cope with post-hype effects, odd though they might be. "Oh, sir," she said, when his eyes began to focus, "I was told by our Captain that you are the painter who does the "See space on a Griffen, it's pure Magic!' posters. They're so b-e-e-autiful, Mr. Jorgenson; I was wondering if you would—I mean if you don't mind, would you be so kind as to autograph one for me?"

"Kitten, I'd be only too happy to sign as many posters as you'd like, just trot them out." He chuckled surreptitously pinching her heavily girdled backside.

"Oooh, MISTER Jorgenson," she giggled, batting her four pair of fake lashes at him. "I wish I could, but we don't have any of the posters on board—"

"Don't worry about that, dear, if you just give me your home address, and—maybe your Tri-Tele as well, I'll send you some posters first chance I get."

"Thank you s-o-o-o much, sir." her fingers rested on his sleeve, lightly caressing the fabric.

"Anytime, anytime at all." He looked her over, analzing her rather obvious charms, and decided she was definitely an 'or something'. "Say, if you're not going to be busy, why don't you spend a little time showing me some of Burson's World? I've never been here, and—well, I'd like to get a good look round."

"Oooh, I wish I could, but we're on a return-turn-about pattern, so—" she shrugged sadly, "I'm sorry. I really wish I could, honest."

"It's all right, dear; have yourself a good flight back, hear?"

Jorgenson stepped out of the shuttlecraft and into the pouring rain of Burson's World. Cursing the planet's lack of a proper landing area, he sprinted toward the Customs shed that blocked the only exit in the electro-link fencing that surrounded the flight field.

The shed leaked badly, mud and disintergrating concrete squashed underfoot. The Customs agents, a Terran and two of the natives, examined every tube of paint and each canvas, *twice*. The forms took even longer. Declarations had to be signed and entry permits ok'ed before he would be allowed to leave the field. Jorgenson was soaked through and starting to sneeze before the whole hellish process was over.

"Say," he said to the Terran, who was finally closing the last suitcase, "how do I get to *Government House*? Is there a ground shuttle or something?"

"Oh, I am sorry sir. This being a small outpost, all ground vehicles are reserved for Staffers only. But the village is just a short walk away; we can get you some help for your luggage, and as far as your hotel goes well, it is only a *few* blocks—"

Damning governments, colonies, and the rain, Jorgenson set out through the damp dusk with a native, who for a small consideration had agreed to carry his bags and show him the way to his new quarters.

The village was, as he had been told, fairly close. It was a small haphazard collection of snaking, cramped streets and narrow one and two story buildings. "Nothing for old Burson to be too proud of," Jorgenson muttered, following unhappily in the wake of his guide. He could hear laughter and the sound of voices coming from a small bar on one of the streets they waded through. The light-laminate sign in front of the place winked *Galactic, Galactic, Galactic,* in a red-green-blue patteren while every few blinks a comet lit up over the sign. This was the first warmth or brightness Jorgenson had seen since arriving on the planet. He made a mental note of its location and decided to visit it once he was settled in his room. *"After dinner,"* he thought *"it might be rather nice at that."*

The doors of the *Galactic* squealed open at Jorgenson's approach. The warm fetid air seemed to rush out to wrap itself around him as he stood in the doorway adjusting his eyes to the dim light. The *Galactic* was obviously the social center of the colony, judging by the size of the crowd packed the room.

Guided by the glow of the small blue flickerlights on the tables Jorgenson edged through the room looking for a place to sit. He was cursed several times for stepping on toes and had beer slopped on his tunic by a drunken *Goodtime* girl. The stage lights began to change as he continued his search for a free table; pulsating shades of amber, orange and red climbed the spectrum to deep purple and back again. At one point the room glowed with underwater tones, then dimmed until the watchers became a convention of ghouls.

Several natives came in on stage left carrying two drums and some flutes. The musicians were soon joined by a shriveled old hag who sat down on the lip of the stage, her bare feet almost touching the table below. She settled her dusty robe around her body and began to sing in a nasal whine, keeping time by clapping her twig hands together.

Pressed against a wall, Jorgenson waited until he could jump for a table which two *orta* miners were leaving, beating at least four other people to it. There was some growling, a few complaints, but Jorgenson's size and strenght prevented anything more than a remark or two damning his ancestry and future get, all of which he cheerfully ignored seeing as how he had the table he'd wanted.

Roul, the owner, rushed by carrying a tray of empty glasses, and stopped to take Jorgenson's order just as the musicians began to play an oddly rthymic melody and the old woman started to chant in a surprizingly vibrant voice.

He wasn't sure at first if the girl was really there or just a trick of the lighting. Jorgenson thought he saw flashes of a slender body moving back and forth on the stage, the light clothing it with fair skin and hair tinted with violet. Suddenly the room brightened, and shw was there, bathed in a gold spot, a naked shaft, beautiful, with a dream's familiarity.

She began to dance, slowly at first, swaying her body by a pattern of tiny steps; her eyes were closed, and she was the moon hidden by clouds of hair. Then, as her lashes lifted, the sun rose, warm and radiant. As the colors changed she danced creation: the earth grew green, plants twisted their heads to the sun, and rain fell from her softly floating hands. Evening came, and she was night, dark, with sparks of light which went out one by one, leaving a foretaste of the final sleep. Lastly, dawn slid over her shoulders, lightly dancing on her toes.

She moved without strain or awkwardness, at times she almost overcame gravity, a cloud tossed by the winds. The girl performed using only her body to suggest universes to the audience, wanting them to feel all she was while she danced for, rather than to them.

Jorgenson felt loss, sharply painful, when her dance ended and she left the stage. He knew he must see her again. He had to know who she was, and where he might have seen her before.

Roul brought his drink and Jorgenson grabbed his arm to keep him at the table. "Who is she, that dancer?" Jorgenson demanded, tugging Roul closer so he could be heard over the noise of the bar.

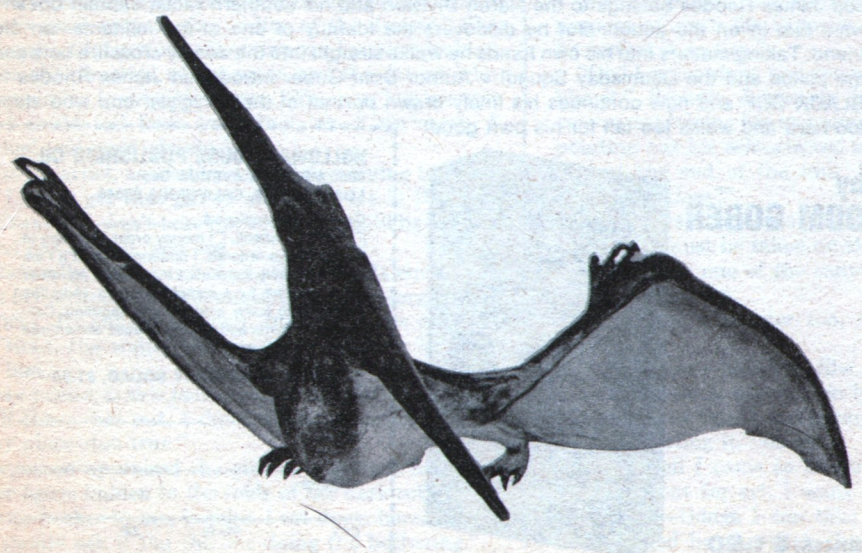
"Mister, she's just a *Kef* dancer, a good one, but—"

"I want to mee her, now." Jorgenson shoved a Fedcred into Roul's hand. "Go get her, please. It's important." His voice shook with urgency.

"Look, I don't know if she'll come; she ain't no Goodtime or nothin." Jorgenson scowled, and he stam-

MOMENT IN HISTORY

SUPERBIRD



Early this year Douglas A. Lawson, a graduate student in paleontology from the University of California, put together the remains of a large flying reptile, a pterosaur, dug from fields in Big Bend National Park, Texas over the past three years and found he had a real monster on his hands.

Previously many skeletal remains of pterodactyls, flying reptiles with wingspans of approximately 20 feet, had been found, and paleontologists had assumed that these bat-like creatures were the largest creatures capable of flight ever to exist on Earth. The newly found flying lizard, though, dubbed the Texas Pterosaur, is far larger, with a wingspan of over 51 feet. In comparison, a modern Phantom jet fighter has a wingspan of 38½ feet. The largest bird alive today, the almost-extinct California Condor, has a wingspan of between 9 and 10 feet.

The pterosaur, which lived more than 60 million years ago, had a very small body in relation to wing area and very light, hollow bones. Evidence indicates that the skin was leathery, like that of a bat, although there is some evidence that the skin may have been somewhat fur-covered.

A common assumption until the time of the Texas find has been that the pterosaurs (pterodactyls) were primarily gliding reptiles, launching themselves from rocks or cliffs then using thermals to gain altitude, as do large gliding birds today. They were thought to be too large to take off from level ground. Another assumption was that they were primarily fish-eaters, using their long necks to probe beneath the surface in a diving-swoop. This new find casts doubt upon those assumptions, though, since the remains were found at a point which was at least 200 miles from the sea during the time the creatures were alive. Also, geological evidence indicates that there were no cliffs or high hills in the area where the remains were found, making it quite likely that the pterosaurs could take off by running and flapping their wings. And, that long neck, instead of being used to spear fish, would have been perfect for probing deep into the dead carcass of a dinosaur.

The Texas Pterosaur: larger than a jet fighter, and with a taste for meat. Godzilla, move over. You've got some new competition. ○

mered, "Okay mister, I'll ask, but I can't promise she'll come."

Jorgenson let go of his arm, shoving him, and the fat man hurried away through the crowd, his tray banging at his side.

She stood beside his table, taller than he'd expected, her slender frame wrapped in a green toga-like garment which left one small breast bare. "I am Malequar," she said in a childish voice. "Roul said I must dress quickly and go to you. Why is that?"

"Lord, but you're beautiful!" Jorgenson said the first thing that wandered into his mouth. "Sit—sit down, will you?" He pulled out a chair, turning it so that she could easily slide into it. "Please? I only want to talk to you."

As she slid into the chair across from him, her robe falling in perfect folds around her, Jorgenson wondered if she did anything without an air of gracefulness. "Look," he said, "I know I've met you before, but I can't recall where. And it's twitching me, not remembering. Have you ever left Burson's, gone off planet?"

"No. I do not go from my home." She spread her hands in a gesture of apology. "I am sorry, I do not know of you. Might you have seen me here before?"

"This is my first trip to Burson's—I can't figure it out." Jorgenson ran his fingers through his hair, causing the curls to fluff on end. "Say, this isn't a pickup or anything. I really liked your dancing. You're marvelous."

"Thank you." She smiled at him, her eyes lighting behind the fringe of her bangs. "The dance is my life, I do it well, but it is good to please others as well as self."

"Oh, that you do! Tell me, why do you work here? I mean, with your talents you could go anywhere in the Confederation."

"I am happy here; the Temple says it is a good thing for me to work for Roul, so I would not wish to leave either the *Galactic,* or my planet."

"Sure, I understand; an artist often works better in familiar surroundings. You feel better. Safer too."

"Aah, do you dance also?"

"No, I paint. You know, oils, watercolors, sonics, that sort of thing."

"I know very little of such, but I would enjoy having you tell me of them." She sat back in the chair, relaxed, much more sure of herself.

"Look, it's rather hard to explain painting. How would you like to go to my place and have a quick trip through my work? I'll try to make it as entertaining as possible for both of us." Behind his too-innocent eyes gears were clicking neatly into place.

With her fingers interlaced, a slight frown on her face, she considered his offer. "I think, yes," she said after devoting a fraction of time to thought. "Jorgenson, I would wish to see your paintings. I will go with you."

She gathered her robe together, the soft fabric clinging to her slim body. Jorgenson shoved back his chair and came around the table to take her elbow, escorting her out of the *Galactic.*

Roul, seeing them leave, dashed into the crowd, pushing people roughly out of his way so he could come to a quivering halt in front of the door, blocking their exit.

"Where do you thing you're taking my dancer, mister? She works for me, and you ain't going to get away with no funny stuff—I'll tell the Temple, I will."

"Roul, please?" Malequar kitten-smiled at him. "The Temple did not say you might own me; I promise to be back in time for the next show. I swear it by my Art."

"Malequar, you don't understand." Roul shook his head at her, then turned back to Jorgenson. "Mister, you want to sex down with somebody, I'll get you a *Goodtime* girl, a clean one, or even one of the colonials. But not this kid. She's a Gunk; we don't hold with Terrians and Gunks here—besides, she's my best dancer, and I want her here for perfomances, not messin' out in the brushland with you."

He asked that his art be judged. He didn't know that his life was to be judged along with it.

"I'm not taking her out to any brush; I just want to show her some artwork I have at *Government House."*

"Uh huh, an' I'm the Governor General—Malequar, I warn you, he's up to no good."

"But why? You have my word I will be back, what more is needed?"

"Kid, can't you tell I'm trying to help you?" Roul raked at his forehead with a sleeve, sweat rolling down his face was distracting him from the problem at hand. "Don't you see what this Bighunk is after? You're too damn backward, an' you don't know what's best for you, truly now."

"I have no need of your advice, I go where I wish—you can not tell me otherwise."

"The lady said she was coming with me, and she meant it. Don't lose your jets, little man. I have no intention of harming her at all."

Roul looked up at Jorgenson, then at the girl and shrugged. "All right, you take off outta here. But if you get yourself beat but good, don't expect me to do nothin' about it—we don't stand for disgustin' things like this on Burson's World." Seeing he had lost, Roul felt selfrightousness was the best attitude to take. He then stepped aside to let them out the door. "Damn dirt lovers." he yelled after them as soon as he was sure Jorgenson was out of hearing range.

Roul's really worried about your fair, white and slender, isn't he? Aren't you a bit afraid too? You know I could be planning to steal you off planet and sell you to the first joyhouse I come to—you'd better be careful, little one!"

Malequar walked beside Jorgenson in the rain, clinging to his arm as she tried to avoid the worst of the puddles in the mud clogged street. "Truly, Jorgenson?" she asked, reaching up to pull part of her robe over his head as protection from the dampness. "Would you indeed sell me? I would bring a good price I am sure."

"Maybe that's what Roul's so afraid of. That or the thought I might in some way damage your dancing abilities."

"He is most worried you will take me to your bed—would you do that?"

"Well, uh—you see—" Jorgenson was at a loss for a cool way to say 'yes' without frightening her off.

"Aaah, you would then—I thought it was such, but I do not mind as long as I see your paintings too."

"Uh, thank you, I think." Jorgenson had been caught off stride, and wasn't too sure how to get back into it.

"Roul is right, such things are not to be done, but they happen anyway. He is but mad that you might get what he has not been able to take himself."

"Has that jellyworm been trying to sex you? I'd think what with you working for him it would be an easy thing to manage."

"No, not easy. I would complain, and the ConFederation would be forced to act in my name—remember, I am a native of this planet, and I must be protected, small child that I am."

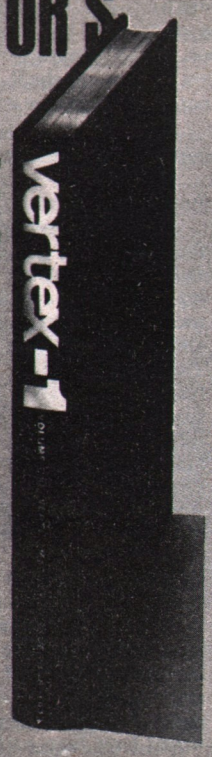
Jorgenson laughed, hugging her closer under the tent she had made over them. "All right, 'small child', I intend to take very, very good care of you too."

Jorgenson's suite in *Government House* was packed with boxes, trunks and assorted canvases. His easel took up most of one corner of the bedroom. It was arranged so that it would receive the best light should the sun ever decide to show itself. The bed was shoved out of the way, back against the wall, so that he could have more space in the sleeping area for a portable table to hold his sketchpads, paints and rolls of unstretched canvas.

"Watch out for the sonics box, dear." Jorgenson said, leading her into the room. Malequar tiptoed around the black cube he'd indicated, pulling her toga closely around her to avoid having a loose edge sweep anything off the table.

"What is a sonics? Is that thing good to paint? It is not pretty, I think." Jorgenson laughed, causing her to blush and stammer "I make a mistake? I am sorry,

COLLECTOR'S BOUND VOLUME OF VERTEX



A historic collector's edition of the first year of Vertex magazine magnificently bound into hard cover library volume—complete art and text, volume one, issues one through six 1973.

☐ LIMITED COLLECTORS EDITION
EDITION LIMITED TO 1,000 NUMBERED COPIES ONLY
GOLD FOIL EDGE PAPER AND IMPRINT
BLACK CLOTH BINDING
$16.95

☐ EDUCATOR & LIBRARY EDITION
STANDARD SILVER IMPRINT
BLACK CLOTH BINDING
$12.95

PRIORITY ORDER FORM
Both editions will be shipped on a priority basis to orders received with payment. Orders will be accepted until entire edition is sold. Due to the limited quantity of both editions, we expect both to be oversubscribed and urge your early response to assure your copy. Priority for future editions will be given to purchasers of this first edition.

PRIORITY ORDER FORM—VERTEX 1

VERTEX MAGAZINE
8060 Melrose Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90046

Dear Sirs:
Enclosed is ☐ check, ☐ currency, ☐ money order, as payment in full for *VERTEX-1.* Please send the edition indicated below:

☐ LIMITED COLLECTORS EDITION @ $16.95
☐ EDUCATOR & LIBRARY EDITION @ $12.95

I understand that shipment will be made on a priority basis. If oversubscribed at the time of receipt of my order, full refund will be made. (California residents please add 6% tax. Overseas orders, $1.00 additional per volume for postage.)

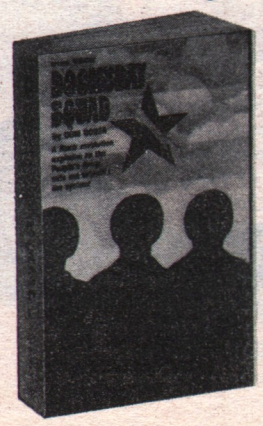
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP _____

DOOMSDAY SQUAD

A BLACK REVOLUTION EXPLODES AS THE PEOPLE'S ARMY SETS OUT TO CRUSH THE SYSTEM!

It can happen here—and it almost did! A doomsday plot, hatched by the People's Army and aimed to crush the system. A ruthless Black revolution, a war on the pigs, manned by people sick and tired of being ripped off! • The militants, vicious killers who enjoy their work, are highly trained in military strategy and launch their massive raids, using grenades and heavy weapons stolen from an infantry reserve armory, to produce a shock wave of street warfare that rocks the country! • They bomb, rob and assassinate. And the police realize, almost too late, that they've got an all-out war on their hands! • Black cop James Rhodes belongs to the Narco Division and his southern racist captain doesn't want him in on the action. But he discovers the identity of one of the militants—an old friend. Taking matters into his own hands he walks straight into the deadly crossfire between the police and the Doomsday Squad! • Author Dom Gober introduced James Rhodes in BLACK COP and now continues his finely drawn portrait of the " 'nigger' cop who steps too hard and walks too tall for his own good!"

by DOM GOBER



BH465, $1.50

HOLLOWAY HOUSE PUBLISHING CO.
8060 MELROSE AVENUE Dept.
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90046

Gentlemen: I enclose $ _____
☐ cash, ☐ check, ☐ money order, payment in full for books ordered. I understand that if I am not completely satisfied, I may return my order within 10 days for a complete refund. (Add 25¢ per order to cover postage and handling. California residents add 6% tax. Please allow three weeks for delivery.)

☐ BH465, DOOMSDAY SQUAD, $1.50

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

I do not know sonics."

"A sonic box produces soundwaves. You put paint on a canvas and expose it to the sonics, it makes patterns in the paint—the art comes from changing the soundwaves to make an attractive pattern, do you understand?"

"Aaah—what are soundwaves, Jorgenson?"

"Dear, let's not go into that. I'd hate to tax your sweet mind with something so unimportant as this is."

"Are you good at sonics?"

"I use good equipment, the proper paint and special canvases. But anyone with the same junk could do as well as I can—I hate it, but the clotheads back home think it's the universe's gift to art, so—I'm stuck with it. Here, I'll fix you a seat, and show you what I really like doing."

Jorgenson took a stack of paintings and an art book or two off the only chair in the room, then motioned Malequar to sit down. He brought her each painting, one at a time, tilting them so she would get the best view of his work.

"I like these colors. They are most well done, Jorgenson. Each picture you show me is better than last. Oh, you must be a quite famous artist among your people."

"No, I can't say that I am. I do hackwork for hack customers. My own people believe in posthumous fame for painters."

"And what is 'posthumous'? Is it art?"

"Not exactly. It means dead. That's when you'll get all the honors my dear world can give an artist. Before your end you can keep yourself from starving by painting cheap commercial adwork, doing *Tri-Vee* cubes or any other form of artistic prostitution that takes your fancy, and nobody cares."

"That is most peculiar. I do not understand." Malequar held up one of the paintings, admiring the glowing swirls of a nebula in oils. "Among my people it is not so. Art, if it is good, is rewarded. If the work is bad, then you are punished. Bad artwork is blasphemy, a sin against the Gods, and must be met with by death. Do inferior art, you die. Much simpler, I think."

"Malequar!" He took the painting from her, reaching out to hold her close to him. "Are you—will they kill you?"

"Ah, no. I have passed all the cycles of Dance. I am a Master, and do not fear the judgement any longer."

"Why do they kill people? I came here hoping to ask the Temple to look at some of my stuff. But now . . . poor baby, how frightening it must have been for you!"

"Naturally. But there was pride too, when I was declared a Master. Do not upset your mind. This is the way it has always been, and shall be." She slid her arms around his waist, hugging him tightly. "We are a great people, our art is most superior. We achieve this by removing that which is not of first quality among us."

"Survival of the fittest applied to art. Seems funny, though, that the Confederation doesn't try to stop it."

"Your government does not care. What is one dead native, or two, three, a dozen? Less natives, more space for Terrans. It is to their advantage, you see."

"Oh yes, we've done it to other cultures, why not Burson's World too. Poor little one, you're caught up in the middle of it aren't you?"

"Even so. It was before my cycles, my family's cycles, and it will go on long after we are gone—soon there will be no more cycles."

"Maybe I should do a painting of it. *Rape of a Planet. Death on Burson's World.* Oh, any number of tricky titles would do the job. The weeping hearts back on Terra of Firma would love it."

"When you do such a painting, please do not call this Burson's World. My home is called *Mellange,* at least that is how you could call it—that is most close to the sound of my tongue."

"Mellange? Malequar of *Mellange,* very nice, I like it. So, I'll paint something called *The Rape of Wet Mellange,* or some-such thing."

Malequar had her duty to perform, and there was no question that she would act with style—and finality!

"Good. I would like it known that my home had a name long before your starships came to us. It would be good, though, for you to stay until the dry times. Paint the sunlight and the growing things. I would dance them, and you could make pictures."

"That's a nice picture right there, you and I—" He smoothed her hair, tucking her closer to his body, almost as if to shield her. "I'd like that, Malequar. Just the two of us, painting, dancing, doing anything else that we would enjoy together." He lifted her chin, watching the colors shift and blend in her agate eyes. "Stay with me, dearest, stay until the dry times—"

"I will be with you and dance many things just for us." She kissed his forehead, whispering into his hair. "I want to be with you as long as you might wish, Jorgenson . . ."

They lay together on his bed, the scent of their bodies mingling with the stronger odor of turpentine in the air. Jorgenson found he knew every inch of her boyish body; how her muscles made ropy bands in her arms, the surprizing strength in her skinny thighs and the slight shadows of her two umbilical indentations. Her hands fluttered, dancing across his chest and down his ribs to his thigh, soft and caressing.

"I've done this with you before, I'm sure of it, Malequar. I just don't know—"

"Hush." She put her fingers over his mouth, stopping his voice. "There has not been this thing before with me; I have not even been sexed by anyone, so it could not have been as you think."

"Malequar!" He sat up, sliding her to one side. "Good Gods, why not? You're an attractive female. You should have had many men by now—what's the matter with you, something physical?"

"Not so. I was most busy. It is far better to be a live dancer than a dead woman who has tasted pleasure. My Art came first before all other things. See, I am a Master, and can now take joy with the man I wish. You."

"Then I'd better make sure you are pleased!" He grabbed her, tickling and teasing at her body, rousing emotions, teaching her what she had never learned in a dancing class. He showed her how to explore his body, and she was a willing pupil. He found her hidden focal foints; together their eyes brightened, breathing quickened, movments became less exact, more hurried. She screamed under him, biting his shoulder as her body arched, tremors running the length of her nerve endings; tremors he matched as he climaxed with her.

Her hair matted with the damp locks of his chest; she lay close alongside him, moist and warm, her breath soft on his ear. "Aaah, that is indeed pleasure," she murmured, purring deep in her throat. "I like it so, you please me much. I only wish I could give you of something that would bring you as much joy."

"Little one, you have, and I intend to stay around quite a long time and collect more of it."

"But it is such a small gift I give; I am unskilled and would wish to please you in many ways."

"Malequar, the only thing that could ever give me more happiness than you is if my World proclamed me the greatest artist of them all."

"Would that really please you?"

"Sure, but it isn't about to happen to me now; so you see, you are the most important . . . Hey, you're shivering. Where did we put that robe thing of yours?"

"There it is, at the end of the bed. No matter though, I am fine. I was only thinking how sad a thing it is not to be a Master until one is dead."

Jorgenson reached down and pulled the toga up over both of them, tucking it closer around the girl. "Posthumous fame is, I suppose, a very dirty trick. But you must admit it's better than no fame at all."

"Truly, Jorgenson?" Malequar fumbled with the robe, letting it slip down as she sat up in the bed. I would then wish you all greatness, honor and fame for the joy you have given me. So fame is the gift I must give to you."

Her dagger struck swiftly, clean and sure . . .

o

Can Computers fall in love?

Do computers have a sex? Does a computer built under Scorpio get along with a programmer who was born under Capricorn? Could a computer conspiracy ever arise? Could you live a daydream through a computer?

If you've ever thought about these questions before, or if you're first thinking about them now, then it's time you thought about "Creative Computing"—the magazine that speaks *your* language.

"Creative Computing" is a bi-monthly publication that's about everything that computers are about. From computer poetry to computer art. From the effects of computers on pollution to their effects on privacy. From computers as crime fighters to computers as teaching aids.

"Creative Computing" gives you the chance to be a matador in a bull fight, govern the ancient city of Sumaria, and even fight a space war. Those are only a sample of the kinds of computer games you'll find. Or how about some non-computer games and puzzles?

And that's not all. "Creative Computing" has book reviews, cartoons, fiction, and even a fold-out poster. Plus news and commentary on the twenty computer education projects that have endorsed this publication.

So get involved in the curious world of computers now. Subscribe to "Creative Computing". It's *the* magazine for *the* curious mind.

I'd like to get involved in the curious world of computers. Please enter my subscription to:
Creative Computing, Box 789-M, Morristown, N.J. 07960

☐ 1-Year $8 ☐ 3-Year $21
☐ Payment Enclosed
☐ Please Bill Me (receive one issue less).

☐ Send sample issue $1.00

Name_____
Title/Dept._____
School/Company_____
Street Address_____
City_____
State_____ Zip_____

creative computing

Scheduled For The Next Issue Of Vertex

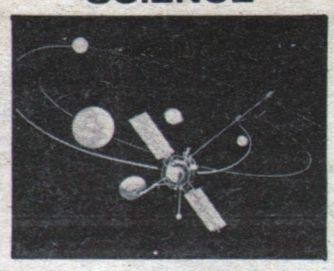
FICTION

Vertex presents *Landing Party*, sequel to William Rotsler's acclaimed *Surprise Party*.

HUMOR

The Vertex Potpourri section will hit you right on your science fiction funnybone!

SCIENCE



Vertex follows Mariner to Mercury for a closeup look at the hidden inner planet.

S-F

A penetrating interview with the leading edge of the New Wave in S-F, Norman Spinrad.

FEATURE

Flash Gordon, the greatest science fiction hero of them all, comes to Vertex!

SENSATIONAL vertex SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

NEW SIZE • NEW FORMAT • NOW MONTHLY

TWICE AS MUCH VERTEX EACH YEAR

AT THE SAME LOW RATES PREVIOUSLY IN EFFECT

FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Check subscription term desired below:

- ☐ **$8.00 FOR 1 YEAR (12 issues, save $4.00 off regular price)**
- ☐ **$14.00 FOR 2 YEARS (24 issues, save $10.00 off regular price)**
- ☐ **$24.00 FOR 4 YEARS (48 issues, save $24.00 off regular price)**

Indicate if this is a ☐ new subscription, an ☐ extension of current subscription, or a ☐ gift subscription. (If gift subscription, gift card should read _____

Also give your name and address as donor

_____

_____

_____

_____

Send subscription to:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Mail check or money order with coupon to:

Subscription Department
VERTEX MONTHLY
8060 MELROSE AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90046

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

Your subscription will continue for the same time period at no increase in cost to you . . . although you will be receiving twice the number of Vertex issues remaining on your subscription. You will receive a new issue of Vertex monthly instead of every other month and, in addition, you will be enjoying Vertex in this new larger tabloid format. This is a good time for you to extend your current subscription or give your gift subscriptions while the old Vertex rates are still in effect. Send the coupon above today.