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"My name is Dr. Edward Hayland," he said.

"I do atomic power research."

"That's a lie," said Max, standing in the New Mexico sunshine. "There is no such thing as atomic power. Which of our concentration camps have you escaped from?"

**Two Dooms**

a novel

by C. M. KORNBLUTH

"...why should we be tender
To let an enemy piece of flack thrust us,
Flay judge and everybody all himself!"

[Cymbeline, 5, ii]

It was May, not the summer by five weeks, but the afternoon heat under the corrugated roof of Manhattan Engineer District's Los Alamos Laboratory was daily less bearable. Young Dr. Edward Hayland had lost fifteen pounds from an already meager frame during his nine-month hitch in the desert. He wondered every day while the thermometer crawled up to its 85°F peak, whether he had made a mistake; he would regret the rest of his life in accepting work with the laboratory rather than hitting the local draft board here his cause and do what they pleased with it. His
University of Chicago demonstrators were gleefully reflecting etchings and wrecks from Spain to Brnoch, one of whom, a front-line mathematician named Hatfield, would do me a favor later. To mathematicians it meant that Hatfield would do me a favor later.

"And what, Daddy, did you do in the war?"

"Well, kid, it's a little hard to explain. They had this stupid atomic bomb project that never came to anything, and they did up a lot of us in a Gothenburg place in New Mexico. We figured and we calculated and we foiled with uranium and some of us got radiation burns and then the war was over and they sent us home."

Royland was not amused by this prospect. He had lost his left arm under his and he was waiting, not patiently, for the Computing Section to send him his figures on Phase Six, which was the (goddamn childish) code designation for Elemental Assembly Time. Phase Six was Royland's own particular baby. He was under Boeselgard, superintendent of Whysam's Atomic Track III, and Boeselgard was under Oppen-heimer, who bossed the works. Sometimes a General Greaves came through a few feet of a mile and met from a window Royland had won the venerable Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of

War, walking slowly down their dusty street, leaning on a cane and surrounded by young and old officers. That's what Royland was thinking of the war.

"Laboratory! It had sounded inviting, cool, soothing but quiet. So every evening these days he was blasted out of his cot in a bunker, a collimate, at seven by 'Oppie's whistles,' fought for a shaver and shave with thirty-seven other bachelor scientists in eight languages, hoisted a bad caloric breakfast and went through the barbed wire. Re-registered Line to his "office"—another matched-wall wall cubicle, smaller and better and wetter, with talking and typing and click of adding machines all around him.

Under the circumstances he was doing good work, he supposed. He wasn't happy about being restricted to his one new problem, Phase Six, but no doubt he was happier than Hatfield had been when his Mitchell got it.

Under the circumstances . . . they included a weird layout arrangement for computing. Instead of a dozen differential analyzers machine they had a human sea of office girls with Bneight desk calculators; the girls screamed "summation" and charged on differential equations and swamped them by sheer volume; they clicked them to death with their little adding machines. Roy-
land thought hopefully of Comston’s huge, beneficial mingling differ-
enced up at M.I.T. It was probably tied together by whatever the mys-
terious “Radiation Laboratory” was doing. Royland suggested that the “Radiation Labora-
tory” had as much to do with radiation as his own “Man-
hattan Business District” had to do with Manhattan engineering. And the world was supposed to be
bracing on the edge these days of a New Dispensation of Computing which would obso-
lete even the M.I.T. machines—
tobac, relays and binary arith-
matic at blinding speed instead of the
crudely turning cogs and the
smoothly extruding rods and the
elegant nested curves of
Comston’s masterpiece. He decided
that he wouldn’t like that; he wouldn’t
like it even less than he liked
the little office girls clack-
ing away, pushing ball hair from
their dowdly brows with undist-
turbed hands.

He wiped his men brow with
a crumpled handkerchief and per-
nounced himself a glance at his
watch and the thermometer.
Fifteen and one hundredth re-
spectively.

He thought vaguely of getting
out, of finding up just enough to
be released from the project and
drafted. No, there was the post-
war career to think of. But one
of the big shots, Teller, had been
irreproachable; he had clamped out-
side of his assigned mission again
and again until Oppenheimer let
him go; now Teller was working
with Lawrence at Berkeley on some-
thing that had reportedly
gone over at a reputed quarter of
a billion dollars—

A girl in khaki knucked and
replied. “Free material from the
Computer Section, Dr. Royland.
Clock time and again him,
please.” He counted the three
sheets, signed the discipline
form she held out and plunged
into the material for thirty
minutes.

When he sat back in his chair, the
events slipped into his eyes
unnoticed. His hands were shak-
ing a little. Though he did not
know that either. Phase 5b of
Wagah’s Dance Tack III was
finished, over, done, successfully
accomplished. The answer to the
question “Can U2, stop he
snagged into a critical mass within
a physically feasible time?” was
in. The answer was “Yes.”

Royland was a theory man, not
a Whistlerite or a Kehoe; he
liked the numbers for themselves
and had no special passion to
grab for wires, mics and bits of
graphite so that what the num-
ers said might immediately be
given flesh in a wonderful new
gadget. Nevertheless he could
visualize at once a workable
atomic bomb assembly within
the framework of Phase 5b. You have
so many microseconds to norm-
life your critical mass without it boiling away in vapor; you use them, by blowing the subassemblies together with shaped charges, lots of micrometers to spare by that method, practically headfirst. Then comes the Big Bang.

Oop! The whole blew it was quitting time. Reynold sat still in his cubicle. He should go, of course, to Reptochad and tell him; Reptochad would probably clap him on the back and pour him a jigger of Bob Green from the tall clay bottle he kept in his safe. Then Reptochad would go to Oppenheim, before noon the project would be redesignigated Track I, Track II, Track III, and Track V would be shut down and three people canned into Track II, the one with the perturb! New excitement would build through the project; it had been toojul and uneventful for three months. Phase Six was the first good news in at least that long. It had been one damn bitter alley after another. Green Green had looked sour and dubious but then around.

Desk drawers were slamming throughout the corridor, undusted building; doors were slamming shut on cubicles; down the corridor, somebody staked with laughter, strained laughter. Fainting. Reynold's done, somebody cried impatiently: "are our fans Him two?"

Reynold whispered to himself: "You damned fool, what are you thinking of?"

But he knew—he was thinking of the Big Bang, the Big Dirty Bang, and of torture. Painful torture of the old days, fiercely cruel by today's lights, rubbed the whole body, or crushed it, or burned it, or shattered the fingers and legs. But even that old judicial torture carefully avoided the most sensitive parts of the body, the generative organs, though damage to these, or a real threat of damage to these, would have produced quick and insipid confessions. You have to be more or less crazy to torture somebody that way: the sane man does not think of it as a possibility.

An M.P. corporeal tried Reynold's door and looked in. "Quitting time, professor," he said. "Okay," Reynold said. Mechanically he looked his desk drawers and his files, turned his window lock and set out his wastepaper basket in the corridor. Click the door; another day, another dollar. Maybe the project was breaking up. They did new and then. The huge bosses at Berkeley proved that. And Reynold's hair furs was light two physicists now; their incubators stood empty since they had been drafted to M.I.T. for some uninhabitable thing. Green had not looked happy but then around; how did
a general make up his mind anyway? Give them three months, then the end! Maybe Stimmen would run out of patience and cut the line, clear the District down. Maybe F.D.R. would say it is a scandalous meeting, “By the way, Mr. Secretary, what ever became of—?” and that would be the end if old Henry could say only that the scientists appear to be optimistic of eventual success, Mr. President, but that as yet there seems to be nothing concrete—

He passed through the barred wire of the Line under scrutiny of an M.F. lieutenant and walked down the bamboozled company street of the maintenance troop to their mess pool. He wanted a jeep and a trip ticket; he wanted a long beach dress in the twilight, he wanted a dinner of foliage and egg plant with his old friend Charles Miller Nahatapoe, the medicine man of the adjoining Hopi reservation. Boyland's hobby was anthropology, he wanted to get a little drunk on it—he hoped it would clear his mind.

Nahatapoe welcomed him cordially to his hut; his milling wrinkles all smiled. "You want me to play informant for a whilst?" he grinned. He had been to Carlyle in the 39's and had been laughing at the white man ever since. be admitted that physics was funny, but for a real joke give him cultural anthropology every time. "You want some nice common stuff about our institutionalized homosexuality? Should I cook us a dog for dinner? Have a seat on the blanket, Edward."

"What happened to your charts? And the funny picture of McKinley? And—every thing?"

The hut was bare except for cooking pots that simmered on the stone-cold central hearth.

"I gave the stuff away," Nahatapoe said casually. "You get tired of things."

Boyland thought he knew what that meant. Nahatapoe believed he would die quite soon; those particular Indians did not believe in dying encumbered by possessions. Manners, of course, forbade discussing death.

The Indian watched his face and finally said: "Oh, it's all right for you to talk about it. Don't be embarrassed."

Boyland asked: "Nervously?"

"Don't you feel well?"

"I feel terrible. There's a snake eating my brain. Pitch in and eat. You feel pretty awful yourself, don't you?"

The hard-learned habit of security caused Boyland to evade the question, "You don't mean that literally about the snake, do you Charles?"

"Of course I do," Miller insisted. He stopped a steaming
grand fall of stow from the post and blow on it. “What would an armed child of nature know about huntsmen, visites, toasts and repast? What would I know about break-the-sky medi- 
cations?”
Beyland looked up sharply; the Indian was literally singing. “Do you hear any talk about break-the-sky medicine?” Beyland asked.
“No talk, Edward. I’ve had a few dreams about it.” He pointed with his chin toward the Laboratory. “You fellows over there shouldn’t dream so hard, it leaks out.”
Beyland helped himself to stow without answering. The stow was good, far better than the cot-
tom stuff, and he did not force to guess the source of the meat in it.
Miller said thoughtfully: “It’s only kid stuff, Edward. Don’t get so worked up about it. We have a long dill story about a hoarse
toad who ate some low-bed and thought he was the Sky God. He got angry and he tried to break the sky but he couldn’t so he sunk into his hole ashamed to face all the other animals and died. But they never knew he tried to break the sky at all.”
In spite of himself Beyland de-
mumbled: “Do you have any stories about anybody who did break the sky?” His hands were shaking again and the moist almost hy-
po
tical. Oppo and the rest of them were going to break the sky, kick humanity right in the mouth, and munch a pawing monster that would go up and down by night and day prancing in all the windows of all the houses in the world, leaving no sane man ever untroubled for his life and the lives of his kids. Phase 56t, God damn it to blazes hell, make sure of that! Well done, Beyland; you earned your dollar today!
Determinedly the old Indian set his guard aside. He said: “We have a saying that the only good people is a dead people, but I’ll make an exception for you, Edward. I’ve got some strong stuff from Mexico that will make you feel better. I don’t like to say my friends hearing.”
“Prospect? I’ve tried it. Seeing a few colored lights won’t make me feel better, but thanks.”
“Not prospect, this stuff. It’s God Food. I wouldn’t take it myself without a mouth of preparation; otherwise the gods would scoop me up in a net. That’s because my people are clean, and your eyes are closed.” He was briefly examining through a deep-chinked whisker box as he spoke; he came up with a covered dish. “You people have your sight closed put a little by the God Food, so it’s safe for you.”
Beyland thought he knew what the old man was talking about. It was one of Nikolatov’s big-
just jokes that Hopi children un-
derstood Einstein’s relativity as
soon as they could talk and there
was some truth to it. The Hopi
language—like English—is
naturally subject to abbrevi-
ation and there was no concept of
time-occupancy, it had noth-
ing like the Indo-European
speech’s subject and predicate,
and therefore no holding meta-
physics of cause and effect. In
the Hopi language and mind, all
things were upwardly tiered for-
ever into one great relationship,
a crystalline structure of space-
time events that simply were
because they were. So much
for Nahatape’s people “seeing
clearly,” But Boyland gave him
self and any other physicist credit
for seeing so clearly when they
were working a four-dimensional
problem in the X Y Z space var-
iables and the T time variable.

He could have spelled the old
mans’s joke by putting that out,
but of course he did not. No, no;
he’d got a jag and maybe a
bobbysoap from Nahatape’s bath
medicine and then go home to
his cubicle with his problem un-
resolved, to kick or not to kick?

The old man began to mumble
in Hopi, and drew a tattered
sheet across the doorframe of
his hat. It shut out the last rays
of the setting sun, long and slanting
on the dart, picked against
the ash plumes of the Indian
settlement. It took a minute for
Boyland’s eyes to accommodate
to the flickering light from the
hearth and the lily pad square of
the ceiling smoke hole. Now
Nahatape was “singing,” doing
a crooked shuffle around the hot
holding the covered dish before
him. Out of the corner of his
mouth, without interrupting the
rhythm, he said to Boyland:
“Drink some hot water now.”
Boyland sipped from one of the
dishes on the hearth, as far as it
was much like yeyote ritual, but
he felt rumin.

Nahatape turned a loud
scorn, added apologetically;
“Sorry, Edward,” and coughed
before him to cover the cover
off the dish like a headscraper.
So God Food was dished black
mushrooms, miserable, wrinkled
little things. “You swallow them
all and chase them with hot
water,” Nahatape said.

Obnubiled Boyland choked
them down and gulped from the
jug; the old man resumed his
dance and chanting.

A little old self-hypnosis, Boy-
land thought bitterly. Give some
imagination sleep and forget about
old 90s, as if you could. He could
see the big dirty one now, a bill
of a fishbale, maybe over Monoch,
or Colapage, or Toronto, or Nova.
Cooked people, brain cathedral
stones, the beams of the big
Buddha running like water, per-
haps lapping around the ankles
of a priest and burning his feet off
so he fell sense into the stuff.

Two Dreams
He couldn't see the gamma radiation, but he would be there, invisible, about doing the dirty unfathomable thing, slyly burning away the sea of men and women, cutting short so many lives of great potential of origin. His life could mean to his family of Buc, or five generations of Bucanilla, or see to it that the great Roylan-Darwin area did not occur.

The flesh burned, purple and red and fleshy with green.

The mushrooms were making him, he thought. Surely. He could really see it. Nahatape, crushed and tearing, moved through the flesh just as he had the last time, and the time before that. Djä vu, extraordinarily strong, stronger than ever before, gripped him. Royland knew all this had happened to him before, and remembered perfectly what would come next; it was on the very tip of his tongue, as they say—

The flesh paths began to dance around him and he felt his strength drain suddenly out, he was lighter than a feather, the breeze would carry him away; he would be blown like a dust mote into the circle that the circling flesh paths made. And he knew it was wrong. He cursed with the last of his energy, feeling himself slip out of the world. "Chtarl Hay!!"

Out of the corner of his mind as he slipped away he sensed that the old man was yelling him now under the arms, trying to tug him out of the hot, crying thinly into his ear: "You should have told me you did not see through me! You are clever, I never knew I saw—"

And then he slipped through into blackness and silence.

Royland awoke sick and fuzzy; it was morning in the hut, there was no sign of Nahatape. Well. Unless the old man had got to a phone and reported to the Laboratory, there were new jobs scoring the desert in search of him and all hell was breaking loose in Security and Personnel.

He would catch one of that hell on his return, and accept it with his usual assembly team.

Then he noticed that the hut had been cleaned of Nahatape's few remaining possessions, even the door cloth. A pug went through him, had the old man died in the night? He leaped from the hut and looked around for a funeral pyre, a crowd of mourners. They were not there; the naked bodies stood mute in the sunlight, and mere words grew in the single moment he remembered. And his pug, parked last night against the hut, was missing.

There were no wheeltracks, and
uncrushed weeds grew tall where the jeep had stood.

Nahatope's God Food had been powerful stuff. Boyland's hand crept uncertainly to his face. No, no beard.

He looked about him, looked hard. He made the effort necessary to see details. He did not glance at the hot and because it was approximately the same as it had always been, conclude that it was unchanged, eternal. He looked and saw changes everywhere. Once-sharp adobe corners were rounded, peeling roof beams were bleached bone-white by how many years of desert sun? The wooden framing of the deep fortess-like windows had crumpled; the third building from him had wavering, not-stable above its window-frames and its beams were chipped.

He went to it, numbly thinking; Phase 950 at least is settled. Not old Rigo's baby now. They'll know me from fingerprints, I guess. One year? Two? I feel the same.

The burnt-out house was a shamrock. In one corner were piled dry human bones. Boyland flinched blindly against the door-frame; its charred splintered and streaked his hand. These skulls were Injuns—he was anthropo-
gist enough to know that Indian men, women and children, skin and piled in a heap. Who kills Indians? There should have been some sign of clothes, burnt rugs, but there were none. Who strips Indians naked and kills them?

Signs of a devoured manure were everywhere in the house. Bulletspecks in the walls, high and low. Savage tracts left by bayonets—and swords? Dark stains of blood; it had run two inches high and left its mark. Metal glinted in a rib cage across the room. Scrupulously, he walked to the bulletproof and thrust his hand into it. The thing hit him like a razer blade; he did not look at it as he plucked it out and carried it to the dusty street. With his back turned to the burnt house he studied his find. It was a piece of soleplate, six inches long, hand-honed to a perfect edge, with a couple of nicks in it. It had stifling smell and the usual blood smell. It had a perceptible curve that would fit into only one shape: the Sasaki sword of Japan.

However long it had taken, the war was obviously over.

He went to the village well and filled it checked with steel. It was while he stirred into the dry hole that he first became afraid. Suddenly it all was real; he was no more an october but a frightened and very thirty man. He ascended the stone house of the settlement and found nothing to his purpose—a child's delirious hero, a couple of cartridge cases there.

There was only one thing left,
and that was the road, the same
earth track it had always been.
wide enough for one jeep or
the rump-sprung station wagon of the
lytle settlement that once had been.
<TaskA> invited him to run,
he did not yield. He sat on
the well-worn, took off his shoes to
noticeably smooth wrinkled out
of his khaki G.I. socks, put
the shoes on and noticed the holes
loosely enough to allow for swelli
and hesitated a moment.
Then he gained, selected two
pebbles carefully from the dust
and pepped them in his mouth.
"Heavy Petrol, forward march," he
said, and began to hike.
"Yes, he was thirty; soon he
would be hungry and tired, what
of it? The dirt road would meet
state-maintained blueline in three
miles and then there would be
traffic and he'd hitch a ride. Let
them argue with his fingerprints
if they felt like it. The Japanese
had got as far as New Mexico,
had they? Then God help their
house blacks when the counter
blow had come. Americans were
a ferocious people when tres
passed on. Conceivably, there
was not a Japanese left alive...
He began to construct his story as
he liked. In large parts it was a
repeated "I don't know." He
would still them: "I don't expect
you to believe this, as my fed
hugs won't.be hurt when you
don't. Just listen to what I say
and hold everything until the
P.R.L. has checked my finger
prints. My name is ---" And so on.
It was unsatisfying then, and
he would be on the highway soon.
His mouth, sharpened by hunger,
picked up a dinner morsen on the
desert breeze, the spices of sage,
the right way blackdust odd from
an arrow thrown on the shaded side
of a rock, the breath-taking rock
of far suggests for a
moment on the air. That would be
the highway, perhaps a recent
hitchhike on a dollar bill. Then
a startling tang of sulfur should
drewed them out and pasted on
leaving him stung and snuffing
and spitting for a headcheck
that was not there. What in God's
name had that been, and where
from? Without coming to trudge
he studied the horizon slowly and
found a smoke poll to the far
west dirty smogging the sky. It
looked like a small city's, or a
failing-cane factory's, pollution. A
city or a factory where "in his
time" she formed the thought ex
stantially-dissolved had been gone.
Then he was in the highway.
It had been improved, it was
a two-lane still, but it was easily
graded now, built up by perhaps
three inches of gravel and lay
beyond its old level, and trivially
pitched on either side.
If he had a coin he would have
traded it, but you want the week
without spending a cent at Los
Alamos Laboratory, Uncle took
care of everything, from cigarettes
to trenches. He turned left and began to walk westward toward that sluggish climate.

I am a reasonable animal, he was telling himself, and I will accept whatever comes in a spirit of reason. I will control what I can and try to understand the why.

A faint seen screen began behind him and built up fast. The recumbent animal jumped for the ditch and hopped it for dear life. The animation closer, and motion moved. At the ear-splitting climax Reynolds put his head up for one glimpse, then fell back into the ditch as if a grenade had exploded in his middle.

The convoy moved on, down the center of the two-lane highway, straddling the white line. First the three little ronc cars with the twin-count machine guns, each filled brimful with those rambunctious Japanese soldiers. Then the high-profile, armored car of duty, all-checkered, with a probably encrusted gun turret meant—nickel-plated pannards are impractical—and the Japanese emblem in the front shield but nothing else. The driver kept one eye beside a rainworn, battle-hardened SS officer in gleaming black. Then, simultaneously, two more little ronc cars—

"We've lost," Reynolds said in his usual nonchalantly. "Ceremonial tanks with glass windows—my last a long time ago." Had there been a Rising Sun insignia or was he new imagining that?

He climbed out and continued to trudge westward on the unpaved blacktop. You couldn't say "I reject the universe," not when you were as thin as he was.

"Sieghe," a mocking voice said.

"What are you doing here?"

The vehicle was just as odd in its own way as the ceremonial tank. It was minimum motive propulsion, a lefthand steed on wheels, powered by a note of little air-cooled outboard motor. The driver sat with no more comfort than a cat to back his coccyx against, and behind him were two twenty-five-pound flour sacks that took up all the remaining room in the little backboard provided. The driver had the lchengry Southwestern look; he wore a baggy blue outfit that was obviously a uniform and obviously unsuitable. He had a name-tape on his breast above an inconspicuous row of dueling ribbons.

"MARTFIELD, E., 13TH M.S., P.7" he read. He saw Reynolds' eyes on the tape and said kindly:

"My name is Martfield—Pramaker Seventh, but there's no need to use my rank here. Are you all right, my man?"

"I'm fine," Reynolds said. "What's the time back?"
"You can read!" Marfield said, astonished. "These clothes—"

"Something to drink, please," Reylond said. For the moment nothing else mattered in the world. He sat down on the backboard like a puppet with cut strings.

"Not here, fellow!" Marfield snapped in a curt, strained way, forcing the words through his throat with a stony, conventional effort of controlled anger. "You can stand until I invite you to sit!"

"Have you any water?" Reylond asked dully.

With the same look: "Who do you think you are?"

"I happen to be a theoretical physicist—" feebly arguing with a firm seventeen-century-cut imitation of a drill sergeant.

"Oh-hah!" Marfield suddenly laughed. His stiffness vanished; he actually reached into his buggy trunk and brought out a pint canteen that perched. He then forgot all about the canteen in his hand, regardedly dug Reylond in the ribs and said: "I should not have suspected. Youascal! Somebody was supposed to pick you up—but we were another minute, eh? Ah-hah-hah-hah!"

Reylond took the canteen from his hand and sipped, so a scientist was supposed to be an idiot savant, eh? Never mind now, drink. People said you were not supposed to fill your stomach with water after great thirst; it sounded to him like one of those pietistic rules people make up out of nothing because they sound reasonable. He finished the canteen while Marfield, Paymaster Seventh, looked alarmed, and wished only that there were three or four more of them.

"Got any food?" he demanded.

Marfield coughed briefly. "Doctor, I ought extremely that I have nothing with me. However if you would do me the honor of riding with me to my quarters—"

"Let's go," Reylond said. He squatted on the floor and said they changed at a good thirty miles an hour; it was a fair little engine. The Paymaster Seventh continued detestable, apologizing over his shoulder because there was no windshield, later dropped his erging eternally to explain that Royland was seated on rum—"white flour, understand?" An over-the-shoulder wink. He had a friend in the bakery at Last Alham. Several bookborders passed the other way as they traveled. At each encounter there was a passing ejaculation of miasmatic judge who saluted. Once they met a sketchy-shadowed vehicle which furnished its driver with a law suit instead of obliging him to sit with legs straight out, and Paymaster Seventh Marfield almost dislocated his shoulder saluting first. The driver of that one was a
Japanese in a kimono. A long curved sword lay across his hip. Mike felt the smell of sulfur and sulfides increased; finally there was before them the towers of a French Process layout. It looked like an oilfield, but instead of ground-straddled pipelines and basaltic storage tanks there were footlifts of yellow sulfur. They drove between threes-seated saloons from haggard, sunburned workers with shovels and yodelling shillelaghs in their wreathes. Off to the right were things that might have been Selby Penrose towers for sulphuric acid, and a glittering haven of a new-Russian administration-and-labor building. The Rising Sun banner fluttered from its central flagstaff.

Music surged as they drove deeper into the area, first it was a welcome counterpoint to the pop-pop of the two-cycle backboard engine, and then a mission by itself. Reynard looked unmoved, for the landscape, and saw them everywhere—in power poles, buildings, gatetowers. Salimadny Strauss walked behind them, his smell, made thinking just a little harder, made communication just a little more blurry even after you had learned to live with the noise.

"I miss music in the wilderness," Meshfield confided over his shoulder. He throbbed down the backboard until they were just rolling; they had passed some five unrecognised by Reynard beyond which one did not salute everybody—just the occasional Japanese walking by in business suit with blueprint-clip and attaché-case, or in kimono with scoundrel. It was a German who saluted Reynard, however, a classic pick-booted German in black broadcloth, black leather and plenty of silver trim. He watched them still for a moment after exchanging salutes with Meshfield, made up his mind, and said, "Halt."

"The Paymaster seventh stopped on the leash, killed the engine and popped to attention beside the backboard. Reynard more or less initiated him. The German said, stiffly but without accent: "Wohn haben you brought her, Paymaster?"

"A scientist, sir. I picked him up on the road returning from Los Alamos with personal supplies. He appears to be a suitable prospect who missed a rendezvous, but naturally I have not questioned the Doctor."


"If there was no bomb he'd be dead, didn't invent it now for these people."

"No! That is very interesting, considering that there is no such thing as nuclear power research. Which camp are you from?"

"The
German threw an aide to the Paymaster Seventh, who was literally shaking with fear at the turn things had taken. "You may go, Paymaster. Of course you will report yourself for harboring a fugitive."

"At once, sir," Allard said in a sick voice. He moved slowly away pushing the little hunchback before him. The Simon walked out-paid his last card and instantly the hunchback struck up a happy-go-lucky folk dance.

"Come with me," the German said, and walked off, not even looking behind to see whether Royland was following. This malt demonstration how unlikely any obstruction was to succeed. Royland followed at his back, which of course were gabled with silver spats. Royland had not seen a horse so far that day.

"A Japanese stepped from inside the administration building, a staid, grey gentlemanly type in a grey suit. "How nice to see you again, Major Kappel! Is there anything I might do to help you?"

The German stiffened. "I didn't want to bother your people, Mr. Lin. This fellow appears to be a fugitive from one of our camps; I was going to turn him over to our liaison group for examination and return."
The three heard him out in silence. Finally, in an amused voice, the colonel asked: "Who was this Hitler you mentioned?"

"For that Boyland was not prepared. His jaw dropped.

"Majer Koppel said: 'Oddly enough, he struck on a name which does figure, somewhat famously, in the annals of the Third Reich. One Adolf Hitler was an early Party agitator. But as I recall he was imprisoned against the Leader during the War of Triumph and was executed.'

"An ingenious madness," the colonel said. "Sterilized, of course!"

"Why, I don't know. I suppose so, Doctor, would you?"

Dr. Figueroa quickly examined Boyland and found him all there, which reassured them. Then they thought of looking for his camp tattoo number on the left knee, and found none. Then, thoroughly upset, they discovered that he had no birth number above his left nipple either.

"Aha!" Dr. Figueroa stammered. "His shoes are odd, sir: I just noticed. Sir, how long since you've worn shoes and laced laces?"

"You must be hungry," the colonel suddenly said. "Doctor, have my aide get something to eat for—"

"For the doctor," said Boyland. "I hope no harm will come to the fellow who picked me up."

"Have no fear, or doctor." said the major. "Such insanity! You are of German blood!"

"Not that I know of, it may be."

"It must be," said the colonel.

A plate of bread and a glass of beer arrived on a tray. Boyland postponed everything. At last he drank:

"Now, Dr. on believe me! These must be fingerprints to prove my story still in existence."

"I feel like a fool," the major said. "You still could be housing us. Dr. Figueroa, did not a German scientist establish that nuclear power is a theoretical and practical impossibility, that one always must put more in than one can take out?"

Figueroa nodded and said reverently: "Heisenberg, 1935, during the War of Triumph. His group was then assigned to electrical weapons research and produced the blinding bomb. But this fact does not invalidate the doctor's story; he says only that his group was attempting to produce nuclear power."

"We're got to research this," said the colonel. Dr. Figueroa, entertain this man, whatever he is, in your laboratory.

Figueroa's laboratory door was a maze of astounding simplicity, even crudeness. The ants, eagles and balance were capable only of simple qualitative and quantitative analyses; various works in progress testified that
they were not even strafed to their modest suits. Samples of saline and its compounds were analyzed here. It hardly seemed to call for a "doctor" of anything, and hardly even for a human being. Machinery should be continuously testing the products as they flowed out variations should be sorted mechanically or on a moving tape; automatic controls should at least stop the process and signal an alarm when variation went beyond limits; at least it might correct whatever was going wrong. But here at Figueroa every day, titrating, precipitating and weighing, entering results by hand, in a ledger and telephoning them to the world! Figueroa looked about proudly.

"As a physicist you wouldn't understand all this, of course," he said. "Still it works!"

"Perhaps later, doctor, if you'd be good enough. If you'd just help me orient myself -"

So Figueroa told him about the War of Triumph (1840-1865) and what came after.

In 1840 the realm of the Puebler (hero Gaedelen, of course)—that stripping blood fellow with the heroic jaw and eagle's eye whom you can see in the picture there—was simultaneously and treacherously invaded by the misguided French, the sub-human slaves and the predacious British. The attack, for which the abashed Germanics coined the same blunderbuss, was timed to coincide with an internal eruption of sabotage, self-punishing and assassination by the Zigmundiads, or Jews, of whom little is now known; there seem to be none left.

By Nature's indelible law, the Germans had necessarily to be tested to the utmost so that they might fully respond. Therefore Germany was overrun from East and West, and Holy Scilla: Ruff was taken, but Gedelen and his court took refuge like Barbarossa into the mountain fastnesses to await their day. It came unexpectedly soon. The deluded Americans launched a million-man amphibious attack on the breach on the Jupes of 1845. The Japanese moved with almost Trojanus courage. Not one American in twenty reached shore alive, and not one in a hundred got a mile island. Particularly lethal were the women and children who lay in consigned pits hugging artillery shells and aircraft bombs, which they detonated when enough branches drew near to make it worth while.

The second invasion attempt, a month later, was made up of second-line troops bunched up from everywhere, including occupation duty in Germany.

"Literally," Figueroa said, "the
Japanese did not know how to surrender as they did not. They could not surrender, but they could and did continue suicidal resistance, consuming nonpowers of the allies and their own warpower and supplies—a sheer bargain for the Japanese! The Russians refused to become involved in the Japanese war; they watched with avid delight while two future enemies, as they supposed, were engaged in mutual destruction.

"A third assault was made on Kiska and gained the island at last. What key shall? Only another assault on Eniwetok, the main island, house of the Emperor and the principal station. It was 1943; the volcanic, child-like American were war-weary and mistakes, the rest of them were gone. In desperation the Anglo-American leaders offered the Russians an economic sphere embracing the China coast and Japan as the price of participation."

The Russians gained and assumed, they would take that—at first. They wanted a large assault for the spring of 1947; they would take Korea and leap off from there for the Northern Hemisphere while the Anglo-American forces struck in the south. Surely this would provide at last a symbol before which the Japanese might without shame bow down and admit defeat! And then, from the mountain fastnesses, came the radio voice: "Command Your Leader calls upon you again!" Followed the Hundred Days of Glory during which the German Army reconquered itself and expelled the occupation troops—by then, children without combat experience, and fevered by not-quite-disabled veterans. Followed the lifespan of the airfields, the Luftwaffe in business again. Followed the drive, almost a death rattle, to the Channel Coast, gulping up immense munition dump retaining alignment to the Pacific Theater, millions of tons of raw materials, factories, piles of shells and explosives that lined the French roads for acres of miles, thousands of twenty-ton trucks, and hales of gasoline to fuel them. The ships of Europe, from Hamburg to Toulon, had been turning out, furiously, invasion barges for the Pacific. In April of 1947 they sailed against England in their thousands.

Halfway around the world, the British Navy was rounding Tokyo, Nagasaki, Kobe, Hiroshima, Nara. Three quarters of the way across Asia the Russian Army marched steadily on, but the decadent Brit-ish picked up their own fish, the glorious motherland at last was gaining her long-sought, long-denied warm-water ocean. The British, tired women without their
yet, children fatherless these eight years, old folks doubly weary, doubly worried about their sons, were brave but they were not insane. They accepted honorable peace terms, they capitulated.

With the Western front severed for the first time in history, the ancient Drive to the East was resumed; the monumental struggle of Treton against Star went on. His spectacular glittering with captured Dr. Paperson said: "We were worthy in these days of the Tamaíne Knights who served Prunia from the subcontinent. On the victorious Twenty-First of May, Moscow was ours!"

Moscow and the mammoth state machinery it controlled, and all the roads and rail lines and communication wires which led only to and from Moscow. Detroit-built tanks and trucks sped along those roads in the face of the bitter spring weather; the Red Army turned one hundred and eighty degrees at last and counter-marched halfway across the Russian lands; and at Kazan it broke through against the Fedorov Line.

Europe at last was One and German. Beyond Europe lay the dark and swarming masses of Asia, mysterious and populous folk where it would be better to handle through the non-German, but insidious, Japanese. The Japanese were reinforced with shipping from Blackhead, artillery from the Parlow Works, jet fighters from Canton, steel from the Ruble, rice from the Po valley, herding from Norway, timber from Sweden, oil from Bessania and laborers from India.

American front was thrown from Kusun in the winter of 1945, and bloody back across their chain of island stepping stones during the half-decade that followed.

Surely they would not; it was a monstrous affront that shield-shaped North America dared to lie there between the German Atlantic and the Japanese Pacific threatening both. The affront was wiped out in 1955.

For one hundred and fifty years now the Germans and the Japanese had sneered at each other across the banks of the Mississippi. Their leaders were fond of referring to that river as a vast frontier unhalted by a single fortification.

There was even, in fact, some interpretation; a Japanese colony fished out of New Scotia in the very rim of German America; a island name which was part of the Farben system lay in New Mexico, the very heart of Japanese-American—this was where Dr. Edward Beyland found himself, being lectured to by Dr. Paperson, Dr. Gavar Piero Paperson, true-blue German.
"Here, of course," Dr. Pigvena said gloomily, "we are so damned provincial. Little ceremony and loss manners. Well, it would be too much to expect them to send German German to this charity output, so we French Germans must endure it somehow."

"You're all French," Royland asked, startled.

"French Grosberg," Pigvena stiffly corrected him. "Colonel Biederman happens to be a French Grosberg also. Major Koppel is—"Bromberg—an Italian German." He smiled to show what he thought of that.

The Italian Grosberg entered at this point, not in time to shut off the question: "And you all come from Europe?"

They looked at him in bafflement. "My grandfather did," Dr. Pigvena said. Royland remembered, as Biederman seemed to guess their surprise—Germans born and reared in Britain, or on the Danube, Romans who would never in their lives see Italy or Rome.

Major Koppel said affably, "Well, this needn't concern us. I'm afraid, my dear fellow, that your little hoax has not succeeded. He chopped Royland merely on the back. I admit you've tricked us all miserably, now may we have the facts?"
job?" Kuppel smiled. "I looked it up in the big encyclopedia."  
Dr. Pippens, chemist, nodded. "I guess approval of the major's diligence and thorough grasp of the scientific method."  
"You still don't want to tell us?" Major Kuppel asked coarsely.  
"I can only stand by what I said."  
Kuppel shrugged. "It's not my job to persuade you; I wouldn't know how to begin. But I can and will step you off fast-foot to a work camp."  
"What—is a work camp?" Royland uneasily asked.  
"Good heavens, man, a camp where our worst! You've obviously an ungladly penning and you've got to be globally altered!" He did not speak these words as if they were foreign; they were obviously part of the everyday American working vocabulary. Gloomically he meant to Royland something like "coordinated, brought into tune with. So he would be brought into tune with what, and how?"  
The Major went on: "You'll get your orders and your back and your show, and you'll work, and eventually your irregular vagabondish habits will disappear and you'll be humbled on the kibitzer market. And you'll be damned glad we took the trouble with you." His face fell. "By the way, I was too late with your friend the Paymaster. I'm sorry—I sent a messenger to Disciplinary Control with a stop order. After all, if you took in an hour, why should you get paid after fooling a Pay-Seven?"  
"Too late? He's dead? For picking up a blackletter?"  
I don't know what that last word means," said the Major. "If it's dialect for 'papered', the answer is obviously yes. The man, after all, was a Pay-Seventy; he could read. Either you're keeping up your hooch with remarkable fidelity or you've been living in isolation. Could that be it?" is there a tribe of you somewhere? Well, the interrogator will find out that's their job.  
"The Dispatch legend?" Dr. Pippens burst out, thunder-struck. "He may be an Alcrite!"  
"By Heaven," Major Kuppel said slowly, "that might be it. What is another in my top to find a living Alcrite?"  
"What?" demanded Dr. Pippens, ostent.  
"I think I'll look the Dispatch legend up," said Kuppel, heading for the door and probably the big encyclopedia.  
"So will I!" Dr. Pippens announced firmly. The last Royland saw of them they were racing down the corridor, neck and neck. Very funny. And they had killed single-minded Paymaster Mannfield for picking up a little.
changed into the civilian suit, stuffed his own shirt and pants far back on the top shelf of the closet; this was probably concealment enough from those numerous censors. He walked out, and up the stairs, and through the busy lobby, and into the industrial complex. Nobody noticed him and he related nobody. He knew where he was going to a good, sound Japanese laboratory where there were no Germans.

Boyland had known Japanese students at the University and admitted them beyond words. Their brains, frugality, discipline, and good humor made them, as far as he was concerned, the most sensible people he had ever known. Toys and his workmen were not, as far as Boyland was concerned, essentially Japanese but just more dandies soldiers and politicians. The real Japanese would emotionally like to him, calmly check the facts—

He rubbed his chin and re-re-read Mr. In and his ship in the face. Well, presumably Mr. In was a dandified scholar and politician—and demonstrating for the Germans' benefit a tough border area full of jurisdictional questions. At any rate, he would not go to a labor camp and boil rocks or refresh furniture until those Ikebukuro decided he was glücksgutacht, he would go mad in a month.
Royland walked to the Selway towers and followed the glass pipes containing their output of sulfuric acid along the ground until he came to a bottling shed where bottle-heads men worked silently filling great wicker-boxed carboys and heaving them outside. He followed other men who heaved them up onto hand-trucks and rolled them in one door of a storage shed. Out the door at the other end were men loaded them onto service trucks which were driven up from time to time.

Royland settled himself in a corner of the storage shed beside a barefaced carboy and listened to the truck dispatcher swear at his drivers and the carboy handlers swear at their carboys.

"Get the goddam fifteen hundred loaded, uvaph! I don't care if you gotta go, we gotta get it out by midnight!"

So a few hours after dark Royland was riding west, without much air, and in the dangerous company of one thousand gallons of acid. He hoped he had a careful driver.

A night, a drive, and another night on the road. The truck never stopped except to gas up, the drivers took turns and ate sandwiches at the wheel and dozed off shift. It rained the second night. Royland, coldly and perhaps a little cruelly, linked the dogs that ran down the tar-pit side covering the road. At the first crack of dawn, hunched between two wider canoes, he saw they were rolling through irrigated vegetable fields, and the water in the ditches was too much for him. He heard the transmission shift down to slow for a curve, assumed over the tailgate and dropped to the road. He was weak andleep enough to hit like a sack.

He got up, ignoring his hunger, and hobbled to one of the hemming five-foot ditches; he drank, and drank, and drank. This time: purgatorial futility proved right; he heaved it all immediately, as what had not been grievously absorbed by his desiccated stomach. He did not mind; it was bliss enough to stretch.

The field crop was tomatoes, almost dead ripe. He was starved for them as he saw the rich humus he knew that tomatoes were the only thing in the world he cared. He gobbled one so that the juice ran down his chin, he ate the next two deliberately, letting his teeth break the crip-ness of their skin and the kempt-ful taste ran to his tongue. There were tomatoes as far as the eye could see, on either side of the road, the green of the vines and the red dots of the ripe fruit.
graphed by the checkerboard of silver ditches that caught the first light. Nevertheless he filled his pockets with them before he walked on.

Royland was happy.

Farewell to the Germans and their crusty hash and murderous ways. Look at these beautiful fields! The Japanese are an insatiably artistic people who bring beauty to every detail of daily life. And they make damn good physiologists, too. Confined to their stone hovels, cramped as he had been in the tank, they grew twisted and painful, why should they not have reached out for more room to grow, and what other way is there to reach but to make war? He could be very understanding about any people who had planted these beautiful tomates for him.

A dark blush on the size of a man struck his attention. It lay on the margin of one of the running five-foot ditches out there to his right. And then it smiled slowly into the ditch with a splash, floundered a little and proceeded to dance.

In a bobbling run Royland broke from the mud and across the field. He did not know whether he was limber enough to swim. As he stood panting on the edge of the ditch, pouring into the water, a head of hair emerged near him. He flung himself down, stretched widely and grabbed the

hair—and yet had detachment enough to feel a pang when the tomatoes in his Today pocket smushed.

"Steady," he muttered to himself, yanked the head toward him, took hold with his other hand and lifted. A surprised face confronted him and then went blank and unconscious.

For half an hour Royland, weak as he was, struggled, cursed feebly, and crept to get that body out of the water. At last he plucked himself, found it only chest-deep, and shoved the corpse over the mudclay bank. He did not know by then whether the man was alive or dead or much care. He knew only that he couldn’t walk away and leave the job half-finished.

The body was that of a fat, middle-aged Oriental, nicely Chinese rather than Japanese, though. Royland could tell by why he thought so. His clothes were soaked rags except for a leather wallet the size of a cigar box which he wore on a wide cloth belt. In side pocket was a landscape kerosene-covered patience bottle. Royland sniffed at it and smiled. Some kind of super-gin. He smiled again, and then took a conservative gulp of the stuff. While he was still coughing he felt the bottle being removed from his hand. When he looked he saw the Chinese, eyes still closed, secretly gulping the
neck of the bottle to his mouth, The Chinese drank and drank and drank, then returned the bottle to the wallet and finally opened his eyes.

"Honorable sir," said the Chinese in cut, California American speech, "you have desisted to save my unworthy life. May I supplicate your honorable favor?"

"Ah, Royland. Look, take it easy. Don't try to get up; you shouldn't even talk."

Somebody screamed behind Royland. "There has been throwing of tomatoes! There has been smashing and destruction of three vines! Children you, still see sweet-senses before the Japanese!"

"Christ, now what?"

Now a slimy black man, not a Negro, in a dirty loin-cloth, and beside him like a pipe-pipe five slimy black loin-clad sleeping in decreasing order. All were capering, pointing and threatening. The Chinese grinned, faked in his tattered robe with one hand and pulled out a nappy roll of bills. He peered me off, held it out and said: "Regard potentiayal barbarians from beyond Tien-Shan. My master and I give you claim, not tribute."

The Dravidian, or whatever he was, grabbed the bill and howled: "Ten-thousand-cents for the terrible damage! The Japs-same!"

The Chinese waved them away lovingly. He said: "If my master

Royland uncertainly helped him up. The man was wildly, whether from the near-drowning or the terrific bout of alcohol he'd taken there was no knowing. They proceeded to the road, followed by shrieks to be careful about stepping on the vines.

On the road, the Chinese said:

"My unworthy name is Li Po. Will my master design to indicate in which direction we are to travel?"

"What's this master business?" Royland demanded. "If you're grateful, swell, but I don't own you."

"My master is pleased to jest," said Li Po. Politely, fact-saving and third-personing Royland until hell wouldn't have him, he explained that Royland, having meddled with the Celestial decree that Li Po should, while drunk, still into the irrigation ditch and drown, was last held Li Po on his hands, for the Celestial Ones had washed their legs of him. "As my master of course will excellently in a moment or two."

Understandingly, he expressed his sympathy with Royland's unfortunate in seizing him as his obligation, especially since he had a hearty appetite, was known to be dishonest, and suffered from fainting fits and spasms when faced with work. "I don't know about all this," Royland said mockingly. "Wasn't there another Li Po? A poet?"
The door would have kept all really important demons out. When Bayreud described his escape from German territory to Japan, and why he had es-
serted it, he was very bland and blank. Bayreud judged that Li Po privately thought him not very bright for having left any place to come here.

And Bayreud hoped he was not right, "Tell me what it's like," he said.

"This realm," said Li Po, "under our benevolent and noble over-
lords, is the haven of all whose skins are not the bleached-bone hue which indicates the wily spirit of the Celestial Ones. Hitler's flock of Hun fighters are unworthies and the sons of Hidetaka beyond the "Tan-Sang" that we may till new soil and raise up men, and some of men to venerate us when we ascend."

"What was that bit," Bayreud demanded, "about the bleached bone? Do they shoot, ah, white men on sight here, or do they not?"

Li Po said evasively, "We are approaching the village where I unerringly serve as fortune teller, doctor of feng shui, occasional poet and story teller. Let my master have no fear about his color. This humble one will straighten his master's skin, tell a trustworthy and honest lie or two, and pass his master off as mostly a hokum."

Two Doors
After a week in Li Po’s village Royland knew that life was good there. The place was a water-and-clay settlement of about two hundred souls on the back of an irrigation ditch large enough to be dignified by the name of “canal.” It was situated not where Royland thought it must be the San Fernando Valley. The soil was thick and rich and here famously the year round. A large kind of muli was the principal crop. It was too coarse to be eaten by man; the villagers understood that it was feed for chickens somewhere up north. At any rate they harvested the stuff, fed it through a great hand-powered shredder and shade-cured the sheets. Every few days a Japanese of low caste would come by in a truck, they would load two of the stuff onto it, and wave their giant muli gaily forever. Presumably the chickens ate it and Japanese then ate the chickens.

The villagers ate chicken too, but only of weddings and funerals. The rest of the time they ate vegetables which they cultivated, a quarter-one to to a family, the way other craftsmen facet dinnish. A single cabbage might receive, during its ninety days from planting to maturity, one hundred weigh-hours from grandmother, grandfather, son, daughter, eldest granddaughter and on down to the smallest toddler. Theoretically the entire family line should have starved to death, for there are not one hundred weigh-hours in a cabbage, no how they did not. They merely stayed thin and cheerful and hard-working and content.

They spoke English by imperial decree; the reason seemed to be that they were as unworthy to speak Japanese as to paint the Imperial Chrysanthemum seal on their houses, and that to let them cling to their old languages and dialects would have been politically unwise.

They were a mixed lot of Chinese, Hindus, Dravilians and, to Royland’s surprise, low-caste and rancorous Japanese; he had not known there were such things.

Village traditions had it that a samurai named Uptons long ago sailed, pointing at the distant hills of a Hong Kong jail, “I’ll have that lot,” and “that lot” had been the ancestors of these villagers transported to America in a foul hold practically as ballast and settled here by the canal with orders to start making their muli quota.

The place was at any rate called The Uptons Village, and if some of the descendants were teetotallers, others like Li Po gave color to the legend of their starting point.

After a week the cheerful presence that he was a sufferer from
Hannah's diagnosis was confirmed and he could wash the mud off his face. He had managed to avoid the uppers' Juggernaut and especially the mauls. This was not exactly a stigma, in general it was a good idea for everybody to avoid the mauls.

In the village, Royland found his first love and his first religion both false.

He had settled down, he was getting used to the Oriental work; rhythm of slow, repeated, insinuating effort; it did not surprise him any longer that he could count his ribs. When he ate a bowl of artfully-arranged vegetables, the red of peppered cod liver against the yellow of papaya, a slice of pickled beet adding visual and olfactory tang to the picture, he felt full enough; he was full enough for the next day's fertile work in the field. It was pleasant enough to play dully with a wooden mallet in the rich soil, did not people once buy land so their children might do exactly what they did, and envy their innocent absorption? Royland was innocently absorbed, then, and the back-bench had collected six times since his arrival, when he began to feel strains of lust. On the edge of starvation (but who knew this?), For everybody was his mind was dulled, but not his later. They burned, and he looked about him in the fields, and the first girl he saw who was not repulsive he felt about him in the fields, and the first girl he saw who was not repulsive he felt about him in the fields, and the first girl he saw who was not repulsive he felt about him in the fields, and the first girl he saw who was not repulsive he felt about him in the fields, and the first girl he saw who was not repulsive...
most highly developed uniform. Vahit, if she found him weak on the theory side, made no complaints. On the contrary, when Reyland woke, she was doing something or other to his feet.

"Mom!" he thought incredulously. "With food?" He asked what she was doing. Submissively she replied, "Washing my dad's hands—let him fix you. I am a piece and old-fashioned woman.

So she painted his toe with red paint and pricked it; and then she fixed breakfast—merry, and unceremonial. She washed him, and then suddenly lifted his feet from the bowl. She handed him his clothes, which she had washed while he still slept, and helped him into them after she had washed him. Reyland thought more slowly: "It's not possible! It must be a dream. I am among the dead—all if it had to be said!" He turned to mumble as he saw her, without a moment's pause, turn focus dreaming him to polishing his wooden rale. He asked that day in the field, round-about-fashion, and learned that this was the kind of service he could look forward to for the rest of his life after marriage. If the woman give any he'd have to beat her, but this address happened more than every year or so. We have good girls here in Ugena Village.

So an Ugena Village peasant was in some ways better off than anybody from "his time," who was lost in a directionless.

His staved shinness was such that he did not realize this was true for only half the Ugena Village peasants.

Reyland awoke up on him in similar fashion. He went to the part-time Tartar priest because he was a little bored with Li Po's current after-dinner joke. He could have met all the others and listened passively to the innumerable tales of the glorious Yellow Emperor, and the beautiful hot dressed Princess Emerald, and the vicious hot plain Princess Moon Blossom; it just happened that he went to the priest of Tao and got boiled hard.

The kindly old man, a tool-maker by day, dropped a few peels of window which, in his foggy superstition-dear, Reyland did not perceive to be peels of unforgettable somberness; and showed Reyland how to meditate. It worked the first time.

Reyland hung a right match through into a 200-proof state of resemblance—the Eastern version of self-hypnosis—Enlightenment, that made him feel wonderful and all knowing and left him without a hangover when it was over. He had desired, in college, the type of people who took psychology courses and we had taken none himself; he did not know a thing about self-hypnosis except as just
To see your stupid faces, I hear there's a peculiar one in this fuc-king shang-houp you call a village.

Well, by now Reynald knew his duty. He rose and with downcast eyes asked: "Is this the noble protector in search of my unworthy self?"

"Ha! The amount owed. It's true! A big assist!" He heaved the flawless away (all amounts were nobly contrivedness of the overly material), held his scabbard in his left hand and swept out the long curved sword with his right. Li Po stepped forward and said in his most enchanting voice: "If the Heaven-born would only deign to heed a word from this humble—" What he must have known would happen happened. With a contemptuous brushand sweep the blade the amount befuddled him, and Li Po's debt was paid.

The tank of the story teller stood for a moment and then fell stiffly forward. The amount stopped to wipe his blade clean on Li Po's regal robe.

Reynald had forgotten much, but not everything. With the villagers scattering before him he ploughed forward and tackled the amount low and hard. No doubt the amount was a Brown Belt master, as he had nobody but himself to blame for turning his back. Reynald, not remembering that he was hardest, tried to kick the amount's face in. He
hears his wonderful big toes, but
its imitated heavy nail removed
the left eye of the warden and
after that it was no contest. He
never let the amnion get up off
the ground, he took out his other
eye with the handle of a rake and
then killed him on the floor with
his hands, his feet, and the
dalexander melon's traditional
weapon, a bat. It took easily half
an hour, and for the final twenty
minutes the amnion was scream-
ing for his mother. He died when
the last light left the western sky,
and his darkness Bayland stood
glue alone with the two corpses.
The villagers were gone.
He assumed, or pretended, that
they were within reach and yelled at them brokenly: "I'm
carry, Vadab. I'm sorry," all of
you. I'm going. Can I make you
understand?
"Listen. You aren't living. This
isn't life. You're not doing any-
thing but idling, you're not growing up. That's
not enough! You've got to read
and write. You can't pass on any-
thing but baby-stories like the
Yellow Emperor by word of
mouth. The village is growing.
Since your fields will reach the
fields of Sakawa Village to the
west, and then what happens?
You won't know what to do, so
you'll fight with Sakawa Village,
"Regret. No. It's just getting
drum the way you do it. You're
set up for it by being half-starved
and then you go into smashup
and you feel better so you think
you understand everything. No!
You've got to do things. If you
don't grow up, you die. All of you,
"Women. That's wrong. It's
good for the men, but it's wrong.
Half of you are slaves, do you
understand? Women are people
too, but you use them like animals
and you've turned them into
right for them to be old at thirty.
For God's sake, can't you try to
think of yourselves in their place?
"The breeding, the crazy breed-
ing—get it to stop. You forget
Oriental? But you aren't frugal;
you're crazy drunkedikers, You're
squandering the while world! Every month you breed
has to be fed by the land, and
the land isn't infinite.
"Hope some of you understand.
Li Po would have, a little, but
he'd dead.
"I'm going away now. You've
been kind to me and all I've done
is make trouble. I'm sorry."
He dashed on the ground and
found the amnion's flashlight.
With it he hunted the village's
inhabitants and found the Japa-
nese's backboard car. He started
the motor with its racket and
bawled down the dirt track
from the village to the highway.
he all right if we just keep rolling.

The car ran out of gas when Fuchs down first began to pale the sky behind him. He pulled it into the roadside ditch and walked on; by full light he was in a tumble-down, phalanx, evil-smelling, paper-eating, galvanized iron city whose name he did not know. There was no likelihood of his being noticed as a "white" man by anyone not specifically looking for him. A month of outdoor labor had browed him, and a month of artistically-composed vegetable plants had left him gaunt.

The city was carpeted with awakening humanity. Its narrow streets were paved with sprawling out men, women and children beginning to stir and hove up phlegm and rub their sleepily eyes. An open sewer-litter running down the center of each street was casually used, satisfaction the users hid their own eyes while in action.

Entry mangled variety of English rang in Royland's ears as he tried between bodies.

Toward to being something now, he told himself. This was the shabby industrial outskirts, the lowest marginal-labor area. Somewhere in the city there was beauty, science, training.

He walked aimlessly paddling until noon, and found nothing of the sort. These people in the
choses were food-handlers, food-transporters. They
sold one another cheap soup. They
made automobiles (Tol) Trucks
were one-family automobiles fac-
tories which probably made six
buckettrucks a year, filling all metal
parts by hand out of hot stock) and
orange crates and baskets and
coffee, chocolates, nails and books.
The Mystifies East has done
it again, he thought bitterly. The
Indians-Chinese-Japanese were
themselves a nice sparse area.
They could have laid things out
neatly and made it pleasant for
everybody instead of for a minute
spaced of aristocracy which he was
unable even to detect in this
human soup . . . but they had
done it again. They had laid it
impossibly just as fast as they
could until the land was full. Only
frontiers and patience could
"Help" them now.
He found exactly one building
which owned some clear space
around it and which would sur-
vive an earthquake or a flood
on cigarette butt. It was the
German Consulate.
"I'll give them the Boost, he said
to himself. "Why and? None of this
is mine. And for the Boost I'll
earn a price of some comfort
and dignity for as long as I live.
Let them blow one another up!
His climbed the endless steps.
To the black-suffered guard at
the sword-rested bronze
doors he said, "Wenn die Licht-
säulen der von einem Fluchte
herausgelassenen Strahlung den Con-
sum des Windes zu ihrem Strahl-
richtung und Flammengrüßen
proporional ist, so nennt man die
Flasche eine vollkommen aromatische
Flasche." Lambert's Law, Optics
1. All the Goths he remembered
happened to rhyme, which might
have made the guard suspicious.

Naturally the Germans come to
attention and said apologetically;
"I don't speak German. What is
it, sir?"
"You may take me to the con-
sul," Royland said, affecting
bonhomie.
"Yes, sir. At once, sir. Er, you're
an agent of course, sir?"
Royland said witheringly;
"First come, first served!"
" Um, This way, sir?"

The consul was a considerate,
understanding gentleman. He
was somewhat surprised by Roy-
land's true tale, but said from
time to time; "I see, I see. Not
impossible. Please go on."

Royland concluded: "These
people at the silo are nice ones,
I hope, unrepresentative. One of
them at least complained that it
was a drizzly sort of backwoods
assignment. I am simply guessing
that there is intelligence in your
Rush. I ask you to get me a real
physicist for twenty minutes of
conversation. You, Mr. Coult, will not regret it. I am in a position to turn over considerable information on atomic power.” So he had not been able to say it after all, the bomb was still an obvious thrill below the lob.

“This has been very interesting,” Dr. Reynold,” said the emerald green. “You referred to your enterprise as a gamble. I do not gamble. What have I to lose by putting you on report with a scientific whoo? If you prove to be a plausible hooligan?” He smiled to address it. “Very little indeed. On the other hand, what have I to gain if your extraordinary story is quite true? A great deal. I will go along with you, doctor. Have you eaten?”

The relief was tremendous. He had lunch in a basement kitchen with the Consulate guards—a huge lunch, a rather nasty bunch of stewed livers with a forced gravy, and cup after cup of coffee. Finally one of the guards lit up an ugly little spindle-shaped cigar, the kind Reynold had only seen before in the caricatures of George Grosz, and an afterthought offered one to him.

He thanked the man, smoked and managed not to cough. He overhauled and cut the greasy aperitif of the show satisfactorily. One of the blessings of the Third Reich, one of its great pleasures. They were just people, after all—a certain connection,

the fusty type of person with altogether too much power, but they were human. By which he meant, he supposed, members of Western Industrial Culture like him.

After lunch he was taken by truck from the city to an airfield by one of the guards. The plane was somewhat bigger than a B-29 he had once seen, and lacked propellers. He presumed it was one of the jets. Dr. Figures had mentioned. His guard gave his desire to a Luftwaffe sergeant at the foot of the ramp and said cheerfully, “Happy landings, fellow, it’s all going to be all right.”

“Thanks,” he said. “I’ll remember you, Corporal Collins. You’ve been very helpful.” Collins turned away.

Reynold climbed the ramp into the barrel of the plane. A bucket-seat job, and most of the seats were filled. He dropped into one on the very narrow aisle. His neighbor was in rage, his face showed signs of an old beating. When Reynold addressed him he simply sniggered away and began to sob.

The Luftwaffe sergeant came up, smiled and slammed the door. The jet began to wind up, making an unbelievable racket; further conversation was impossible. While the plane waited, Reynold paced through the win- dowless glass at his fellow-passengers. They all looked poor,
God, were they so quickly and quietly airbrushed? They were.

Even in the basket seat, Royland fell asleep.

He was awakened, he did not know how much later, by the sergeant. The man was shaking his shoulder and asking him:

“Any policy had every watch?”

“Got some nice fresh water to sell to people that wanna buy it.”

Royland had nothing, and would not take part in the miserable little racket if he had. He shook his head indignantly and the man moved on with a grim.

He would not last long – petty chicanery were lacking in the efficient dictatorship: they were rapidly detected and stopped up. Mussolini made the trains run on time, after all. (But tragically Royland recalls mentioning this to a Northwestern University English professor, one Beaven.)

Beaven had casually informed him that from 1931 to 1939 he had lived under Mussolini as a student and tourist guide, and therefore had extraordinary opportunities for observing whether the trains ran on time or not, and could definitely assure that they did not; that railway time-tables under Mussolini were best regarded as humorous fiction.

And another thought nagged at him, a thought connected with a pole, scored face named Bloom. Bloom was a young refugee physical chemist working on Wazowen.

Disembarkation Train I, and he was somewhat crazy, perhaps. Royland, on Train III, used to see little of him and could have done with even less. You couldn’t say bolla to the man without it turning into a lecture on the horrors of Nazism. He had wild stories about “gas chambers” and crematoria which no reasonable man could believe, and was a blanket slanderer of the German medical profession. He claimed that trained doctors, certified men, used humans in experiments which terminated fatally. Once, to try and bring Bloom to reason, he asked what sort of experiments these were, but the American had heard that working out, piloting someone about reviving mortally burned men by putting naked women into bed with them! The man was probably sexually damaged to believe that, he naively added that one variable in the series of experiments was to use women immediately after sexual intercourse, one hour after sexual intercourse, two hours.

Bloom was a young refugee physical chemist working on Wazowen...
Two Doors

they rise to positions of authority, they simply can’t do the work re-
quired in positions of authority because their insanity gets in the
way.

“Know your enemy,” of course—but making up phoney lies? At
least Bloom was not the obvious provocateur. He got letters in
Yiddish from friends and relations in Palestine, and there were
letters with the latest wild rumors supposed to be based on the latest
word from “escapees.”

Now he remembered. In the caloricaa about three months ago
Bloom had been sipping tea with somewhat shaking hand and
reading a letter. Reyland tried to pass him with only a nod, but
the shaky hand shot out and held him.

Bloom looked up with tears in
his eyes. “It’s real, I’m tellin’
you, Reyland, it’s real. They’re
not goin’ to use the right to
arrest, to strike a futile blow, to
outlaw prayer. Kiddush ha Shem
like a Jew should when he is
drinkin’ for Communion of the
Nations! They trick him, they say
they go to form settlements, to
labor camps, so free-five of the
stalins and sixties can handle a
whole trailerload Jews. They trick
the clothes off of them at the
camps, they say they debase
them. They trick them into nose
sacs if you look, over the door
and then it’s too late to say any
prayers, then goes on the gas.”

Bloom had let go of him and
put his head on the table between
his hands. Reyland had mumbled
something, put his shoulder
and walked on, shaken. For once
the neurotic little man might have
got some straight facts. That was
a very circumstantial touch about
expediting the handling of pris-
ners by systematic hit--always
the curtain and the stick.

You, everybody had been so
goodminded agreeable since he
climbed the Communist step! The
friendly door guard, the Council
who nodded and remarked that
his story was not an impossible
one, the men he’d eaten with—
all that quiet optimism. “Thanks,
I’ll remember you, Corporal Col-
lins. You’ve been very helpful.”
He had felt positively benign
toward the corporal, and now re-
membered that the corporal had
turned around very quickly after
he spoke. To hide a gibe?

The guard was working his
way down the side again and noti-
tied that Reyland was awake.
“Changed your mind by now?” he
asked kindly. “Got a good watch,
maybe I’ll find a piece of bread
for you. You won’t need a watch
where you’re going, folks.”

“What do you mean?” Reyland
demanded.

The guard said soothingly:
“Why, they got clocks all over
these work camps, folks. Every-
body knows what time it is in
them work camps. You don’t need
no watchfor them. Watchfor don't get in the way at them work camps." He went on down the slide, quietly.

Boyland reached across the slide and, like Bloom, gripped the man who sat opposite him. He could not see much of him, the huge windows across was lit only by half a dozen siren bulbs overhead. "What are you here for?" he asked.

The man said shyly: "I'm a Laborer Two, see? A Two. Well, my father taught me to read, see, but he waited until I was ten and knew the score, see? So I figured it was a family tradition, so I taught my own kid to read because he was a pretty smart kid, ya know? I figured he'd have some fun reading like I did, no harm done, who's to know, ya know? But I should of waited a couple years, I guess, because the kid was too young and got to beeging he could read, ya know how kids do? I'm from St Louis, by the way. I should of said first I'm from St Louis a truck maintenance man, see, so I hopped a string of returning emigrants for San Diego because I was scared. Ya see why?"

He took a deep sigh. "Thirty," he said. "Got to with some Chicks, nobody to trouble ya ya any, but then one of them cops-like seen me and he took me to the Coned place like they do, ya know? Had me scared, they always tell me illegal read- ing they bump ya off, but they don't ya know? Two your work camp, how about that?" Ya, Boyland wondered. How about it?

The plane decelerated sharply, he was thrown forward. Could they brake with those 'jets' by reversing the streams or were the engines just throttling down? He heard gargling and shuddering, hydraulic fluid to the actuators letting down the landing gear. The wheels bumped a moment later and he heard himself, the plane was still and the motors cut off seconds later.

Their Luftwaffe sergeant unlocked the door and hauled through it. "Shove that golden ramp, willja?" The sergeant's assurance had dropped from him; he looked like a very scared man. He must have been a very brave one, really, to have let himself be locked in with a hundred doomed men, protected only by an eight-shot pistol and a chain of systematic fire.

Therefore, they were hauled out of the plane onto a ramp of what Boy- land immediately identified as the Chicago Municipal Airport. The same week wafted from the stockyard the row of airline buildings at the eastern edge of the field was hatched and patched but
unchanged; the hangars through
were now something that looked
like infant plastic boys. A good
trick. Beyond the hangars many
lay the double red-bellied and
paint-stained wastes of Cleve-
hill.

'Little' men were yapping at
them: 'Fence up, boys; make a
land! Work means freedom! Look
fast!' They shuffled and were
drove into columns of four. A
snappy majorite in shiny satin
pants and white hats pranced
out of an administration build-
ing twirling her baton; a sister
march blouse from hoofer in her
tall for hat. Another good trick.

"Forward march, boys," she
shouted at them. "Wouldn't you'll
just like to follow me?" Inductive
smiis and a wiggle of the ramp,
a pause, they shuffled off in
time to the march; she must have
been wearing earphones. They
shuffled after her. At the airport
gate they dropped their blue-
clothed Little boys and picked
up a waiting escort of a dozen
blackcoats with skulls on their
high-peaked caps.

They walked in time to the
music, hypothesized by it, through
Cleveland. Cleve had been bombed
till hell and not rebuilt. To his sur-
pise, Boydland felt a pang for the
vomited Poles and Italians of W's
old ballpark. There were German
Germans, French Germans and
even Italian Germans, but he knew
in his bones that there were
no Polish or Ukrainian Germans. . . .

And Bloom had been right all
along.

Deadly weary after two hours
of marching (the majorite was
indefatigable) Boydland looked up
from the broken pavement to see
a cock-eyed wonder before him. It
was a Castle; it was a Nightmare;
it was the Chicago Auditorium.
The thing shouted 'Lake Michigan';
it covered perhaps sixteen
city blocks. It flooded down on
the lake at the east end of the
tumbled acres of bombed-out
Chicago at the south, west and
north. It was covered with rein-
fused iron bars and graves to
look like medieval

masonry. It was walled, towered,
portcullis-ed, towered, rampaged,
assaulted. The death's head
guards looked at it reverently and
the prisoners with fright. Boydland
wanted only to laugh wildly. It
was a Disney production; it was
as funny as Herrmann Corning in
full fig, and probably as deadly.

With a rummage-palooza of pass-
ports, belts and badges they were
admitted, and the majorite went
away, so doubt to take off her
boots and greens.

The vast interior of the
dead's-head filled them up and
silted affably: "Bot dinner and
your beds presently, my boys; first
a selection. Some of you, I'm
afraid, aren't well and should be
in sick-bay. Who's sick? Raise
your hands, please."
A few hands crept up stripped old men.
"That's right. Step forward, please."
Then he went down the line tapping a man here and there—\textbf{one} fellow with glaucoma, another with wrinkles visible through the tattooed past he wore. Lastly they stepped forward. Royland he looked thoughtfully over. "You're thin, my boy," he observed. "Stomach pain?" "Vomit blood? Tarry stools in the morning?"

"Nope!" Royland barked. The man laughed and continued down the line. The "sick bay" detail was marched off. Most of them were weeping aloud, they knew. Everybody knew; everybody presumed that the terrible thing would not, might not, happen. It was much more complex than Royland had realised.

"Now," said the death's-head affably, "we require some competent cement workers..."

The line of examining men went mad. They surged forward almost touching the officer but never stepping over an invisible line surrounding him. "Me!" some yelled. "Me Me Me! Another cried: "I'm good with my hands, I can learn, I'm a mechanic too, I'm strong and young, I can turn!"
A heavy, bald-headed one waved his hands in the air and bellowed: "Gearing and tile-setting! Gearing and tile-setting!"

Royland stood alone, horrified. They knew. They knew this was an offer of real work that would keep them alive for a while.

He knew suddenly how to live in a world of lies...

The officer lost his patience in a moment or two, and whips came out. Men with their faces blood-stung struggled back into line. "Lose your hands, you cement people, and no living, please. But you wouldn't lie, would you?" He picked half a dozen volunteers after questioning them briefly, and one of them marched them off. Among them was the gearing-and-tile man, who looked piously pleased with himself; such was the reward of diligence and virtue, he seemed to be proclaiming, peers to those groaners back there who neglected to learn A Trade.

"Now," said the officer casually, "we require some laboratory assistants."

The chill of death oozed down the line of prisoners. Each one seemed to shrink into himself, become poker-faced, imply that he wasn't really involved in all this.

Royland raised his hand. The officer looked at him in perplexation and then covered up quickly. "Splendid," he said. "Step forward, my boy. Yes, he pointed at another man. "You have an intelligent forehead; you look as if you'd make a fine laboratory assistant. Step forward."

"Please, not," the man begged.
He fell to his knees and clamped his hands in supplication. "Please no!" The officer took out his whip meditatively, the man groaned, scrambled to his feet and quickly stood beside Bayland.

Where there were four more chases, they were marched off across the concrete pad into one of the absurd towers, and up a spiral staircase and down a corridor, and through the promenade at the back of an auditorium where a woman screamed German from the stage at an audience of women. And through a tunnel, and down the corridor of an elementary school with empty classrooms full of small desks on either side. And into a hospital area where the fake-masonry walls yielded to scrubbed white tile and the fake flagstones underfoot to composite flooring and the fake pinewood torches in bronze brackets that had hidden their way to fluorescent tubes.

At the door marked "ROENTGEN- RENSCHRAFT" the guard rapped and a forty-faced man in a laboratory coat opened up. "Yes, requisition a demonstrator," Dr. Kalten, the guard said. "Pick any one of these."

Dr. Kalten looked them over. "Oh, this one, I suppose," he said. Bayland "Come in, fellow."

The Roentgen Laboratory of Dr. Kalten proved to be a decent medical setup with an operating table, cadaver charts of the race of men and their anatomical, mental and moral makeup. There was also a phonological head diagram and a heliograph on the wall, and an arrangement of glinting crystals on wire which Bayland recognized. It was a model of one Hans Horkheimer's crackpot theory of planetary formations, the Wehrleders.

"Sit down," the doctor said, pointing to a stool. "They've just got to take your pedigree. By the way, you might as well know that you're going to end up dissected for my demonstration in Race Science III for the Medical School, and your degree of cooperation will determine whether the dissection is performed under anesthesia or not. Clear?"

"Clear, doctor."

"Curious--no panic. I'll wager we find you a proto-banana of the Nordic-Asian stock, of at least degree five, but let's get on. Name?"

"Edward Bayland."

"Birthday?"

"July second, 1921."

The doctor threw down his pencil, "If my previous explanations were inadequate," he shouted, "let me add that if you continue to be difficult I may turn you over to my good friend Dr. Horkheimer. Dr. Horkheimer happens to teach interrogating technique at the Goggo School. Do--you--understand?"

"Yes, doctor. I'm sorry I cannot withstand your questions."
Dr. Kolben turned elaborately triumphant. "How then do you account for your remarkable state of preservation at your age of approximately 300 years?"

"Doctor, I am twenty-three years old. I have traveled through time."

"Indeed?" Kolben was amused. "And how was this done?"

Royland said shortly: "A spell was put on me by aosaic Jewish magicians. It involved the ritual cauterization and transmutation of seven beautiful Nordic virgins."

Dr. Kolben gaped for a moment. Then he picked up his pencil and said firmly: "You will understand that my doubts were logical under the circumstances. Why did you not give me the sound scientific basis for your surprising claim at once? Go ahead, tell me all about it."

He was Dr. Kolben’s prize; he was Dr. Kolben’s treasure. His predilection of speech, his otherwise-inscrutable absence of a birthmark over his left nipple, when they got around to it the gold filling in one of his teeth, his uncanny knowledge of Old America, now had a simple scientific explanation. He was from 1644. What was as hard to grasp about this? Any sound specialist knew about the last Jewish Kabbalistic mystic, Gerson and such.

His story was that he had been a student Race Scientist under the pioneering master William D. Polly. (A noisy whack who used to bantamize the chew-and-gobble hogs with the backing of Deutsche News Bank; many enough they found him in Volume VII of the standard Introduction to a Historical Handbook of Race Science.) The Jewish virgins had attempted to ambush his master on a lonely road. Royland persuaded him to switch hats and coat; in the darkness the substitution was not noticed. Later, in their stronghold he was identified, but the Nordic virgin had already been ritualistically murdered and drained of their blood, and it wouldn’t keep. The drayman destined for the master had been visited upon the disciple.

Dr. Kolben loved that bit. It tickled him pink that the scientist’s “avenging” on their enemy had been to precipitate him into a world pagand of the schlemiel entirely, where a Nordic might breathe freely.

Kolben, except for discreet confidences with each people of Old America specialties, a deutsch who was starched by the gold filling, and a dermatologist who established that there was not and never had been a grandmother on the subject committed, was playing Royland close to his vest.

After a week it became apparent that he was removing Royland for
a grandrovelling which would climax the reading of a paper. Royland did not want to be unveiled; there were too many holes in his story. He talked with animation about the beauties of Mexico in the spring; its fair roses, cacti, and mushrooms. Could they make a short trip there? Dr. Kahle said they could set. Royland was becoming rotten? Let him study, learn, profit by the marvelous annual of the scissors available here in Chicago Public Library. Dear old Chicago boasted distinguished exponents of the World Ice Theory, the Hailstone World Theory, Dancing, Homoeopathic Medicine, Curative Folk Botany—

That last did sound interesting, Dr. Kahle was pleased to take his place at the Medical School and introduce him as a protégé to Professor Allen, of Folk Botany.

Allan was a bearded gnome out of the Arthur Rackham illustrations for Das Rheingold. He loved his subject. "Mother Nature, the all-bounteous one! Wander the fields, young man, and with a wise eye in an hour's stroll you will find the argot that abounds, the dill that could forever, the tuft that strengthens the old, the puppy that mothers the heedful nestling lobe!"

"Do you have any hallucinogenic Mexican mushrooms?" Royland demanded.

"We may," Allen said, sur-
toward's back and clamped it away.  

That night Royland and Dr. Kalton walked out on one of the immemorale tower-tops for a final crisis. The moon was high and full, its light turned the graven terrain that had been Chicago into another moon. The sage and his disciple from another day leaned their elbows on a crenelated parapet two hundred feet above Lake Michigan. 

"Edward," said Dr. Kalton, "I shall read my paper tomorrow before the Chicago Academy of Race Science." The words were a challenge; something was wrong. He went on: "I shall expect you to be in the wings of the auditorium, and to appear at my command to answer a few questions from me and, if time permits, from our audience."

"I wish it could be postponed," Royland said. 

"No doubt."

"Would you explain your un-friendliness to voice, doctor?" Royland demanded. "I think I've been completely cooperative and have opened the way for you to win admiring fame in the annals of Race Science."

"Cooperatives, yes, Comrade—I wondered. You see, Edward, a dreadful thought struck me today. I have always thought it amazing that the fourth attack on Reverend Polly should have been for the purpose of precipitating him into the future and that it should have missed him. He took something out of his pocket: a small paper. He smiled it causally at Royland. "Today I began to wonder why they should have done so. Why did they not simply murder him, as they did thousands, and dispose of him in their secret crematoriums, and permit no mention in their controlled newspapers and magazines of the disappearance?"

"Now, the blood of seven Nordic virgins have been no cheap commodity. One picture with each Nordic man pistling their precious consciousness of humanity, eyes roving over every passing face, noting who bears the stigma of the sub-human, and following those who do most carefully indeed last each different be committed with a look or an accidental touch in a crowded street. Nevertheless the thing was done, your presence here is proof of it, it must have been done at enormous cost; mind these and you must have been employed to kidnap the virgins, and many of them must have fallen before Nordic guns."

"This merely to silence one small voice crying in the solemnness of the silence? I think, Edward, it was more. You bear not your real name may be, that Jewish arrogance over you, a Jew yourself, into the future as a message from the jewry of that day to what it foolishly thought..."
would be the triumphant Jewry of this. At any rate, the public questioning tenures will be con-
ducted by my friend Dr. Hertz-
bronner, whom I have mentioned
to you. If you have any little
secrets, they will not remain
secrets long. No, no! Do not move
away. You shall not go far-
singly in the knee if you do.”

Boyland moved toward him and
the gun went off. There was
an igniting hammer blow high
on his left arm. He picked up
Kalton and hurled him, scream-
ing, over the parapet two hundred
feet into the water. And collapsed.
The pain was horrible. His skin-
line was badly cracked if not
broken through. There was not
much bleeding; maybe there
would be later. He needed not fear
that the shot and scream would
raise the castle. Such sounds were
common in the Medieval Wing.

He dragged himself, injured
leg trailing, to the doorway of
Kalton’s living quarters, he leaned
himself into a chair by the stair-
well and threw a rug over his legs.
He rang the dinner bell and told
him: ‘Very quietly. “Go to the
medical storehouse for a leg
U-stance and whatever is neces-
sary for a cast, please. Dr. Kalton
has an interesting idea he wishes
to work out.”

He should have asked for a
system of morphine—no he
shouldn’t. It might affect the
time-distortion.

Two Doors

When the man came back he
thanked him and told him to turn
in for the night.

He almost screamed getting his
shoe off; his trouser leg he cut
away. The gusset had arrived just
in time; the wound was begin-
ing to bleed more copiously.
Pressure seemed to stop it. He
conducted a sleepy walking cast
on his leg. The directions on the
several five-pound cans of plaster
helped.

His leg was getting numb. Good.
His cast probably pulled some
major nerves, and a week in
it would cause permanent paraly-
sis, who cared about that?

He tried it out and found he
could get across the floor ineffi-
ciently. With a strong-enough
banister he could get down stairs
but not, he thought, up there.
That was all right. He was going
to the basement.

Gad, didn’t the medieval
Nazi’s and their cornball caste
carry back of the way, he went
to the basement: there he had a
windfall. A dozen drunkards SS
men were living it up in a corner
far from the continuous work of
their company commanders; they
were playing a game which might
have been called Spin the Cor-
poral. They saw Boyland rushing
and went sentimental tears for
poor old doc with a broken leg; they
carried him two whirling miles to
the storehouse he wanted, and shot
the lack off for him. They de-
petered, begging him to call on of Company K any time, he'd fallas in Chicago, doc. Of course here
can tear the men off a Liba ricker with his bare hands, honest, doc? Just the way you
tried a drummer off a turkey.
 You want us to get a Liba rick show you?

He got rid of them at last, clicked on the light and began his search. His leg was now too cold, painfully so. He ramaged
through the uncatologed botani-
cals and found what seemed
like boxes a crate shipped from
Tulsa. Raymond opened it by
leaking its corners against the
concrete floor. It yielded
goffed plastic envelopes, through
the clear material of one he saw
the wrinkled black things. He did
not ever compare them with the
other photos in his pocket. He saw
the envelope open and examined
them into his mouth, and chewed
and swallowed.

Maybe there had to be a Hopi
dancing and chanting, maybe
there didn't have to be. Maybe
one had to be calm, all bitter,
and fresh from a day of hard work
at differential equations which ap-
promised the Hopi souls of
thought. Maybe you only had to
fix your mind vaguely on what
you desired, as his was fixed now.
 Last time he had heard and
shamed the sounds, what he
wanted was a world without the
Hrops. He had got it, all right!

Charles Miller-Nobatpepe whis-
purred: "Choo, Choo. I was so
frightened!"

Rayland lay on the floor of the
bath, his leg mutilated, untra-
tured, but aching horribly. Drows-
ily he felt his ribs; he was
merely slender now, no longer
grand. He mumbled, "You were
working to pull me back from this
side?"

"Yes, you were there?"

"I was there. God, let me sleep."

He milled over heavily and
collapsed into complete unconscious-
ness.

When he awoke he was still
dark and his pains were gone.
Nobatpepe was reciting a healing
song very softly. He stopped
when he saw Rayland's eyes open.

"Now you know about heart-thy-
sky medicine," he said.

"Better than anybody. What

time is it?"

"Six o'clock."

"I'll be going then?" They
clapped hands and looked into
each other's eyes.

The tear started easily. Four
hours earlier, or possibly two
months earlier, he had been
worried about the baloney. He
chugged down the sentiment
read and knew what would happen next. He wouldn’t wait until morning; a mosquito might kill him, or a scorpion in his sleep. He would go directly to Brotchniak in his apartment, ask Vron Brotchniak and wake her up to tell him about Sca, tell him we have the Book.

We have a symbol to offer the Japanese now, something to which they can and will surrender, Brotchniak would be philosophic. He would probably sigh about the Book: "Ah, do we ever act responsibly? Do we even know what the consequences of our decisions will be?"

And Boyland would have to try to spell something else very sharply: 'Yes. This once we damn well will do.'

---

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Though it may not seem likely, galaxies often run into each other. Two of them are doing so at this instant—and in a most improbable manner.

THE CLASH OF CYMBALS

by ISAAC ASIMOV

About twenty years ago, two most reputable theories of the origin of planets involved the collision, or near-collision, of two stars. Considering the distances between stars and their velocities, it seemed perfectly obvious that stars practically never collided and that our own planetary family must have been the result of a nearly miraculous accident.

E. E. Smith (of Skylark and Lensman fame) knew this and was in a spot. His tremendous epic required many stellar systems in the Galaxy, and his scientific integrity insisted he supply these systems in some plausible way. He got off the spot ingeniously, by postulating the collision, not of two stars, but of two Galaxies.

With two Galaxies colliding, stellar collisions would apparently become a matter of course, and after the two Galaxies had separated, both Galaxies would be simply lousy with planets. Don Smith assumed one of the Galaxies was ours and was all set.

However, it might seem that Galaxies are even less likely to collide than stars are. The average Galaxy has a radius of 15,000 light years and is separated from its nearest neighbors by an average of 3,000,000 light years. For its size this is a smaller separation than in the case of stars, but the Universe is expanding and the Galaxies are receding from one another. Consequently—no collisions.

In the last two decades, though,
these have been two developments.

First, astronomers are increas-
ingly aware that Galaxies, like stars, may exist in clusters. For in-
stance, there is, in the constella-
tion Coma, a region of space
5,000,000 light years in diameter
that contains 500 Galaxies. Within
that cluster, Galaxies are sepa-
rated by average distances of only
300,000 light years, and, in the
center of the cluster, Galaxies may
be only 30,000 light years apart.
Furthermore, within such clusters,
individual clusters fall into
Galactic gravitation is preemi-

dent. In these clusters, therefore,
Galactic collisions become quite
conceivable and it is even argued
that some of the more crowded
Galaxies may have undergone
anywhere from 3 to 10 collisions
in the few billion years that
Galaxies have existed.

Secondly, colliding nebulae have
actually been seen as a result of
the recent development of radio-
astronomy. A "radio-star" is any
radio-source of radio waves any-
where in the sky. The second
emission is in a point in the constella-
tion Cepheus. As radio astronomers
pointedly narrowed down the precise po-
cision of the object being the radiat-
ing, it became more evident that it was
coming from nothing within our Galaxy. It seemed, in fact, to be
coming from a rather peculiar nebula with a distorted shape.

Since 200,000,000 light years dis-

tant.

Close investigation explained
why the nebula had a distorted
shape. It wasn't a nebula; it was
a two nebulae merging head on. The
head-on collision was making
an almost perfect line out of it.
It was an angle shot or a graz-
ing shot; they were coming to-
gether like a pair of well-directed
nebulae; surely the most terren-
cious crash of nebulae humanity
ever witnessed.

One might think that the radia-
tion would come from the col-

cision point where their mass (which
contains 90 percent of the stars but
practically no dust) collides. In-

stead, the radiation comes from
the outer regions of both Galaxies
where there are relatively few
stars but tremendous hordes of dust.
The total radiation radiation from
the outer edges of the
Galaxy is ten times as energetic
as is the light emitted by all
the stars in both Galaxies.

(Doc Smith was at least ten
years ahead of the professionals
in this respect, so I think we can list
"colliding Galaxies" as one of the
better "g" predicitions that sum-
true.)

Now, then, what about star col-

Science: The Clash of Nebulae
Interstellar travel is now a reality in science fiction, we naturally want to know how near right Doc Smith's intuitive guess was.

Suppose our Sun, for instance, were boring straight through the nucleus of another Galaxy. Ought we to close our eyes, put our hands over our ears and wait for a resounding crash?

Well, the nucleus of a Galaxy averages about 30,000 light years in the long diameter and contains a few hundred billion stars, so that the average distance between stars is about one light year. Two average stars would be in collision if their centers were within a million miles of each other. Therefore, by comparing the volume of a sphere of a million miles radius, with one of a light year radius (a light year being equal to 5,880,000,000,000 miles), it turns out that there is 200,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 (two hundred quintillion) times as much "non-collision space" as "collision space" in a Galactic nucleus. (The optical areas of a Galaxy are much more sparsely populated with stars than is the nucleus and may be ignored.)

To put it another way; if our Sun were placed at random, in a spot within a Galactic nucleus, the chances that it would be in collision with another Sun would be only 1 in 200,000,000,000,000,000,000.

But if the Sun were not just placed in the Galactic nucleus but moved through it from end to end, it would occupy at one time or another in its travels, all points in a cylinder 420,000 miles in radius and 30,000 light years in length. The volume of such a cylinder would be 200,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 times the volume of the Sun. That means that the chance of colliding with a star at some point in its travels is that many times better than the chances of colliding at one particular point, or 1 chance in 10,000,000.

Still not enough to warrant serious worry, perhaps. But the Sun is only one star. What if a whole Galactic nucleus of stars—200,000,000,000 of them—move through another Galactic nucleus, as is the case of the colliding Galaxies in Cygnus. Of course, not all would pass along the full length of the nucleus—some stars would only graze it. Let's say that the average "collision length" for the various stars is 15,000 light years. Allowing for 200,000,000,000 cylinders of that length, the odds for at least one collision of stars between 1,000 to 1 in favor, and the odds are therefore even for the occurrence of 1,000 such collisions.

The time it takes for two Galaxies to work their way through a collision is estimated to be 100,000 years. This means that if you are on a planet harbored in such a starclashing affair, you will
witness a star collision on an average of once a century. . . . Not very exciting, considering.

Nor, for that matter, would 1,000 planetary systems per galaxy (assuming the notions of theory of planet formation to be true) quite satisfy Dee Smith, I think, since I imagine he envisioned a thicker population of planets than that.

Ironically enough, however, Dee Smith need never have worried. We no longer need colliding stars to explain planets. Current theories seem to lean to planets as natural concomitants of star formation, so that now almost every star is expected to have planets. If these theories are correct, however, they raise another point.

The planets of our Solar System, for instance, are no closer than 29,000,000,000 to the center of the Sun (Mercury) and as far away as over 4,000,000,000 miles (Pluto). In colliding Galaxies, therefore, a star may come nowhere near colliding with another star, and yet still be close enough to disrupt the planetary system.

Come to think of it, that could be a heck of a note. Suppose the Sun made its way through another Galaxy, snatching all comers and then, just as we were on the point of congratulating ourselves, we discovered that our orbit about the Sun had been shifted to the point where life was no longer possible on Earth!

Colliding Galaxies, just to round out the subject, bring up thought of antimatter. Ordinary matter, such as that which makes up the Earth and us, consists of atoms containing positively charged protons and uncharged neutrons in their nuclei, plus negatively charged electrons in their outer reaches.

A particle resembling the electron but with a positive charge (the anti-electron, or positron) and one resembling the proton but with a negative charge (the anti-proton) are both now known. Just as a neutron decays to yield a proton (\( + \)) and an electron (\( - \)), an uncharged particle can exist which will decay to yield an anti-proton (\( - \)) and an anti-electron (\( + \)). Such a particle is an anti-neutron.

When the original super-stars exploded (see last issue's article, "The Big Bang"), the demands of symmetry led us to expect that equal quantities of particles and anti-particles were formed. Anti-particles could then get together to form anti-atoms (made up of anti-protons and anti-electrons in the center and anti-electrons in the periphery). Such anti-atoms would comprise antimatter, just as one antimatter, as it was called in a few more years ago.

But if so, where is the antimatter? There are three possible answers:

1) The demands of symmetry
aren't demanding. In 1950, the Law of Conservation of Parity was disproved. This means, essentially, that the universe need not be symmetrical. Possibly the original supernova formed only particles plus anti-particles. If so, they can't exist too closely together since a particle and an anti-particle annihilate one another on contact, their total mass being converted to energy. Since Galaxies were originally formed (it is thought) out of individual dust clouds which were themselves stable and not infalling in mutual annihilation, then a Galaxy as a whole, must be either matter or anti-matter. Our Galaxy is obviously matter. Are half the total number of Galaxies anti-matter? We might just visit other Galaxies and see if we blow up. Or we might observe as many colliding Galaxies as possible. Radio-wave emission looks reasonable, but if two colliding Galaxies are emitting a flood of gamma-rays instead, one or the other (we couldn't tell which) could be anti-matter. Of course, if both were anti-matter, it would be radio-spectra again.

3) The demands of symmetry are too demanding. Both particles and anti-particles were formed out of the original supernova but were shot off in opposite directions, so to speak. Two universes are formed; one of matter (ours) and an anti-universe of anti-matter. Each would be wrapped in its own curved space-time continuum and be beyond the reach of the other.

Of course, there is no necessary connection between universe and anti-universe, but my symmetrical mind likes to imagine a complete symmetry, and somewhere in the anti-Universe (my symmetrical mind imagines), sitting in an anti-chair on an anti-Earth, anti-Astron is completing an anti-article on colliding anti-Galaxies... and speculating on the existence of matter.
ON HAND:
Science, non-fiction, and non-science too,
by THEODORE STurgeon

There I've been read this double
month, in ways which call for
rather meticulous description of
the cause-for-chapters. Mad the first
drama from The Upliftings (Philoso-
phical Library, 90 pp., $3.00) by
one L. M. Falker. So grossness,
pedestrian, and narratively lrght
a work must exceed its excursive
price—even its very existence—in
more added, rare, or unique qual-
ity, and this specimen attempts
such a justification by assuming
the stance of social satire. Heaven
knows good social satire is rare
in these times (when a good
comedian dares to strike at no
more significant a target than a
network vice-president) and un-
gently needed (when for clear
and painful reason we avoid any
objective look at ourselves). Now,
I am not taking exception to Fal-
ker's choice of target. In the yam
of an African protopate, Ugg, and
Ugla his consort, who cause to
America to save our skins, the
author lays heavily about him
and his many of mine own en-
emies. My quarrel is rather with
how it's done; and 'how it's done'
is the very marrow of good satir,
ANIMAL FARM, PROSENT ISLAND,
DULLY'S TRAVELS, FLATLAND,
PLATO'S REPUBLIC and SYMPHAX
are each successful satire, but
they have this in common: each
is a reflecting good story. You
read all the way through because
you don't know what's going to
happen, and you care. You can't
predict, because the plot is so
good; you care because you like
and/or identify with the protag-
nist. The plots are as very good
that they can carry large books
of readers who don't need to know
they are reading satire, like chil-
dren and girls, mathematicians
and sailors. And each is
false, snod, parallel. This last
important point has escaped Fal-
lax altogether, and in attacking
dissent, Christianity, and ex-
pectancy within our borders, he calls
it all by name. Presenting no
analogy, he grants you no in-
sights. When Dean Swift tells you
of the generations-long warfare
between two nations which stea
from the Big-Endian and Little-Endian factions, and you learn that originally this was a difference of opinion on where to crack your breakfast egg, a little light goes on in your mind and you say delightfully, "Oh, just like..." When Ugg takes off on theological hyperbole or the simply humorous, naming names, you give him no credit for deixiseness, but lightness, say "Ugh." If you could like or dislike Ugg, or even care, it might be different, but the way he's drawn, he has all the wit and cleverness of a smart-alecky kid dropping his pants to shock an inoffensive maiden aunt.

So—I'm sorry; but not in the least at Fallow, who gives ample evidence of not knowing what he's doing here, but at the publishers of the book. I'm mad because they allowed their names to look so far for good satire, while right in front of them lies the work of men in our field like Felix Leiten, Alfred Bates, Fred Pohl, and a baker's dozen of others in the s/f field who can not only write gagging around the hands-heaved Fallow, but one with drollness and sublimity really make us look at ourselves.

Furry the second has a somewhat similar bane, though I strike at the author and not the publisher. Here again I am offended at the appearance of the questionable from a matrix of excellence; and here again I must stipulate must carefully in order to be understood. In his Fads & Fallacies in the Name of Science (Dover 1954, 393 pp. $1.96) Morris Gardner has written a magnificent catalog of human gullibility. I can think of no single volume more certain to delight you than this fresh, clear, well-written account of pseudo and quack, frauds and crankpots who have at one time or another propagated The Word in science and psychology, social theory and religion. Well annotated and indexed, with bibliographical sources carefully cited, the book is a pleasure to read and its subject-matter is a source of repeated astonishment and amaze—to say nothing of the dusty paragons of laugher it will afford you. I am angry because most of the book is so very fine that I resent the careless which permits one single coying ethic a handhold, however small. The slip Gardner made is a little one, but in a book of this kind, with the fine care meditated hence it blows through the fester of lazarism, no single carelessness should be permitted, lest it be used by the very microbes it is set to combat.

I refer to his footnote on diameter, wherein he leaves his reader subject to go on to piracies and give it a churning. He describes Campbell's demonstration, at the 1956 World's Fair, as...
tion, of “his second and more precise version of the Hit-Army- 
nos trojan.” What then follows is a description of the machine’s re- 
sponsive function, and effects, with references to Campbell’s “nul-
ously” interesting his audience of this and that about the ma- 
chine in particular and profits generally. Then: “Someone at the 
latter stood up and asked the obvious question: had Campbell 
tried varrying the circuit or even removing it altogether to see if 
the device still worked? No, Campbell hadn’t tried that…” 
Following which, Gardner ends his note with an utterly unjusti-
ified grouping of pinions with clavatures and the Shaver mys-
tery, an erroneous identification of “the number of Campbell’s 
readers who are impressed by this nonsense” with “the average 
fan”—two very different things—and no eye-opening explicit-
ation of the latter—that’s you, claim-by-category.

Now let it be crystal clear that I am not here mixing to the dis-
sense of pinions (which haven’t come up with anything but spec-
ulative ant enslaved), or Campbell (who’s entirely capable of dis-
banding himself) or fans, who by 
now are case-hardened-like geese they sound when struck, 
but it doesn’t hurt. My objections arise solely from Gardner’s mis-
use of the episode at the conven-
tion. Campbell was anything but

shaken in his presentation and the 
fans started no handshakes in the 
direction of pinions; there were 
more doubts than facilitators, and more non-compliantly inter-
ested than those who bought the idea outright. What Gardner 
raised altogether, however, is the signal point that Campbell 
had two machines with him for the specific purpose of demon-
strating the kind of change which 
Gardner claims he did not make. 
The first was a “broadhead” 
model with all its intense shov-
eling-tubes, primers, cells and all. 
The second was a glossy product 
in a wrinkle-finished case with 
handsome store-bought con-
tacts. Having demonstrated that 
both gadgets worked, where and 
for whom they worked, as well 
as each other, Campbell un-
veiled the top plate of the prot-
otyped No. 2 model and with 
big joy demonstrated to all that it 
contained nothing but the wiring 
diagrams of Hit-Army’s ma-
chine, drawn in India ink. If this 
kind of jolly is shannonism or hubbub, then Gardner and I 
are Doctors of Scientology. What 
bothers me is that the brilliant 
Gardner a) would have found 
so much about the demonstration 
without leaving it all, and then 
b) could have as filled what he 
found. . . . be all this as it may, 
do buy this supplement book. 
You’ll have fun, and learn a lot 
about the straight by these clear-
CONTACT BETWEEN EQUALS

by ALBERT STROUD

When he saw the world for the first time, it was much as he had imagined it. But in the back room, a heavy, breathing thing pushed impatiently against the wall, and pervaded, "I’m going to get you...!"

Alicia came over to my bathed with a scorch of cotton and a whisper of silk, and bent over me with a breath of perfume, "Will It’s time. Are you awake, Will?"

Availed! Because I’d been lying there motionless, it hadn’t occurred to her that I might be counting the cimes from the clock in its hand-erubed wooden case on the mantel.

"Dr. Chapley’s here, Will."

"I know. I heard him drive up."

I opened my eyes with a break of before against the loosely-wound guaze that swathed my head, and let in the light.

The light was while. Alicia’d taught me during the past week—dshed played colored lights on the guaze, and taught me the success of the colors. We had also talked about perspectives, and about the perception of shape and texture from a distance. I’m sure Dr. Chapley had outlined a program of education, to get me a little re-oriented ahead of time.

Alicia had been surprised how really it had gone. She ought not to have been, I’d listened to talking books all my life, and there was radio, of course. And forty years of hearing people in conversation around me. I was a graduate of Harvard Business School. I was a millionaire—five and six time the millionaire my father had been. That did not happen by accident. It could not have happened to a man who did not think intelligently, analytically, and systematically. I had an exact pattern of the world, in one-to-one correspondence with the world perceived by the sighted. My re-orientation would consist of no more than simple transposition from one system to the other.

Chapley had gotten out of his car, pulled on the gravel road fronting the cottage. He came up the flintstone steps to the porch, opened the screen door, crossed the porch, knocked briefly, opened the front door, and stepped brisk-
ly into the room. The screen door of the porch ached shut on its old spring, and faltered.

"Hello, Doctor," Alicia said.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Schaeffer. Is Mr. Schaeffer awake?"

It was a long speech for him. I put it away in my mind, to fisk out what little I knew about him.

Up to now, he'd been little more than someone Alicia had talked about a great deal, the famous, brilliant young surgeon whom had become interested in William Schaeffer's case, and who thought he could do something about it. I'd taken considerable thought on all the factors involved. But Chapman's had been all business during the brief examination in his office—a few gentle touches around the face, a lifting of my lid, a stick of the unseen flashlight, a thought-ful-grin or two, and one muttered word: "Maybe."

No matter, no beside manner, I'd liked that. All the other doctors had come from men who went through elaborate lectures to hide their infallibility, and it was always definite: "Yes," or "No." The second had, at least been right. The first had been hammy.

Well, Chapman had brought it off, as far as we could tell at the moment. Alicia said it had only taken an hour operating time. I'd come out of anesthesia in the ambulance, leaving Chapman's clinic, and the most difficult part of the whole business had been remembering not to move my eyes at all for thirty-six hours. The ambulance had brought Alicia and me to the lakes cottage of Chapman's, because it was nearer his clinic than any of my lodging. Alicia and I had spent the week here alone, without distraction, working toward this time.

Well, I thought, I'm here, and he's here, and I'm getting impatient. "Doctor."

"Yes, Mr. Schaeffer. Right here."

He came across the okra rug in crepe-soled shoes. He was wearing a tweed suit—a mucky tweed, that ruffled as he moved his arms and legs—his smelled of after-shave lotion.

"You smelled like indolene in your office." And he had met me at his clinic. An anesthetist had put me under. I knew absolutely nothing about him. Except, of course, for what Alicia had told me.

"Yes," he said. "Well, now, let's see what I look like." Bandage sheers clinched in his hand. Alicia put her cool fingers on my shoulder.

"There was a cold, grossly feeling of numbness all along my back. The gams pulled slightly. Then it lay limp across the bridge of my nose.

"Try to keep your eyes closed, Mr. Schaeffer. Just for the moment. Let the light come through the lids before you open them."
"All right," he lifted the gauze, and the light was pink. I lay quietly, gathering myself. I did not feel greatly excited. But all week I had been extremely restless, and bluish. Paper I would not let myself feel excitement. Perhaps this was excitement. Now, of course, the feeling was strongest; all, with things approaching their climax.

I did not open my eyes until Chapley asked me to. I opened them slowly, and all I saw at first were blurred colors. That was all right. All that was familiar. But there was the new business of focussing to be done, and that took some time. Binocular vision was something I understood in theory—though I had some rather distorted images of what a lens might be—but I had to teach myself control of the necessary muscles.

After that, I had to make for myself all the discoveries a baby makes—what human beings looked like, where my hands and feet were, all the connecting things. I made them. I made them slowly and carefully. Alicia and Chapley were patient. Finally I felt sure of myself.

Alicia, it seemed, had yellow hair, and was wearing a green dress. Chapley was rather taller than she. He had black hair, and his suit was brown. It was all rather strange, seeing things which had previously only occupied relative positions. But we got through it all, and easily enough.

I went outside with them, finally, wearing smoked glasses. I stood like a child with an open upper mouth. "Mountains, Faro, Sky, Cloaks, Lake, Cottage, Cliff."

The cottage was built out from the side of the steep slope, with only the front porch touching earth at the edge of the narrow road that led down to the lake. The remainder was supported on pilings. I was made uneasy by all these things, but I shuffled my feet on the ground of the road and turned my head as the breeze crossed my cheek, and then I was comfortable.

We went back into the cottage, and I sat down on the edge of the deck. I suppose I was feeling a certain brusque at my new skill. I searched over the room. Dished here. Fireplaces there, with clock. Chairs, tables, another small table with a stick-footed box on it. "That would be a television set, wouldn’t it?"

"Yes, but that’s for another day."

Chapley said quickly. "We don’t want too much drama." He opened a fresh package of gauze, and brought out two wrappings. Alicia stood in the center of the room, her legs bathed in a bar of sunlight exactly as I had heard a similar scene described in a book.

The impression generated by the author had been one of youth and warmth, Alicia... Well, Alicia.
"Well," I said, "I want to talk to you both."

"Of course," Chapley said. "But you can do that just as well with your eyes bandaged."

"No, I want to watch your faces now. Sit down together in front of me.

Alicia raised her eyepieces toward Chapley. Chapley did not change expression in response.
He moved a faint wet sound when he moved his tongue away from the roof of his mouth. He moved
to his right side in front of the fireplace and swung it around. He moved the other for Alicia, and both of them sat down.
I looked from one to the other, and gathered my glances on Chapley.

"Well, you delivered," I said.

"That excuses a great deal. But I won't give you Alicia and a fee in addition. You'll have to be satisfied with just her."

I had, for the first time, the opportunity to see that situation by which a wiper invisibly says:
"A touch of constriction passed between them, and they burst into furious bickering. They began
during their fight vehemently, and, in the end, fell to blaming each other for having been careless."
Alicia disapprovingly said. "It rarely happens in Chapley and said. "I told you he was smarter
than other one of us."
Chapley shrugged as though it hardly mat-
tered, though it took me a moment's thought to understand what
it was he had done with his shoul-
ders. He said nothing, and con-
tinued to watch me with his face
in profile. I took that for a sign of
concentration, and did not like it.

"Very well," I said, "we under-
stand each other. I'm grateful for
your skill, Chapley. I trust your
other patients will enable you to
support Alicia. But I can't under-
stand why you and she went to all
this trouble. Or where it all profit-
her. Does she think a sighted man
will live to a ripe old age than a
blind one? And if so—I repeat—
where has all this profit to her?"
I did not hit their reaction pat-
tern. Not at all. I stood up and be-
gan pacing about the room.

"Sit down, Will!" Alicia said
nervously.
That was more like it. But, why now? "Why?"

"You're making me nervous."

"Why now? Why must I sit
still? Why must my eyes be
handcuffed immediately? What will I
see? Why does this cottage mean
a great deal bigger from the out-
side than the living rooms, bed-
room, bath and kitchen I kow?"
A look passed between them.
It might have been constriction.
Apparently, it had paid me to
watch my feet as I walked and to
learn the visual limits of my eye-
ops, sir. What's behind the
kitchen? I walked toward it, and
Chapley was up facing me, his
schooled control deteriorating far enough to let me see it was a panic move.

"There's nothing back there," he said.

And that, of course, was pathetically ridiculous. I pushed by him and strode into the kitchen. There was a clear space along the wall, between a white box that was the refrigerator and the sink with its dripping faucet. There were scuff marks on the floor. There was a door there, without a handle, hidden in the bolted planks of the panels. I ran my hand over it. I found no way of opening it. Something on the other side, quite large, and breathing, rolled up and smothered against it. The paneling creaked.

I turned quickly and went back into the living room. Alice was tugging at the hardboard plug of the television set.

"Now, why," I said, "would that be the most important action you could take to keep me in ignorance?"

"It was four, Will. I was pushed it back in," she cried. She was practically out of control.

I shook my head. "Alice.

Chumpley tried to stop me from going to the television set. He was impeded by urgency, but I was William Schuster. I pushed him aside and clicked the left-hand switch. Alice stepped back.

The screen blazed up. It was flat, unheeded, and I could not


touch it at that immediately. I scarcely heard what noise the set might be making. There was something pictured on it that I had never seen before, naturally enough, moving something like a mouth. Once I had absorbed that, I could listen, "... going to get you?" It, no, rather, an effeminate component of the set said. The delivery was calm, without much intonation.

Alice turned the set off sharply.

"That's enough, Will. You'll—you'll hurt your eyes."

I almost laughed. But I was also curious. "What was that thing, anyway?"

"A children's program," Chumpley said.

"Well, all right, but what, specifically, was that thing?"

"A monster," Alice said blithely.

"Please let Dr. Chumpley befireage your eyes now."

"A monster, eh?" An entire body of literature had suddenly come clear to me. "Fascinating," I turned the set on again.

"Chumpley," the monster murmured in its unhurried tone, "I'm going to get you soon."

Thus the screen went blank.

I turned the set off and turned around.

"What a fantastic coincidence," Chumpley said.

"Oh, it couldn't have said 'Chumpley,'" Alice exclaimed. "It must have been another name like it."
"It said Champlin," I told her. "I went back to the daybed and sat down. "All this is very interesting."

"Oh, Will!" Alcina snapped. "Don't be ridiculous! It was some kind of a coincidence. You happened to tune in some children's program at just the right moment."

"And the monster was pronouncing just the right name? Odd. How many Champlins do you suppose there are? I was not feeling much elation. Cats may enjoy cat-and-mouse. I am not a cat. What I wanted was information.

Champlin said nothing. Alcina continued to pay out her pathetic rope.

"This whole thing is... insane! You know very well there aren't any real monsters, and if there were, what would they be doing on television?"

"Communicating," I said. "Now, Doctor Champlin. Why would a monster want to get you?"

"Nothing's going to get you," Champlin said.

"No doubt you think so," I said. "But you have already been proven a less effective human being than myself. I have no doubt there are other things in the Universe, as well, that could beat you. The question is, where do I fit into your escape plans?"

"And where did he meet this monster, and what had he done to incur its enmity? And so forth."

But, first of all, why did he need me, why did he need me completely functional, and what did it profit Alcina?"

I went quickly into the bedroom, and found the bureau by touch, with my eyes shut. I had no time to waste. With my hands, I found her purse. I opened her eyes, and opened the purse. It was full of geraniums and written information in the form of a stuffed wallet. All I learned was that she owned a great deal of money, but it was her reaction to my search that I wanted most."

"Has it in my wallet?" she cried in the living room. She was at the bedroom door immediately. "Stay out of my personal possessions!" she blazed. I nodded gratefully. "Thank you very much, dear. You've been an unfailling help. Now—what's in your wallet that could give you away?" I thumbed through the leaves of a ring-bound insert. "Ah. There would be photographs." Like the television picture, they were flat and colorless under their protective celluloid."

She tried to snatch them, and I snapped her hand. Carefully I studied the pictures.

Alcina and Champlin on the steps of an elaborate house. Alcina and Champlin in a car, she at the wheel. Nothing else of interest, unless one counted a dream pose of Alcina in her beauty-contest winning days.
I pressed my lips, and turned toward her. Something caught the corner of my eye. It was a glint of color, a reflection of a dark, moons-faced man, it hung from the back of the bedroom door, and moved.

"What's that?" I asked sharply.

"That?" She laughed. "Why, that's a mirror. That's you, Will!"

"The devil do at it?" I snapped. "Why do they think the blind don't know what they look like? Those pathetic scenes in the novels—the blinding eyes, flash out from under the lamplight; the uplifted hand mirror; the wandering gaze: "Is it that man?" Claptrap. Move the muscles of a face for forty years—feel the flesh twist—shave it, touch it . . . what, in Heaven's name, do they think a blind man would have most immediately available for his study of the world, if not his own body? Gob, no. Tones, shape, diagrammatic configuration, yes. At the very least, no one could ever, ever fool a total stranger on."

I stepped back still and touched my face. And it wasn't mine. I thought of the photograph, Alicia and Champley.

"Champley," I hissed, "it's the magic of the living room. I thrust Alicia out of the way. Champley was standing just inside the living room, a hypodermic syringe, a hypodermic needle, in his hand. He knuckled it and closed his hands on his throat. "What did you do?" I asked coldly, calmly increasing the pressure. "How did we trade bodies?"

He could not answer, and pressed feebly at my ears. After a little while, I found myself able to let him go. I pushed him into a chair.

"Well," I said, "how I know what..."

Alicia, dabbing at her eyes, stumbled on the arm of his chair and stroked his neck. I rushed back and forth across the room, taking stock. "All right. The monster came out from behind that secret door. He has no other escape, unless it's down a deep shaft to kill or seriously injure him. I say escape because he has an urgent desire but cannot as yet fulfill it. Q.E.D., you've got him caught in there. But he's working feverishly, and you don't dare go near him to sec-ure him once more. All right. He escapes, he rolls into this room. What does he find? Does he find a blind stranger? No, he finds Doctor Champley. He sits next, and you and Alicia live happily ever after. Good. So far, there's logic. Next, logic: you need a perpectly functioning Doctor Champ-ley. You want Alicia. Both of you want money. Bingo. You switch with me, while ostensibly recapturing your sight. You do return my sight, because you're having no trouble seeing out of my eyes.

"All right. You can do two impossible things before breakfast. I don't believe a word of it. No. You've got an automatic surgical machine, or machines. No such thing exists. No operation technique exists which would leave you and me walking around normally inside of a week, without a cut or a twinge. You're the one with the new eye, and you're holding up perfectly. You've got hold of some fantastic medical technique which Hopkins never heard of. Where'd you get 'em? What about you is different from every other being? You've met and offended a monster. Monster. Backtrack that. Allen. Allen being from some other world. Some other world with superior science. All right.

"All right, that's the source of your skill. Why does the monster hate you? Why did he give you medical skills? How did you get him exposed in here?"

I stopped and drew my flat into my open palm. "Dorothy!"

I swung toward Champley and pointed my finger between his eyes. "The alien was sick. He probably cracked. He was injured, and told you how to help him. You agreed to patch him up, but you ran out on him instead, and started in on becoming a Park Avenue surgeon. Now you're fat and frightened. The monster's going to get you. What to do? You find a substitute for yourself—and I'm the patsy. Prove me wrong."

Champley's mouth opened.

I:

"Prove me wrong!"

Champley shook his head. "No, . . ."

he said huskily. "It's right."

"And what are you going to do about it?" Alicia demanded triumphantly. "Are you going to force Louis to re-transplant?"

She laughed. "You can't do it. You can kill him, you can beat him—nothing you can do to him can possibly be as bad as what a commonplace thing like that beat would do to him. You can't even fool your way out. You can't think your way out. No one but Louis can set up the surgical machine, and he would sooner die. Better kill him and what have you gained?"

"Kill him? Kill my own body?"
That wouldn't be my kind of thinking, Alici. Let's try another tack.

"You can try all you want to,
You're bound to, Will."

"I doubt it. No part of this plan has gone right for us. I see no reason why the rest of it should.

"None of the other parts were important.

"I was referring to the general level of intelligence displayed.

"I hope you don't wonder why I'd be glad to get rid of you.

"In the most horrid way you could imagine. Yes."

"I never wonder about anything.

"Alici, I find out.

There was a perceptible reaction from the back of the cottage. Something quite large was pressing against the kitchen wall.

"What happens if I run for it?"

"I said thoughtfully. "No. That's no good. Oui, I'd be as fast as a rabbit. You'd have to go to bed me off. Too, it would take me some time to establish my identity, and some time longer before I could tell anyone I had a monster locked up in a summer cottage. Thank you, Chumley might be able to pass for me, with your coaching. Most important, that's a happy approach to the problem. It's the monster's here, and we're all here. Let's get at it."

"Never make it," Chumley said, rubbing his chest. "You're good as dead. And you're welcome."
body who might help. He established communication.

"Ah, Rym. Champlay? How did you talk to each other?"

"Why don't you try torturing me to find out?"

"Uhh. Might. Later. Let's see if I can work around you. . . . It wasn't television. That's one-way. Does he ordinarily talk in electromagnets? Frequency? When he's among his own kind? Interesting. All I need is a microphone and a transmitter, then. None available. Out. All right. How did you talk to him? What kind of wire-tap system did you use? Telepathy? No. Or this pair of yours would have collapsed a long time ago."

I looked up at Champlay. "No — it couldn't be plain English speech! This whole substitution would never stand up . . . or, wait, yes it would. Monster comes out, propelled by years of hatred. Sees Champlay— or no. Champlay says: 'Well, I'm really William Scharffer.' Does the monster listen. Does it stop? Would it? Plain English speech does it. Champlay. All I have to do is go in the kitchen and talk to it while it's still trapped?"

Champlay reached into his pocket and brought out a red, glittering blood thing. "All right, Scharffer. That did it," he said. He pointed it at my knee, and I realized it was a gun. When he fired it, there was a loud noise, my thigh wounded as though a swinging glider had jabbed it. I cupped it in my hand and stared at it, grinding my lips between my teeth.

"Does it hurt, WIP?" Alice murmured.

"Don't worry," Champlay told her. "It hurts. Now—Scharffer, are you going to sit still and do what I tell you, or are you going to try to talk to the monster? I can cripple your other leg. And then your arms. I can leave you helplessly on that bed. I suppose I could even break your spine. All I have to do is hang you up, put new clothes on you over the bandages, and I don't think the monster'll stop to inspect you too closely."

There was a wet look in his and Alice's face. That would be punishment, I thought.

Champlay said: "I don't like you, Scharffer. You're too slippery. Too quick. I'm not as smart as you are. The only thing I can do is be completely ruthless."

"That's not reserved for the exclusive use of the stupid," I said.

He licked his lips. "I don't want to break you up, Scharffer. If possible, I want you moving when the monster comes out." He looked at me with a narrow-eyed smile. "I'd think you'd prefer to have a chance to run for it."

"Crawley for PCC," Alice said. "Grazal for it. Yes?" I said, "no doubt that would be the ordinary man's preference. Perhaps it's mine."
"Quit it!" Champley cried. "On the man with the gun. Quit trying to take the initiative away from me! Now—be reasonable, damn you! Stay quiet and stop trying to wiggle out of this, and maybe you'll be in shape to get away from it when it comes out."

"I'll make no further move toward contacting the aliens," I said.

He relaxed. "Good. Now—roll up the leg of your pants, Alice, and get a compress out of my bag. We can't have him bleeding to death."

"He'll grab me if I go over to him!" Alice cried.

"I'll have the gun on him!" Champley said angrily. "He won't try anything!"

"He'll try anything!" Alice answered back.

"Maybe he will and maybe he won't," Champley said. "Would you rather have the monster grab me? No, do what you're told!"

"Don't hurt him!"

"All right," Champley said in a hard voice, something with temper. "I'll just point the gun at you. That's better than shooting."

Something massive collided against the kitchen wall, and the house trembled.

"Just remember something!" Alice shouted at Champley. "Just you remember this plan of yours doesn't work out at all without me! Even if you get away from the monster, you're nothing without me!"

"By God, I might just try it and see if you're right about that or not!"

"Champley, Alice," I said. "I took my hands away from your thigh and watched the blood spurt. It was pumping out with considerable force. That would be an arterial flow, I thought, raising my eyes and looking at them coldly.

"My God!" Alice whispered.

"Get that compress," Champley said. "Get it quick! He's doing that deliberately!"

They hurried through the basement of compressing my leg. It would have been absolutely stupid to take physical action against them. They weren't my antagonists.

The house shook again. Something broke in the kitchen wall with a loud crack.

Champley wiped his face. Alice jumped up and stood erect.

"I'm getting out of here. I'm going to wait out in the sun."

"You stay here and finish tying up that compress! And when you're through with that, you're going to wipe up the reg and get back out in the sun."

"Must up, the rest of you," I said. "I marched down and told the buildings. Getting to my feet, I started across the room.

"Sit down, Schaeffer!" Champley shouted.

"I'm going into the bedroom to change my trousers. I'm not going..."
Why was he breaking out exactly now? His fury was reaching a climax, but how had he known Champlay was in the cottage at just this time?

Had he heard Champlay's voice?

'Ved been in the cottage a week. Why was he acting now, and why now. I hadn't heard him before today. Were his ears sharper than mine?

Was my voice Champlay's?

No, No, by God. My voice was not the same, his was. All right, he could use electromechanics without apparatus. That was one extraordinary ability he had.

One. If it was his only one, why did he waste that one possible trump card on a melodramatic gesture? Was he a fool? If he was a fool, I could either handle him on the spur of the moment or else an impromptu plan would work against him.

Setup planing?

No, a man he knows what he's doing. Amazing more than the difference between him and a human being. Keep planing.

What kind of difference?

What's a pipeline into his heart? What do I owe to get a hold on him?
Alice screamed, and Chumpley cried: "There he is over there—that's Chumpley."

The alien made straight for Chumpley, took him, rushed out, and took Alice. They hung in the air.

"I have a business proposition to make," I said to the alien.

From somewhere on itself, the alien said: "Let's hear it."

Alice dove the car, with Chumpley lying beside her, his mouth deck and wet. The alien sat on the back seat beside her, covered by a blanket like a bundle of old clothes. From time to time, the alien reached out with part of itself and stroked Chumpley's arm. Whenever he did, Chumpley burst into tears.

"Oh, God," Alice mumbled to herself all the way into New York. "Oh, God, it's all evil and angles and circles. All black and all deck and all yelling."

"We're agreed, then," I said to the alien. "As soon as Chumpley and I have re-reveled bodies, I will use the machine to heal you. Then my subsidiary corporators will begin construction of a new interstellar vessel for you. In return, you will go to us as much scientific knowledge as we are capable of encompassing."

"Agreed," the alien said under his covering. "You're much more satisfying to deal with than that other one."

"I should have known you'd recognize Chumpley no matter what disguise he was wearing."

"Recognize? Chumpley? I thought all you people were named Chumpley."

"No," I said slowly, "I, for instance, am William Schaeffer."

"Interesting," the alien said. "Well, now I have to revise my warning. I like you, but that's beside the point. We've engaged in business. I have to say that if you betray me, I will get you, William Schaeffer. You understand that?"

"It's the best practical basis for doing business. Clear-cut."

"Yes, We're both practical men," the alien said. "I thought Chumpley was the best I could do, and took the chance. It's a shame I can't read minds, or I wouldn't have made the mistake. But I can literally see the presence of practicality, like a glow shining around a man's mind."

"You can," I said.

"Certainly," the alien told me. "I'm amused at the difference in degree between you and Chumpley. It's the only worthwhile measure of intelligence. And as you said, practicality is the only worthwhile rule of conduct. In any environment, it's mandatory always to deal with the most practical creature and discard the others before they can muddle the picture. The ability to sense practicality directly is an invaluable survival trait. It has raised
say people to the heights. It is what separates us from the ani-
mals. It is the test of humanity.”
The alien touched me gently with part of himself. I felt noth-
ing that would make me laugh or
cry. It was simply a contact be-
tween two equals. He said,
“That’s why I took steps to re-
move Champlong and that other
person from any effective in-
fluence between us. I could in-
stantly sense a brother in you.”
And we rode into New York
City. So I became William
Schafer, again. And now there
is an alien race in the stars which
is today a friend of Mankind.

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The Biggest Damned Martini in the Universe
by JOHN NOVOTNY

General Augustus "Auggie" Bermann was a big man. He stood the empty glass, then wrinkled it in his hand, making the olive of round shape. A motorcycle on an inner wall. He sat the glass down, pouring from a well-stewed pitcher. He drowned the olive in a pale food. He smiled thoughtfully—General Bermann was a thoughtful man.

"Sure this scene is important," he said softly to his drink. "I know that better than they do. And Colonel Engelst is exactly the man for the job."

He slipped slowly and considered the personnel assigned to the Moon Flight Experiment. Engelst, Martine, Schardt, Foram, Young. All handpicked. For once I have the right men for the right jobs."

He looked out the window in the general direction of the pentagon, smiled again, and raised his glass in salute. "And with all your procedures, forms, and meetings, I don't think you have time to lose up this operation," he whispered, and drank deeply.

He set the empty glass on the desk. "Yes," he said, thoughtful once more, "just to make sure I'd better make another inspection." He buttoned his blazer, and left the office. General Bermann did not consider himself a gambling man...
partment three weeks ago. Tuesday when General Hornblower walked in, looked at the big chart, and then hurriedly demanded, to know how to hail the test rocket was travelling 300,000 miles an hour—87 feet underground. In fact, Colonel Englebset wondered why the General hadn't transferred the Moon Flight Experiment to another corner at that very moment.

"Well done, Corporal," Colonel Englebset called warmly. Hulfe looked around, smiled, and held the cover triumphantly aloft. The Colonel turned his twisted chair, hoping that the rear cover would remain in place, and nodded approvingly toward Sergeant Young. The rear man had removed all the chalk tic-tac-toe marks from the big radar screen and even had his eyes open, watching the flip.

"How's she doing, Sergeant?" the Colonel inquired loudly. He expected Young of being able to sleep with his eyes open. The Sergeant leaned forward to check the flip and the Colonel felt just a little ashamed.

"The Moon Queen is coming home fast and true, sir. She should land in about two hours," Young reported.

"Excellent!" The officer sat a bit straighter in his chair. This was the sort of efficiency he had often dreamed about but despised of ever seeing. The computer was buzzing, humming, and flashing along the rear wall, happily keeping its business under control. Lieutenant Forrester, the programmer, was not inviting sudden interruption by calling his long-screaming siren at the command desk. The little blonde in the bath towel walked down the hall toward the photographic dark room. O'Donnell had completed his calibration studies on landing steps and Sommerville had the big telescope ready for—

"Blonde in a bath towel!" Colonel Englebset muttered, holstering himself from the chair. "There is no such assignment in this department."

He stalked around the big desk, walked across the center of the room, then down the hall. He halted in front of the door marked:

Doom Room
Do not enter under any circumstances

By order of
P.F.C. Dover

The Colonel glanced the double-looked and attempted to destroy P.F.C. Dover's order. The brush rotated many hundreds of degrees but the door remained closed.

"Can't read the sign,
"Pick up the phone. It's important." The Colonel spoke firmly. "P.F.C. Dower, I need your help. There's been an emergency."

"Emergency?" Dower asked, surprised. "What kind of emergency?"

"Your selection is required," the Colonel said. "I have no choice."

"I can't go. I have a family to care for."

"I understand," the Colonel replied. "But it's important."

"I'll do it. When do I need to be there?"

"As soon as possible."

"I'll be there."

The Colonel nodded. "Thank you."

Dower hung up the phone and walked out of the office, determined to do his duty. He knew it was important, no matter how difficult it might be.
hand across his eyes, nodded, and turned away. The door closed softly.

"Carry on," the Colonel murmured automatically. He walked a few steps, stopped, and spun around.

"That wasn't meant to—"

He closed his mouth suddenly and marched back to his desk.

"The hell with it," he told himself, sitting down.

"The Moon Queen is coming in faster than scheduled," Sergeant Young shouted urgently. The Colonel pushed himself up.

"Nope," Sergeant Young corrected. "I thought it was a ship but it was some of that noisy C.I. stuff."

Engelbert sank back in the non-corn brushed at the screen with his sleeve.

"It won't erase," Sergeant Young shouted. Colonel Engelbert pushed again and disappeared behind the desk. He picked himself up.

"Sergeant, I am having trouble with my camera," he said weakly. "Will you make up your mind?"

"It's the ship, sir. She's coming in."

The computer sprang to life and Lieutenant Forman grabbed his stereoscope.

"Hold on," the Colonel commanded. Forman hesitated.

"Give it a chance," Engelbert said gently. Corporal Hults waited and then bent over the speed prints.

He straightened and raised to his chart.

"Where is she, Corporal?"

"Minus three miles, sir," Hults responded. He gulped audibly and erased his last line. "Three thousand miles out, sir."

"Why aren't they on radio?"

Engelbert demanded angrily. Somervell backed against the controls and flicked the switch to "on." The Moon Queen's voice flooded the big room.

"... the hell is going on? I'll bet Dowar is running another crap game."

The Colonel grabbed the microphone.

"No crap games, Captain Martin," he said gruffly. "Why are you so late in reporting?"

"I've been on the air for the last hour," Captain Martin said wearily from three thousand miles out. "It seemed logical that P.F.C. Dowar was up to something."

Colonel Engelbert looked back toward the darkness.

"I suggest we get down to business," he said harshly. "You are ahead of schedule."

"Shall I turn around and fill about space for a few minutes? Captain Martin suggested feebly. The big screen went silent.

"Have you been drinking, Captain?" Colonel Engelbert demanded. "If you must know—yes," Martin reported. "And you will be too. I'm landing in twelve minutes and will explain then."
The Biggest Damn Mistake in the Universe

"But you did reach the moon?" Englet asked bouncy.
"We did," Martino reported. "In a manner of speaking. I'd rather not explain on record. Over and out."

The rail gun silent. The men stood like statues for a moment, and then rushed to the observation window. They waited.

"There she is," Young said at last. They watched as the big silver ship came down, reversed direction, and settled toward the landing area tail first. Please hit out of the tail rockets to cushion the landing.

"Whose car is that out there in the middle of the landing area?" Scrommontville asked suddenly.

"Miny," Colonel Englet countered miserably, as the rocket blast consumed the little sports car and the tail fins touched down. "I forget I left it there when I inspected the takeoff base."

Young and Holle rushed out to anchor the ladder that came out of the Moon Queen's lower port. Englet watched them shaking hands with the crew, and then everyone headed for the office. Captain Martino came through the door first and saluted. Colonel Englet returned the gesture.

"Let me congratulate you, Captain, on being the first man to command a successful expedition to the moon," he said simply. "This very secret experiment,
"Liquid?" Englet asked in astonishment. Martino nodded.
"Chow," he said. "That's why we use now it. I brought some back." He reached into his pocket and extracted a bottle of colorless liquid. Colonel Englet accepted it gingerly. He unscrewed the cap carefully and brought it to his nose. Quickly he snatched it up and handed it back.
"I gave you the wrong bottle," he said dismally.
"But this is..."
Martino nodded, uncapped the bottle, and took a healthy slug.
"Gin," he said thoughtfully.
"Gin," Colonel Englet repeated weakly.
"Just about the best I ever tasted," the space officer testified. Colonel Englet reached for the bottle and took a deep swallow. He attempted to hand it back but Captain Martino waved him off. "Bought back plenty," he said removing another bottle from his pocket. The Colonel sat silently for a minute.
"Then our secret weapon is no success at all," he said sullenly. "The Moon is unsafe for any installation."
"Unless we can find a way to make gold," Captain Martino said. Captain Schell came to life.
"I would like to volunteer for the first flight," he said bravely.
The Biggest Dreaded Monster in the Universe

grilled in sin, sir,” Colonel England concluded solemnly.

General Bormann nodded understandingly. He glared at everyone in the room. “I think you should know,” he said in a voice of iron, “that you’ll all be in the dishwasher within the week.”

F.F.C. Dower and the blonde dove the amount to come out of the darkness. General Bormann frowned.

“What have you been doing, soldiers?” he inquired. “And what has she been doing?”

“We’ve both been doing the same thing,” the blonde volunteered cheerfully.

“An experiment,” F.F.C. Dower added, a bit hopefully.

“Will I be dressed,” the General said as if nothing else, “Has the Moon Queen been re-fueled?” he asked.

“Standard Reaction,” Colonel England said. “The ground crew began as soon as she landed.”

Bormann sat on the desk and made a phone call. As he whispered the receiver he stood up and approached Colonel England.

“The Moon is important, Colonel. I have ordered a crew to report at once, and I will personally take command. This entire group is disbanded to quarters—I want no hint of this demonic orgy to escape this room while I am gone. Under penalty of an immediate firing squad. Understood?”

The General marched out. An hour later the Moon Queen rose on her column of flame and headed for space.

When the Moon Queen was twenty thousand miles out, General Bormann sat down next to Colonel Fenton.

“I was new England would briefed it up,” he said. “He never did anything right before. I always had the perfect sense when the Pentagon asked—England is working on it. And what does he do? He gets so fixed! Just about wrecks the Bormann—Fenton Moon Exporting Company. And my retirement only two years off.”

Colonel Fenton smiled sympathetically. “Well, it couldn’t have gone on forever. Anyhow, we’ll really load up this trip. And after all, it was just luck that you and I reached the Moon so that early test run—let’s hope the Pentagon never hear about that.”

“Right,” Bormann said. “Did you pack the special equipment?”

Fenton reached into his briefcase and held up a bottle of vermouth and a jar of olives.

General Bormann smiled. “Oh,” he said thoughtfully, “when we get back, remind me to ask F.F.C. Dower about a piece of—equipping he’s been using...”
THE MONEY TREE

by CLIFFORD D. SIMAK

by CLIFFORD D. SIMAK

Perfect twenty-dollar bills were floating out over the wall of the Mercafe estate. Twenty-dollar bills with stems, like leaves. Chuck climbed the wall and found the money tree....Then the rolls bit him.

30
Chuck Doyle, loader with his camera equipment, was walking along the high brick wall which sheltered the town house of J. Howard Matsall from public prying eyes when he saw the twenty-dollar bill blow across the wall.

Now, Doyle was well dried behind the tree—he had cut his eyeteeth on the conditions of the world and while no one could ever charge him with being a sophisticate, neither was he anybody's fool. And yet there was no question, either, about his quick, decisive action when there was money to be picked up off the street.

He looked around to see if anyone might be watching—somebody.
One, for example, who might be playing a dirty joke on him, or, worse yet, someone who might appear to claim the bill once he had retrieved it.

There was small chance there would be anyone, for this was the monotonous part of town, where everyone minded his own business and made sure that any smooth intruder could not come as well as find what he had in most cases by high walls or dense hedges or shabbily ornamented houses. And the street on which Doyle now prepared to stalk a piece of currency was by rights no proper street at all. It was an alley that ran between the brick walls of the Metcalfe residence and the dense hedge of Barker J. S. Groves--Doyle had parked his car in there because it was against traffic regulations to park on the boulevard upon which the houses fronted.

Seeing no one, Doyle set his camera equipment down and charged upon the bill, which was fluttering helplessly in the alley. He scooped it up with the agility of a cat grabbing off a mouse and now he saw, for the first time, that it was no pilfering one-dollar affair, or even a five-spot, but a tenner. It was with joy and amazement that it fairly gleamed, and he held it tenderly in his fingertips and resolved to return to Sunny's Place as soon as possible, and pour himself a dram or two to celebrate his colossal good luck.

There was a little breeze blowing down the alley and the leaves of the few fugitive trees that lined the alley and the leaves of the many trees that grew in the stately lawns beyond the walls and hedges were making a sort of musical symphonic sound. The sun was shining brightly and there was no hint of rain and the air was clear and fresh and the world was a perfect place.

It was becoming more perfect by the moment.

Draw over the Metcalfe wall, from which the first bill had fluttered, other bills came chasing merrily in the whippoorwill breeze, swirling in the alley.

Doyle saw them and stood for a feminine instant, his eyes beaming out a little and his Adam's apple bulging in excitement. Then he was among the bills, grabbing right and left and stuffing them in his pockets, gulping with the fear that one of them might somehow swallow him, and ridden by the conviction that once he had gathered them he should get out of there as fast as he could manage.

The money, he knew, must belong to someone and there was no one, he was sure, not even on this street, who was so consummately of such as to allow it to blow away without attempting to retrieve it.

So he gathered the bills with...
the fever of a Black Finn going through a blackberry patch and
with a lust glass seemed to be sure he had missed none, stroked
for his use.

A drop blocked away, in a less pitch locality, he wheeled the car
up to the ends opposite a vacant lot and hurriedly emptied his
pockets, smoothing out the bills and stacking them neatly on the
seat beside him. There were a lot of them, many more than he
had thought there were, and his breath whistled through his teeth.
He picked up the pile of currency preparatory to counting it
and something, some little stick-like thing was sticking out of it.
He picked it to knock it away and it stayed where it was. It seemed
to be stuck to one of the bills. He asked it to pull it loose. It
came and the bill came with it.

It was a stem, like an apple stem, like a cherry stem—a stem
attached quite solidly and naturally to one corner of a twenty-
dollar bill.

He dropped the pile of bills upon the seat and held up the
stem and the bill hung from the stem, as if it were growing from
the stem, and it was clear to see that the stem not long before
had been fastened to a branch, for the mark of recent separation
was plainly visible.

Doyle whirled softly.

A money tree! he thought.

But there was no such a thing

The Money Tree

as a money tree. They'd never been a money tree. There never
would be a money tree.

"I'm saving things," said Doyle.

"And I wish I had a drink in here."

He could shut his eyes and there it was—a mighty tree, huge
of boll and standing true and straight and high, with spreading
branches fully loaded and every leaf a twenty-dollar bill. The
wind would rustle all the leaves and would make money-music
and a man could lie in the shade of such a tree and not have a
worry in the world, just waiting for the leaves to drop so he could
pick them up and put them in his pocket.

He took at the stem a bit and it still clung to the bill, so he
folded the whole thing up as neatly as he could and stuck it in
the watch pocket of his trousers. Then he picked up the rest of
the bills and stuffed them in another pocket without counting them.

Twenty minutes later he walked into Banya's Bar. Banya was
nipping the mohawk. One lone customer was at the far end of
the bar working through a beer.

"Glass bottle and a glass," said Doyle.

"Show me one," said Banya.

Doyle gave him one of the twenty-dollar bills. It was so
fresh and new and crisp that its crinkling practically thundered
in the silence of the place. Banya
Looked it over with great care.
"Got someone making them for you?" he asked.
"No," said Doyle. "I pick them off the street."
Benny handed across a bottle and a glass.
"You throw work," he asked. "Or are you just beginning?"
"I got in a day," said Doyle. "I been shooting old J. Howard Metoff, Magazine in the east wanted picture of him."
"You mean the jacket?"
"He ain't no reactor. He went legitimate four or five years ago. He's a magazine now."
"You mean tycoon. What kind of tycoon is he?"
"I don't know. But whatever kind it is, it sure pays off. He's got a fancy-looking shack up on the hill. But he ain't so much to look at. Don't see why this magazine should want a picture of him."
"Maybe they're running a story about how it pays to go straight."
Doyle tipped the bottle and chinked liquid in his glass.
"It ain't no skin off me," he declared philosophically. "I'd go take pictures of an angler whose they paid me for it."
"Who would want pictures of my angler?"
"Lots of crazy people in the world," said Doyle. "Might want anything. I don't ask no questions. I don't venture no opinions. People want pictures taken, I take them. They pay me for it, that is all right with me."
Doyle chinked appreciatively and refilled the glass.
"Money," he asked. "You ever have more of money growing on a tree?"
"You got it wrong," said Benny. "Money grows on bushes.
If it grows on bushes, then it could grow on trees. A bush ain't nothing but a little tree."
"No," mumbled Benny, somewhat ashamed. "Money don't really grow on bushes. That is just a saying."
"The telephone rang and Benny went to answer it. "It's for you," he said.
"Now how would anyone think of looking for me here?" asked Doyle, astonished.
He pulled up the bottle and slammed down the bar to where the phone was waiting.
"All right," he told the transmitter. "You're the one who called. Start talking."
"This is Luke."
"Don't tell me. You got a job for me. You'll pay me in a day or two. How many jobs do you think I can do for you without being paid?"
"You do this job for me, Chuck, and I'll pay you everything I owe you. Not only for this one, but for all the others, too. This is one that I need real bad and I need it fast. You see, this one went off the road and into this lake and the insurance company claims-"
"Where is this car now?"
"It's still in the lake. They'll be pulling it out in a day or two and I need the pictures."
"You want me, maybe, to go down into the lake and take pictures underwater?"
"That's exactly the situation. I know that it's a tough one. But I'll get the diving equipment and arrange everything. I hate to ask if of you, but you're the only man I know..."
"I will not do it," Doyle said firmly. "My health is too delicate. If I get wet I get pneumonia and if I get cold I have a cough. Then I like to work and I'm allergic to all kinds of weeds and more than likely this lake is filled with a lot of water lilies and other kinds of plants."
"I'll pay you double!" Jake yelled in desperation. "I'll even pay you triple..."
"I know you," said Doyle. "You won't pay me nothing.
He hung up the phone and shuffled back up the bar, dragging the bottle with him.
"Never of the pay?" he asked, taking two drinks in rapid succession.
"It's a hell of a way," he said to Benny, "for a man to make a living..."
"All ways are," said Benny philosophically.
"Look, Benny, there wasn't anything wrong with that bill I give you..."
"There Russians," said Benny, "a dirty bunch."

Doyle drank again, morosely, then handed the bottle back.

"I got to quit," he announced.

"I told Mabel I would never drink again. She don't like me to have a mornfalk."

"I don't know why Mabel puts up with you," Benny told him.

"There she is, working in that beauty shop where she meets all sorts of guys. Some of them is sober and hard working."

"They ain't get any soul," said Doyle. "There ain't a one of them truck drivers and mechanics that can tell a smut from a scrambled egg."

Benny paid him out his change.

"I notice," he said, "that you never make your pay off."

"Why, sure," Doyle told him, "that's only common sense."

He picked up his change and went out into the street.

Mabel was waiting for him, but she was not surprised. Something always happened and he was always late and she had become resigned to waiting.

She was waiting in a booth and she gave him a kiss and sat down square from her. The place was empty except for a new waitress who was filling up a table at the other end of the room.

"Something funny happened to me today," said Doyle.

"I hope," said Mabel, suspending, "that it was something nice."

"Now I don't know," Doyle told her. "It could be. It could. However, get a man in trouble."

He dug into his watch pocket and took out the bill. He unfolded it and smoothed it out and laid it on the table.

"What you call that?" he asked.

"Why, Check, it's a twenty-dollar bill!"

"Look at that thing on the corner of it."

She did, with some puzzlement.

"Why, it's a stem," she said.

"Just like an apple stem. And it's fastened to the bill."

"It comes off a money tree," said Doyle.

"There ain't no such thing," objected Mabel.

"Yes, there is," Doyle told her, with some conviction. "E. Howard Metcalfe, he's got one growing in his back yard. That's how he gets all his money. I never could get it figured out how all these big fellows that live in these big houses and drive those blocklong cars could manage to make all the money it would take to live the way they do. I bet you every one of them fellows has got money trees growing in their yards. And they've kept it a secret all this time, except today Metcalfe forgot to pick his money and a wind came along and blew it off the tree and over the wall and . . ."

"But even if there was such a thing as a money tree," persisted
Mabel, "they could never keep it secret. Someone would find it out. All of them have servants and the servants would know,..."

"I got that all figured out," said Doyle. "I have been giving this thing a lot of thought and I know just how it works. Those servants in those big mansions aren't just ordinary servants. They're all old relations. They been in the family for years and they're loyal to the family. And you know why they're loyal? It's because they're getting their cuts off the money tree. I bet you they sell it all away and when it comes time for them to retire they live the life of Riley. There wouldn't nobody blush with a setup like that."

"And if all those big shots haven't got something that they want to hide, why has every one of them big houses got big walls or thick hedges around the back of them?"

"But they have garden parties," Mabel protested. "I read about them in society section all the time."

"You ever been to one of them garden parties?"

"No, of course I haven't."

"You let your body you haven't. You ain't got so many mo'...

"Why don't you invite me except other people who likewise have money tree. Why do you think all them rich people are so moody and exclusive?"

"Well, even if they have got money tree, what difference does it make? What are you going to do about it?"

"Mabel, would you maybe be able to find me a sugar sack or something?"

"We have a lot of these out back. I could get you one."

"And set up a Chemlax in it. As soon as I get it full, I could jerk the string and tighten it up so the money wouldn't all spill out if I had to."

"Chuck, you wouldn't?"

"There's a tree outside the wall. I can slimy up it. And there's a branch sticking out into the yard. I could tie a rope to that..."

"But they'd catch you?"

"Well, we'd know it if you got that sack for me. I'll go out, hunt up some rope."

"But all the stores are closed by now. You can't buy a rope."

"Know just where to get move," said Doyle. "Follow down this street has eighteen, twenty feet of it fixed up for a swing out back. Took pictures of a kid swinging there just a day or two ago."

"You'll have to drive me over to my place. I can't fix the sack in here."

"Just as soon as I get back with the rope."

"Chuck?"

"Yeah?"

"It ain't stealing, is it? This money tree?"

"Now, if Mollie has one, he hasn't any right to it. It's fair..."
gases for anyone. It’s more than
false—just isn’t right for a man
to have a thing like that all to
himself.”

“And you won’t be caught for
having counterfeited...”

“Now, how could it be counter-
feited?” demanded Doyle, just a
bit agast that she should suspect
him. “Nobody’s making it. There
ain’t no press and there ain’t no
press. The stuff just grows, hang-
ing on that tree.”

She leaned over the table
toward him. “But, Chuck, it’s so
impossible! How could it grow
anyway?”

“I don’t pretend to know,” said
Doyle, “but I ain’t no scientist and I
can’t catch the bugs, but some of
them botany fellows can do
some funny things. Like old man
Burbank. They can fix it so plants
will do most anything they want. They
can change the kind of fruit they bear and they
can change their size and their
growing habits and I haven’t got
the slightest idea if someone put his
mind to it, he could make the tree
grow anything.”

Mabel slid out of the booth.
“I’ll get the sack,” she said.

II

Doyle climbed up the tree that
grew outside the high brick wall.
Reaching the big branch that
extended out over the wall, invit-
ing the air space over the Met-
calls garden, he crepted quietly.

He tilted his head skyward and
watched the weird fleeting of light
clouds. In another minute or two,
a slightly larger cloud, he was,
would close in on the room and
when that happened was the time
to drop into the garden.

He crepted and watched the
garden and there were several
trees but there was nothing he
could make out that was peculiar
about any one of them. Except
it seemed, when he listened
clearly, that the rustling of the
leaves of one of them was softer
than the other rustlings.
He checked the rope looped in
his hand and the sack tucked
beneath his belt and waited for
the heavier cloud to move across
the room.

The house was quiet and still
and only showed one faint glim-
mer of light in an upstairs room.
And the night was quiet as well,
except for the rustling of the
leaves.

The edge of the cloud began to
cut into the scene and Doyle
moved out on the fork along the
branch. Swiftly he knotted the
rope around the branch and let
it down.

And having accomplished that,
having gone this far, he hesitated
for an instant, listening hard,
stirring his eyes for any trace
of motion in the shadowed rect-
angle of the garden,
He could detect none.
The money tree

Quickly, he slid down the rope and stalked toward the tree which had seemed to murmur more shrilly than the others.

He reached it and thrust up a cautious hand.

The boughs had the size and feel of hills and he glanced at them frantically. He jerked the sack from his belt and thrust the handful of heaven into it and then another handful and another.

Eagly, he crushed, just like picking plums. Just like being in a plum thicket. As easy as picking...

Just five minutes, he told himself. That is all I need. Just five full minutes with no one seconding.

He didn’t get five minutes. He didn’t get a minute. even.

A whirwind of silent anger came in a quiet rush out of the darkness and was upon him. It bit him in the leg and it stabbed him in the ribs and it tore his skirt half off him. It was as she was it was ferocious, and he glimpsed it in that first startled second only as a fleeting patch of motion.

He stifled the horrid glimpse of surprise and fear that snapped into his throat and fought such as silently as the thing attacking him. Twice he had his hands upon it and twice it slipped away and swarmed to the attack again.

Then, finally, he got a grip upon it that it could not shake and he lifted it high to smash it to the ground. But as he lifted it, the cloud lifted off the moon and the garden came alight.

He saw the thing, then, softly saw it, for the first time, and chomped down his gargle of amazement.

He had expected a dog of some sort. But this was not a dog. It was unlike anything he had ever seen before. It was nothing he had ever heard of.

One end of it was all mouth and the other end of it was blunt and square. It was terror-rigid, but no terror. It had short, yet powerful legs and its arms were long and sinuous and armed with heavy claws and somehow he had managed to grab it in such a manner that the arms and monstrous claws were pinned against its body.

It was dead white and hollow and as wooden as a jaybird. It had a sort of knapack, or what appeared to be a knapack, strapped upon its back.

But that was not the worst of it. Its chest was large and hard and gleaming, like the thorax of a grasshopper and the chest was like a neon-lit billboard, with characters and pictures and data and books and dishes flashing off and on.

Rapid-fire thoughts raced their way through the fear and horror that thrilled in Doto's
hears and he tried to get them tracking, but they wouldn’t track. They just kept tumbling round and wouldn’t straighten out.

Then all the dots and dashes, all the bars and symbols cleared off the binnacle’s chart and there were words, human words, in capitals, glowing upon it:

**LET GO**

**OF ME!**

Even to the exhaustion point, "Pah," said Doyle, not a little shaken, but nevertheless determined, "I will not let you go. I get you for you."

He looked swiftly around for the sack and located it on the ground nearby and reached out a foot to pull it closer.

**YOU SORRY**, yelled the creature.

"No," said Doyle, "so that you could cotton."

Kneeling, he reached out swiftly and grabbed the sugar sack. Quickly he heaved the creature into it and jerked the drawstring tight.

He stood up and lifted the sack. It was not too heavy for him to carry.

Lights snapped on in the first floor of the house, in a room facing the garden, and voices floated out of an open window, somewhere in the darkness a screen door slapped shut with a hollow sound.

Doyle whirled and ran toward the dangling rope. The sack hampered him a little, but mystery compensated for the hindrance and he climbed swiftly to the branch.

He squatted there, hidden in the shadow of the leaves, and drew up the rope, coiling it awkwardly with his one free hand.

The thing inside the sack began to thrash about and he jerked the sack up, dumped it on the branch. The thing grew quiet at once.

Footsteps came deliberately down a shadow-hidden walk and Doyle saw the red glow of a cigar as someone puffed on it.

A man’s voice spoke out of the darkness and he recognized it as Metcalfe’s voice.

"Henry?"

"Yes, sir," said Henry from the wide veranda.

"Where the devil did the roll go?"

"He’s out there somewhere, sir. He never gets too far from the tree. It’s his responsibility, you know."

The cigar-end glowed redder as Metcalfe pulled savagely.

"I don’t understand those rolls, Henry. Even after all these years, I don’t understand them..."

"No, sir," said Henry. "They’re hard things to understand."

Doyle could smell the smoke, drifting upward to him. He could tell by the smell it was a good cigar.
The Money Tree

And naturally Metcalfe would sneak the very best. So run with a money tree growing in his garden need worry about the price of money.

Cautiously, Doyle edged a foot or two along the branch, anxious to get slightly closer to the wall and safety.

The ejeet jerked around and pointed straight at him as Metcalfe tilted his head to stare into the tree.

"What was that?" he yelled.

"I didn't hear a thing, sir. It must have been the wind."

"There's no wind, you fool. It's that cut again!"

Doyle huddled closer against the branch, motionless, yet tuned to spring into action if it were necessary. Quietly he gave himself a mental hand-hitting for moving.

Metcalfe had moved off the walk and clear of the shadow and was standing in the moonlight, staring up into the tree.

"There's something up there," he announced finally. "The leaves are so thick I can't make out what it is. I bet you it's that goddam cut again. He's plugging the robs for two nights hand running."

He took the ejeet out of his face and blew a couple of beautiful smoke rings that drifted ghost-like in the moonlight.

"Henry," he shouted, "bring me a gun. I think the treebe-

garoo is right behind the door!"

Doyle had heard enough. He made a dash for it. He almost fell, but he caught himself. He dropped the rope and almost dropped the sack, but managed to hang onto it. The rope, inside the sack, begins to thud about. "Do you want to lose around?"

Doyle said gruffly to the thing inside the sack.

He tossed the bag toward the fence and it went over and he heard it thump into the alley. He hoped, monstrously, that he hadn't killed it, for it might be valuable. He might be able, he thought, to sell it to a clown. Givers were always looking for crazy things like that.

He reached the tree trunk and slid down it with no great ceremony and very little forethought and as a result collected a fine group of scratches on his arms and legs from the roughness of the bark.

He saw the sack lying in the alley and from beyond the fence he heard the frenzied blustering and blood-curdling cursing of J. Howard Metcalfe.

Someone ought to warn him, Doyle told himself. Most of his age, he shouldn't ought to allow himself to fly into such a rage. Somebody held fall flat upon his face and that would be the end of him.

Doyle scooped up the sack and ran as hard as he could to where
he'd parked the car at the alley's end. Reaching it, he toured the sack into the seat and crawled in himself. He took off with a rush and wound a decision was to throw off any possible pursuit—although that, he admitted to himself, was just a bit fantastic; he'd made his getaway before Metallic could possibly have put someone on his tail.

Half an hour later he pulled up beside a small park and began to take stock of the situation.

There was both good and bad. He had failed to harvest as much of the trees' money as he had intended and he had tipped his suit to Metallic, so there'd be no other chance.

But he knew now for a certainty that there were such things as money trees and he had a role, or he supposed it was a role, for whatever it was worth.

And the role—or quiet new inside the sack—in its more active moments of guarding the money tree, had done him not a bit of good.

His hands were dark in the moonlight with the wash of blood and there were stripes of fire across his ribs, beneath the torn skirt, where the role's claws had raked him, and one leg was bloody, too. He put down a hand to feel the warm moistness of his trembling leg.

He felt a thrill of fear course along his nerves. A man could get infected from a showing-up like that—especially by an unknown animal.

And if he went to a doctor, the doc would want to know what had happened to him, and he could say a dog, of course. But what if the doc should know right off that it was no dog bite. More than likely the doc would have to make some report or other—maybe just like he'd have to make a report on a gunshot wound.

There was, he decided, too much at stake for him to take the chance—he must not let it be known he'd found out about the money tree.

For as long as he was the only one who knew, he might stand to make a good thing of it. Especially since he had the role, which in some mysterious manner was connected with the tree—and which, even by itself, without reference to the tree, might be somehow turned into a waif of cash.

He eased the car from the curb and out into the street.

Fifteen minutes later he parked in a remote alley back of a block-long row of old apartment houses.

He descended from the car and hauled out the sack.

The role was still quiet.

"Funny thing," Doyle said. He held his hand against the sack and the sack was warm and the role stirred a bit.
"I heaped it couple of times," he said, and heaved it in the alley and it may be shook up considerable, but you can't take no chances."

He spreaded the sack and dumped the rolls out. With it came a shower of twenty-dollar bills—the three or four handfuls he had managed to pick before the rolls jumped him. The rolls piled itself off the floor with a show of dignity and steel erect—except that it didn't look as if it were standing erect. Its blind legs were so short and its front legs so long that it looked as if it were sitting like a dog. The fact that its face, or rather its mouth, since it had no face, was on top of its head, added to the illusion of sitting.

Its stance was pretty much like that of a sitting coyote baying at the moon—or, better yet, an overstated and more than ordinarily grotesque bullfrog baying at the moon.

Mabel sat out a full-fledged scream and bellowed for the bedroom, slamming the door behind her.

"For cripe's sake," moaned Doyle, "she's in the fire for sun. They'll think I'm murdering her!"

Someone thumped on the floor upstairs. A man's voice bellowed: "Cut it out down there!"

The rolls' gleaming chest lit up.
With a sinking feeling in his belly, Doyle remembered the rolls.

He spun around.

The rolls was on there.

The bedroom door opened and Mabel came out. She was calm as you.

"You live here, lady?" asked the man.

"Yes, dear," the woman said. 

"I see her in the hall."

"This guy bothering you?"

"Not at all," said Mabel. "We are real good friends."

The man swung around on Doyle.

"You get blood all over you," he said.

"I can't seem to help it," Doyle told him. "I just bleed all the blessed time."

The woman was tugging at the man's arm.

Mabel said, "I tell you, there is nothing wrong."

"Let's go, honey," urged the woman, still tugging at the arm.

"They don't want us here."

The man went reluctantly.

Doyle slammed the door and backed it. He leaned against it weakly.

"That guy," he said. "We got to get out of here. He'll keep mili-

ing it over and hell up and call the cops and they'll haul us in . . . ."

"We ain't done nothing, Claud."

"No, maybe not. But I don't like no cops. I don't want to an-

swer questions. Not right now.

HUNGRY, WHEN

WE EAT?

Doyle gulped. His cold sweat starting out on him.

WILLIAM SMITHSEY spelt the rolls. GO AHEAD. TALK. I CAN HEAR.

Someone started hammering on the door.

Doyle looked wildly around and saw the money in the floor. He started snatching it up and stuffing it in his pocket.

Where was at the door kept on hammering.

Doyle finished with the money and opened the door.

A man stood there in his under-

shirts and pants and he was big and tough. He towered over Doyle by at least a foot. A woman, standing behind him, peered around at Doyle.

"What's going on around here?" the man demanded. "We heard a lady scream."


The man kept on looking at him.

"Bit one," Doyle elaborated. "Might have been a rat."

"And you, mister. What's the matter with you? Blowed your shirt get torn?"

"I was in a crap game," said Doyle and went to shut the door.

But the man still armed it and strode into the room.

"If you don't mind, we'll look the situation over."
She cooed closer to him.
"He was right," she said. "You see all bloody. Your hands and shirt..."

"One leg too. The rolls give me a working over."
The rolls stood up from behind a corner chair.

NO VISH EMBARRASS. he
pulled out. ALWAYS HIDE FROM STRANGERS.

"That's the way he talks," said Doyle, admiring.

"What is it?" asked Mabel, backing away a pace or two.

I BOLLA.

I met him under the money tree," said Doyle. "We had a little fracas. He has something to do with the tree, guarding it or something."

"And did you get some money?"

"Not much. You see, this rolls..."

HUNGER, said the rolls.

"You come along," Mabel said to Doyle. "I got to patch you up."

"But don't you want to hear..."

"Not especially. You got into trouble again. It seems to me you want to get in trouble."

She headed for the bathroom and he followed.

"Sit down on the edge of the tub," she ordered.

The rolls came and spread out in the doorway, leaning against the sink.

AIN'T YOU GOT NO FOOD? If asked.

"Oh, for heaven's sake," Mabel exclaimed in exasperation, "what is it you want?"

FRUIT, VEGETABLES.

"Out in the kitchen. There's fruit on the table. I suppose I have to show you."

FIND MYSELF, the rolls said and left.

"I can't understand that spirit," said Mabel. "First he chased you up. Now he pays visits."

"Give him humps," said Doyle.

"Tought him some respect," observed Mabel, "he's doing of starvation. Now you sit down on that tub and let me fix you up."

He sat down gingerly while she rummaged in the medicine chest. She got a bottle of red stuff, a bottle of alcohol, emol and cotton. She knelt and rolled up Doyle's trouser leg.

"This looks bad," she said.

"Where have you cut yourself?"

"You should see a doctor, Chuck. This might get infected. His teeth might not be clean or something."

"You would ask too many questions. We got trouble enough...

"Chuck, what is that thing out there?"

"It's a roll."

"Why is it called a roll?"

"I don't know. Just call it that, I guess."

"I read about someone called a roll once. Rolls boyy, I think,
It was always doing good.

" Didn't do me a bit of good."

" What did you bring it home for, then?"

" Might be worth a million. Might sell it to a circus or a zoo. Might work up a night club act with it. The way it talks and all."

She worked rapidly and quickly on the tooth-mailed sail and cable, cleaning out the soda and snatching them with some of the red stuff that was in the bottle.

" There's another reason. I brought the rolls here, " Doyle confessed. " I get Mertaille where I want him. I know something he wouldn't want no one else to know and I get the rolls and the rolls has something to do with them money trees . . . "

" You're talking blacknose now?"

" Nah, nothing like that. You know I wouldn't never blackmail someone. Just a little private arrangement between me and Mertaille. Maybe just out of gratitude for me keeping my mouth shut, he might give me one of his money trees."

" But you said there was only one money tree."

" That's all I saw, was one. But the place was dark and there might be more of them. You wouldn't expect a man like Mertaille to be satisfied with just one money tree, would you. If he had one, he could grow some others. I bet you he has twenty-dollar trees and fifty-dollar trees and hundred-dollar trees."

He sighed. " I sure would like to get just five minutes with a hundred-dollar tree. I'd be set for life. I'd do me some two-handed picking like you never seen."

" Starch up your shirt, " said Mahal. " I got to get at them scratches on your ribs."

Doyle shook up his shirt.

" You know, " he said, " I bet you Mertaille ain't the only one that has them money trees. I bet all the rich bitches has them. I bet they're all banded together in a secret society, pledged to never talk about them. I wouldn't wonder if that's where all the money comes from. Maybe the government don't print no money, like they say they do. . . ."

" Shut up, " commanded Mahal, " and hold still."

She worked hastily on his ribs.

" What are you going to do with the rolls? " she asked.

" We'll pack him in the car and drive down and have a talk with Mertaille. You stay out in the car with the rolls and if there is any funny stuff, you get out of there. Long as we have the rolls we get Mertaille across the harel."
"I'll do no such thing," said Mabel. "I will not stay with him."

"All right, then," said Doyle, "we'll put him in the trunk. We'll fix him up with some blankets, so he'll be comfortable. He can't get at you there. And it might be better to have him under lock and key."

Mabel shook her head. "I hope that you are doing right, Chuck. I hope we don't get into trouble."

"Put that stuff away," said Doyle, "and let us get a move on. We're going to get out of here before that jerk down the hall decides to phone the cops."

The rette showed up in the doorway, putting at his belly.

"JERKS? he asked, WHAT'S THEM?"

"Oh, my aching back," said Doyle, "now I get to explain to him."

"JERKS LIKE HEELS?"

"Sure, that's it," said Doyle. "A jerk is like a heel."

"METCALFE SAY ALL OTHER HUMANS HEELS"

"Now, I tell you, Metcalfe might have something there," said Doyle, "heh-heh."

"HEEL MEAN HUMAN WITH NO MONEY"

"I've never heard it put quite that way," said Doyle, "but if that should be the case, you can count me as a heel."

"METCALFE SAY THAT WHAT IS WRONG WITH PLANET. THERE IS TOO LITTLE MONEY"

"Now, that is something that I'll go along with him."

"So I SOMETIMES ANGRY WITH YOU ANY MORE."

Mabel said, "My, but he's turned out to be a chatterbox."

"MY JOB TO CARE AND GUARD TREE."

"I ANGRY AT THE START, BUT FINALLY I THINK POOK HEEL NEED SOME MONEY CANNOT BLAME FOR TAKING."

"That's decent of you," Doyle told him. "I wish you'd thought of that before you showed me up."

"If I could have had just a full five minutes..."

"I am ready," Mabel said. "If we have to leave, let's go."

III

Doyle went softly up the walk that led to the front of the Metcalfe house. The ghost was dark and the moon was riding home.
ward in the western sky, just above the tip of a row of pines that grew in the grounds across the street.

He mounted the steps of毛病 brick and stood before the door. He reached out and rang the bell and waited.

Nothing happened.

He rang again and yet again and there was no answer.

He tried the door and it was locked.

"They flown the coop," said Doyle, talking to himself.

He went around the house into the alley and climbed the tree again.

The garden back of the house was dark and silent. He crepted for a long time step the wall and the place was empty.

He pulled a flashlight from his pocket and placed it downward. It cut a circle of uncertain light and he moved it slowly back and forth until it caught the maze of twisted earth.

His breath rasped in his throat at the sight of it and he worked the light around to be sure there was no mistake.

There was no mistake at all. The money tree was gone. Someone had dug it up and taken it away.

Doyle snapped off the light and slid it back into his pocket. He slid down the tree and trotted down the alley.

Two blocks away he came up to the car. Mabel had kept the motor idling, the word from behind the wheel and she slid under it and shoved the car to gear.

"They took it on the rim," he said. "There ain't nobody there. They dug up the tree and took it on the rim."

"Well, I'm glad of it," Mabel said defiantly. "Now you won't be getting into trouble—out with money from at least."

"I get a fender," said Doyle. "No loser," said Mabel. "Both of us is going home and getting us some sleep."

"Maybe so," said Doyle. "You can call up the nurse. Me, I got some driving to do."

"There ain't no place to drive."

"Mopsie told me when I was taking his picture this afternoon about a farm he had. Brought in about all the things he has, you know. Out west some place, near a town called Millville."

"What has that got to do with it?"

"Well, if you had a lot of money trees..."

"But he had only one tree. In the backyard of his house."

"Maybe he has lots of them. Maybe he had this one here just to keep him in pocket money when he was in town."

"You mean you're driving out to this place where he has a farm?"

"I have to find an all-night station first. I need some gas and I need a road map to find out where is this Millville place. I bet
you Matalle's got an orchard on that farm of his. Can't you see it, Mabel? Now after nigh of years, all loaded down with money?"

IV

The old proprietor of the only store in Millville—part hardware, part grocery, part druggist, with the pretender in one corner—rubbed his oily mustache.

"Yess," he said, "Man by the name of Matalle does have a farm—over in the hills across the river. He's got it leased and everything. He calls it Money Hill. Now, can you tell me, stranger, why anyone should name a farm like that?"

"People do funny things," said Doyle. "Can you tell me how to get there?"

"You asked!"

"Sure I asked, I asked you just now..."

The old man shook his head.

"You been invited there? Matalle expecting you?"

"No, I din't suppose he is."

"You'll never get in then. He's got it solid-fenced. And he's got a guard at the gate—even got a little house for the guard to stay in. Less Matalle wants you in, you don't get in."

"I'll have a try at it."

"I wish you well, stranger, but I don't think you'll make it. Now, why in the world should Matalle act like that? This is friendly country. No one else has got their farms leased with eight-foot wire and bars on top of that. No one else could afford to do it even if they wanted to. He must be power-ful scared of someone."

"Won't do," said Mabel.

"Tell me how to get there."

The old man found a paper sack underneath the counter, tied a stick pencil out of his vest pocket and set it carefully in his hip pocket. He unsheathed the jack with a leather-covered band and began drawing carefully.

"You cross the bridge and take this road—don't take that one to the left, it just winds up the river—and you go up this hollow and you reach a stump hill and at the top of it you turn left and it's just a mile to Matalle's place."

He set the pencil again and drew a rough rectangle.

"The place lies right in there," he said. "A snail's pace of property. Matalle bought four farms and threw them all together."

Back at the car Mabel was wait-ing uncertainly.

"So you was wrong all the time," she grunted. Doyle. "He hasn't got a farm."

"Just a few miles from here," said Doyle. "How is the rollin' doing?"

"He must be hungry again. He's hungin' on the trends."

"How can he be hungry? I bought him all of this bonnie at just a couple hours ago."
"Maybe he wants company. He might be getting lonesome."

"I got too much to do," said Doyle, "to be holding up Red's hand."

He climbed into the car and got it started and pulled away into the dusty street. He clattered across the bridge and instead of keeping up the hollow, as the storekeeper had directed, turned left on the road that paralleled the river.

If the map the old man had drawn on the sack was right, he figured, he should come upon the Metcalfe farm from the rear by following the river road.

Crestle hills turned into steep bluffs, covered with heavy woods and underbrush. The crooked road grew rougher. He came to a deep hollow that ran between two bluffs. A faint trail, a wagon-road more than likely, uniled for many years, angled up the hollow.

Doyle pulled the car into the old wagon road and stopped. He got out and stood for a moment, staring up the hollow.

"What you stopping for?" asked Mahal.

"Just look," Doyle told her, "to see Metcalfe in the man."

"You can't leave me here."

"I won't be gone for long."

"And there are mosquitoes," she complained, sleeping woflfy.

"Just keep the windows slanting."

He started to walk away and she called him back.
The Mosquitoes grew worse as he advanced. He reached his handkerchief and tied it around his neck. He pulled his hat down as far as it would go. He wrapped over it—a he tied them there were hundreds, but there was no end to them.

He tried to hurry, but it was no place to hurry. He was dripping wet with perspiration. He wanted to sit down and rest, for he was short of wind, but when he tried to sit the mosquitoes swarmed in upon him in hateful, mindless numbers and he had to move again.

The mouse narrowed and twisted and the going became still rougher.

He came around a bend and the way was blocked. A great mass of tangled wood and vines had become wedged between two great trees growing on opposite sides of the steep hillside.

There was no possibility of getting through the tangle. It stretched for thirty feet or more and was so thickly interlaced that it formed a solid wall, blocking the entire stream bed. It rose for dozen bounden every hundred feet.

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and that it carried its thickness uniformly. And the uphill side of it was smooth and slick, almost as if it had been planed and needed, although there was not a tool mark on it.

He examined it more closely and it was plain to see that it was no haphazard collection of driftwood that had been built up through the years, but that it was woven and interlaced so intricately that it was a single piece—a single piece even before it had become wedged between the trees.

Who, he wondered, could have, or would have, done a job like that? Where would the patience have been needed and the technique and the purpose? He shook his head in wonderment.

He had heard somewhere about Indians weaving brush together to make wets for catching fish, but these were no fish in this dry stream bed and no Indians for several hundred miles.

He tried to figure out the pattern of the weaving and there was no pattern that he could detect. Everything was twisted and interwoven around everything else and the whole thing was one solid mass.

Somewhat mused and with his mind at least partially removed, he proceeded on his way, trailing a vexing cloud of mosquitoes in his wake.

It seemed now that the trees were thinning and that he could see blue sky ahead. The terrain leveled out a bit and he tried to hurry, but_general, big muscles warned against it and he commuted himself with jogging along as best he could.

He reached more level ground and finally broke free into a clearing that climbed gently to the top of a gramy knoll. Wind came out of the west, no longer held back by the trees, and the mosquitoes fell away, except for a small swarm of diptera that went past way up the knoll with him.

He reached the top of the knoll and threw himself in the grass, lying flat, pasting like a tucker dog.

And there, not more than a hundred yards away, was the fence that closed in McAllister's farm.

It marched across the rolling, broken hills, a make of shining metal. And extending out from it was a broad swath of words, want-high, alien-green in the blazing sunlight—as if the ground had been brushed around the fence for a distance of a hundred feet or so and the words were in the ground as one might sow a crop.

Doyle squinted his eyes to try to make out what kind of weeds they were, but he was too far away.

Far on the distant ridge was the red glow of a roof, among many shadowed mans and to the west of the buildings lay an or-
The Money Tree

he could about them. But there were those other fellows—those hip-something or others—who fooled around with changing plants. They bred grasses that would grow on land that would grow no grass than this. So, they crossed-pollinated corn to grow more and bigger ears. They developed grasses that were disease-resistant, and they did a lot of other things. But developing a tree that would grow lettuce-plant money in ten of trunks seemed just a bit fanciful.

The sun beat against him and he felt the heat of it through his drying shirt. He looked at his watch and it was almost three o’clock.

He turned his attention back to the orchard and this time he saw that many little figures moved among the trees. He strained his eyes to see them better, but he could not be sure—although they looked for all the world like a gang of rollers.

He stretched down the knoll and across the strip of grass toward the weeds. He kept low and inch-by-inch and was very careful. His only hope of making a deal, any kind of deal, with Mattie, was to come upon him unwary and let him know immediately what kind of hand he held.

He started worrying about how Mattie might be getting along, but he wiped the worry out. He had enough to worry about with-
out adding to it. And, anyhow, Mabel was quite a gal and could take care of herself.

He began running through his mind alternate courses of action if he should fail to locate Met-calle, and the most obvious, of course, was to attempt a raid upon the orchard. As he thought it over, he wasn’t even sure what a raid upon the orchard might be the thing to do. He wished he’d brought along the sugar sack Mabel had fixed up for him.

The fence worried him a little, but he also thought that worry to one side. It would be time enough to worry about the fence once he got to it.

He skirted through the grass and he was doing swell. He was almost to the strip of weeds and no one apparently had seen him. Once he got to the weeds, it would be easier, for they would give him cover. He could mask right up to the fence and no one would ever notice.

He reached the weeds and walked at what he saw.

The weeds were the heathiest and thickest patch of nettles that he had ever seen before.

He got out a tentative hand and the nettle stung. They were the real McCoy. Evidently, he rubbed at the dead-white with rising on his fingers.

He raised himself cautiously to peer above the nettles. One of the rollers was coming down the slope toward the fence and there was no doubt now that the things he’d seen up in the orchard was a gag of rollers.

He ducked behind the nettles, hoping that the cats had not seen him. He lay flat upon the ground and the sun was hot and the place upon his hand that had touched the nettles blazed with fire, although it was hard to decide which was the worst—the nettle sting or all the mosquito bites that had bloomed out on him.

He noticed that the nettles were beginning to wave and tear as if they were blowing in the wind and that was a funny deal, for there wasn’t that much wind.

The nettles kept on blowing and all at once they parted right in front of him, running to a straight line, making a path between him and the fence. The nettles on the right blew to the right so hard they lay flat upon the ground and those to the left blew to the left so hard they were likewise on the ground and the path was there, without a thing to stop one walking to the fence. The roller stood just beyond the fence and he yelled out a message in large capital letters upon his blackboard chest.

COME ON OVER, HEED!
The Merry Tree

Drake raised himself from where he had been lying flat upon the ground and squatted on his toes.

If could be a trap.

What could he gain by talking with the roller?

But there was no way to retreat without losing what little advantage he might have—there was no choice but to do his best at reasoning it out.

He rose to his feet and ambushed down the settle-path with as slight a show of concern as he could manage.

He reached the fence and hunkered down so that he was almost level with the roller.

"I know where one of the missing rollers is," he said, "but not the other two."

"You know about the one who was in town with Metcalfe?"

"That's right."

"You tell me where he is."

"I'll make a deal," said Drake. "All five of them?"

"I'll tell you where he is; you do something for me. You let me up into that orchard for an hour tonight, then let me out again. Without letting Metcalfe know."

They huddled, confering, their
We cannot do that, we made an agreement and we gave our word. We grow the money, Metcalfe distributes it.

"I wouldn't distribute it," said Doyle. "I promise that I wouldn't. I'd keep it for myself."

No soap, spelled rolls No. 1. "This agreement that you have with Metcalfe. How come you made it?"

Gratitude, said No. 2. "Don't mind my meddler, but gratitude for Metcalfe..."

He found us and he rescued and protected us, and we asked him what can we do?

"And he said, grow me some money."

He say the planet needed money. He say money make happy all. Poor heels like you.

"The hell you say," said Doyle, aghast.

We grow it. We distribute it. Between us we make all the planet happy.

"Just a bunch of meddlers!"

We do not read you, chum.

"Sissies. People who do good."

We do good on many planets, why not do good here?

"But money?"

That what Metcalfe say. He say planet has plenty of all else but is short on money. "What about the other two rolls that are missing?"

They disagree. They leave. We worry, much about them.

"You disagreed on growing money? They thought, maybe, you should grow something else?"

We disagree on Metcalfe. Two say he trick us. Rest of us say he very noble human.
The Money Tree

A bunch of corps,

What do you think, Doyle?

Very noble human!

WE TALK

ENOUGH

NOW WE

SAY

GOODBYE.

They turned around, almost as if someone had shouted orders at them, and went stamping up the slope, back toward the cricket. "Hee!" yelled Doyle, leaping to his feet.

Behind him was a statue and he whirled around.

The statue that had been laid to either side to make the path were rising, wiping out the path! "Hee!" yelled Doyle again, but the roller paid no attention to him. They went on stamping up the slope.

Doyle stood in his little trampled area, wedged against the fence, and all around him were the nettles—upright and strong and bright in the afternoon. They stretched in a solid mass at least a hundred feet back from the fence and they were shoulder high.

A man could manage to get through them. They could be kicked aside and trampled down, but none of them would be bound to jog a man and by the time one got out of there he’d have plenty webs.

And did he, at the moment, really want to get out of there? He was, he told himself, no worse off than he had been before. Better off, perhaps, for he was through the nettles. Better off, that is, if those sticking little roller didn’t run and tattle on him.

There was no sense, he decided, in going through the nettles now. If he did, in just a couple of hours or so he’d have to wait through them once again to reach the fence.

He couldn’t climb the fence until it was getting dark and he had no place else to go. He took a good look at the fence and it would be a tough one to get over. It was a good eight feet of woven wire and atop that were three strands of barbed wire, attached to an arm-lash bracket that extended outward beyond the woven fence.

Just beyond the fence stood an ancient oak tree and if he had a rope he could make a ladder—but he had no rope, and if he wanted to get over the fence, he would somehow have to climb it.

His hunchwork tight against the ground and felt downright insecure. His body was covered with mosquitoes and the nettles webs on his hand had turned into blisters and he’d had a lot worse sun than he was accustomed to. And now the upper musk on the left side of his jaw was developing a sort of
Did they even, he wondered, understand what money was? Just what kind of story had Metcalfe pushed off on them?

They had arrived at Metafa, of all people, had stumbled onto them and taken them in tow. Metafa, not as much a man as an organization that from long experience would know exactly how to exploit a situation such as the rebels offered. One man alone could not have handled it, (could not have done all that needed to be done to set up the rebels for the kill. And only in an organization such as Metafa headed, long schooled in the essentials of self-preservation, could there have been any hope of maintaining the essential secrecy.

The rebels had been duped—completely, absolutely fooled—and yet they were no fools. They had learned the language, not the spoken language only, but both the spoken and the written, and that spelled sharp intelligence. Perhaps, more intelligence than was first apparent, for they did not make use of sound in their normal talk among themselves. But they had adapted readily, it seemed, to sound communication.

The sun long since had disappeared behind the rebels and now was just above the tree line of the hills. Dark would be coming soon and then, Doyle thought, he could get busy.
He debated once against which course he should take. He saw the roller might have told Metcalfe he was at the fence and Metcalfe might be waiting for him, although Metcalfe, if he knew, more than likely would not just wait, but would be coming out to get him. And so for the ride upon the orchard—he’d had trouble enough with just one roll when he tried to pull a tree. He didn’t like to think what free might do to him.

Behind him the settlers began to rustle and he leaped to his feet. Maybe, he thought wildly, they were opening up the path again. Maybe the path was opened automatically, at regularly scheduled hours. Maybe the settlers were like fire clocks or morning gnomes—maybe they were engineered by the roller to open and to close the path so many times a day.

And what he imagined was the truth in part. A path, he saw, was opening. And waddling down the path was another roller. The path opened in front of him and then closed as he passed. The roller came out into the trampl ed area and stood facing Doyle.

GOOD EVENING, HERE, he said.

It couldn’t be the roller didn’t lock the trunk of the car down on the river road. It must, Doyle told himself, be one of the two that had walked out on the money project.

YOU SICK? the roller asked.

"It's just something awful and my mouth is aching and every time I sneeze the top of my head comes off."

COULD FIX.

"Sure, you could grow a drugstore box, opening instruments and salves and pills and all the other junk."

SIMPLE, spelled the roller.

"Well, now," said Doyle and then tried to say no more. For suddenly it struck him that it would be as the mills said—very, very simple.

Most medicines came from plants and there wasn’t anyone or anything that could engineer a plant the way the roller could.

"You’re on the level then," said Doyle unenthusiastically. "You would be able to cure a lot of things. You might find a cure for cancer and you might develop something that would hold off heart disease. And there’s the common cold..."

SORRY, PAL, BUT WE ARE OFF OF YOU. YOU MADE SAPS OF US.

"Then you are one of them that run away," said Doyle in some excitement. "You say through Metcalfe’s game..."
But the rolls was paying no attention to anything he said. It had drawn itself a little straighter and a little taller and it had formed its lips into a circle as if it might be getting ready to let out a cry and the sides of its throat were quivering as if it might be singing, but there was no sound.

No sound, but a rasping dullness that chilled on one's nerves, a something in the air that set can't teeth on edge.

It was an eerie thing, that sense of singing terror in the silence of the dark, with the west wind blowing quietly along the tops of the darkening trees, with the oily curve of the nolles and somewhere in the distance the squawking of a chipmunk home-bound on the last trip of the day.

Our beyond the fence came the thumping of ockewed running feet and in the thickening dusk Doyle saw the five rolls from the orchard pluming down the slopes.

There was something going on. Doyle was sure of that. He steaded the importance of the moment and the excitement that was in it, but there was no telling what it all might mean.

The roll by his side had sent out some sort of cackling call, pitched too high for the human ear to catch, and now the orchard rolls were tumbling down the slopes in answer to that call.

The five rolls reached the fence and hung up in their customary row and their black-board chests were alive with glowing characters—the strange, flickering, nonsensical characters of their native language. And the chest of the one who stood outside the fence with Doyle also flamed with the fleeting symbol, changing and shifting so wildly that they seemed to be alive.

It was an argument, Doyle thought. The five inside the fence were arguing heatedly with the one who stood outside and there seemed an urgency in the argument that could not be denied.

He stood there, on the edge of the orchard, an innocent bystander pocketed in a loosely squabbled he could not understand.

The rolls were gesturing wildly now and the characters upon their chests glowed more brightly than ever as darkness deepened on the land.

A squalling night bird flew overhead and Doyle lifted up his head to watch it and as he did he saw the moving figures of running men outlined against the lighter sky on the north ridge of the orchard.

"Watch out!" he shouted and wondered even as he shouted why he should have shouted.

At the shout the five rolls whirled back to face the fence.
One set of symbols appeared upon each sheet, as if suddenly they might have reached agreement, as if the argument might finally be resolved.

There was a cracking sound and Doyle looked up quickly. Against the sky he could see the old oak tree was tipping, starting slowly toward the fence, as if a giant hand had reached out and given it a push.

He watched for a puzzled second and the tilt continued and the speed of the fall picked up and he knew that the tree was cracking down upon the fence and the time had come to get out of there.

He stepped back a pace to turn around and flee and when he put his feet down there was no solid ground beneath it. He fought briefly to keep from falling, but he didn’t have a chance. He fell and slumped into a crooked cavity and above him he heard the roaring rush of the falling tree and then the crashing that as it hit the ground and the log, high whine of wires stretched so tight they pinged and popped.

Doyle lay quietly, afraid to move.

He was in a ditch of some sort. It was not very deep, not more than three feet at the most, but he was cramped at an awkward angle and there was an uncomfortable stone or root in the middle of his back.

The Money Tree

Above him was a tangle of limbs and twigs, where the top of the oak had crashed across the ditch. And running through the fallen branches was a tangle, rowing much more swiftly than one would have thought was possible.

From up the slope beyond the smashed-down fence came the bellowing of men and the sound of running feet.

Doyle huddled in his ditch, glad of the darkness and of the shelter of the fallen tree.

The stone or root was still in his back and he wriggled to get off it. He slid off to one side and put out a hand to catch his balance and his hand came in contact with a mound of stuff that felt like sand.

And fur there. For just beyond the ditch, standing among the branches and the nettles, was a pair of legs and the loom of a body extending up into the darkness.

"They went down that way," said a voice. "Down into the woods. It will be hard to find them."

Metalie’s voice answered. "We have to find them, Bill. We can’t let them get away."

There was a pause, then Bill said: "I wonder what got into them. They seemed happy up till now."

Metalie swore bitterly. "It’s that photographer. That fellow—what’s his name—I saw him when
he was in the tree and he got away that time. But he won’t make it this time. I don’t know what he did or what’s going on, but he’s in it, close up to his neck. He’s around here somewhere.”

Bill moved away a little and Metallic said, “If you run into this photographer, you know what to do.”

“Sure, boss.”

“Medium-sized guy. Has a dopey way about him.”

They moved away. Doyle could hear them thrashing through the nettles, coming as the nettles stung them.

Doyle shivered a little.

He had to get out and he had to make it fast, for before too long the moon would be coming up.

Metallic and his boys weren’t feeling. They couldn’t afford to feel it. They didn’t want to feel it. If they spotted him, more than likely they would shoot to kill.

Now, with everyone out hunting down therellin, would be the time to get up to that orchard.

Although the chances were that Metallic had men patrolling it.

Doyle gave the idea some consideration and dropped it. There was, now, just one thing to do and that was get to the car down on the river road as fast as he could make it.

Consequently, he crawled out of the ditch. Once out of it, he crawled for long minutes in the tangle of fallen branches, listening for sound.

He moved out into the nettles, following the path that had been crushed down by the man who had pursued the rellin. But, crushed down or not, some of the nettles pegged him.

Then he started down the slope, running for the woods.

 Ahead of him a shot went up and he braced his speed and moved. He reached a clump of brush and hurled himself behind it as other shots went up and then two shots, fired in quick succession.

He saw it moving above the treenaps, rising from the woods—a pale ghost of a thing that rose into the sky, with the red glint of early moonlight on it.

From it trailed a twisting line that had the appearance of a vine and from the vine hung a struggling doll-like figure that was screaming thinly. The ghost-like figure was stabbed at the bottom and pointed at the top. It had the look about it of a hallucinating Christmas tree and there was about it, too, even from a distance, a faint familiarity.

And suddenly Doyle faked up that familiarity—linked it to the woven mass of vegetation that had clamped the creek bed. And as he linked it up, he knew with-out question the nature of this Christmas tree rising in the sky.

The rellin worked with plants
as Man would work with metals. They could grow a money tree and a protective shroud of netting that covered it, it could make an oak tree fall and if they could do all that, the growing of a spaceship would not be too hard a job.

The ship was moving slowly, shifting up across the ridge, and the divot still shuddered at the end of the trailing vine and its strings came down to earth as a far-off whistling sound.

Someone was shooting in the woods below:

"It's the head! Bill, do something! It's the head!”

It was quite apparent there was nothing Bill could do.

Dyke sprang from his bush and ran. Now was the time to make his dash, when all the other men were yelling and starting up into the sky, where Metall was dashing, streaming from the trailing vine—perhaps an anchor vine, perhaps just a part of the rollgrown spaceship that had become uncontrolled. Although, remembering the craftsmanship of that woven hawser blocking the corridor, it seemed unlikely to Dan and that anything would come unstrung from a rollship.

He could imagine what had happened—Metall glimpsing the last of the rollis dancing up the ship and reaching at them, roaring, firing these two shots, then the ship springing wildly upward and the trailing vine twisted round the ankle.

Dyke reached the woods and went plunging into it. The ground dropped sharply and he went plunging down the slope, stumbling, falling, catching himself and going on again. Until he ran full tilt into a tree that bounded him back and put exploding star inside his skull.

He sat up on the ground where he thought had been his and felt of his forehead, convinced it was cracked open, white tears of pain streaming down his cheeks.

His forehead was not cracked and there seemed to be no blood, although his nose was smeared and one eye began to puff.

Then he got up and went on slowly, feeling his way along, for despite the moonlight, it was black-dark beneath the trees.

Finally he came to the dry stream-bed and felt his way along it.

He hurried as best he could, for he remembered Metall waiting in the car. She'd be waiting at him, he thought—she'd be waiting at him. He had gone and let her think he might be back by dusk.

He came to the place where the woven strip of vegetation dammed the streambed and almost tumbled over it onto the rocks below.

He ran the flat of his hand across the polished surface of the
rip of wearing mud to imagine what might have hap-
pened about several years ago.

A ship plunging down to Earth, out of control perhaps, and
shattering on impact, with Met-
calla close at hand to effect a
rescue.

It beats all hell, he thought,
how things at times turn out.

If it had not been Metcalfe,
giving insurance else who did not
think in dollar signs, there might
now be trees or bushes or rows of
vegetables springing hopes
such as mankind had never
known before—hope for survival
from disease and pain, an end to
poverty and fear. And perhaps
many other hopes that no one
now could guess.

And they were gone now, in a
spaceship grown by the two de-
serting rulers under Metcalfe's
very nose.

He squatted on the dam and
knew the blasted hopes of man-
kind, the hope that had never
come to be, wrecked by aviation
and greed.

Now they were gone—but, wait a minute, not entirely gone!
For there was a roll left. He
had to believe that the deserting
rulers had never seen was with
the others—but there was still his
roll, locked in the trunk of that
old hoop down on the river road.

He got up and stumbled through the darkness to the end
of the dam and climbed around
the chasm of mud and trees. He
skidded down the sharp incline
to the stream-bed and went
fumbling down the hollow.

What should he do, he won-
dered. Head straight for Wash-
ington? Go to the FBI?

For whatever else, no matter
what might happen, that one
remaining roll must be gotten into
proper hands.

Already there was too much
lost. There could be no further
chances taken. Placed in govern-
mental or scientific hands, that
one poor roll might still retrieve
much that had been lost.

He began to worry about what
might have happened to the rolls,
locked inside the trunk. He re-
called that it had been hanging
for attention.

What if it disappeared? What if
there were something of im-
portance, something about its
use, perhaps, that it had been
vital that it tell him? What if
that had been the reason for its
hanging on the trunk?

He fumbled down the stream-
bank as shivering haste, tripping on
the smooth boulders, falling over
hazards. Mosquitoes flew a heavy
cloud to him and he flapped his
hands to try to clear them off, but
he was so worried that they seemed little more than an
obstruction.

Up in the orchard, more than
likely, Metcalfe's mob was busy
stripping trees, harvesting its one
could guess how many millions
in brand new, shiny bits.
For now the jig was up and
all of them would know it. Now
there was nothing left to do but
clean up the orchard and dis-
appear as best they could.
Perhaps the money trees had
required ‘the constant attention
of the roller to keep an producing
better-perfect money. Otherwise
why had Mr. Hersey had the rolls
to trad the tree in town? And
now, with the rolls gone, the
trees might go on producing, but
the money that they grew might
be defective and irregular, like
the growth of scrubby oaks.
The slope of the land told him
that he was near the road.
He went on blindly and
suddenly came upon the cut. He
went around it in the dark and
reapped upon the window.

"Hark!" Mabel screamed.

"It's all right," yelled Doyle.

"It is me, I'm back,"

She unlocked the door and he
climbed in beside her. She
leashed against him and he put
an arm around her.

"Sorry," he said. "Sorry that I
took so long.""Did everything go all right,

"Yes," he mumbled. "Yes, I
imagine that you could say it
did.""I'm so glad," she said, relieved.

"It is all right. Then. The rolls
ran away."
Moria was important. She represented home, love, and faraway Earth. And then she and all those things had to be left behind forever...

LADY OF SPACE
by LESTER DEL REY

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman...

I've never seen a sketch again with a quotation, and I guess this is a bit less step and note sketch than most of what I've put down. Maybe I'm just reminding myself I had the kind of bringing up where I'd remember such things, even out here in space. But it seems to be, though there's more to the original verse. If you figure that heaven stands for space above Earth—as it used to mean—then it fits perfectly. There's no open, official culting,
Lady of Space

but space is supposed to be reserved for men. It was explored
devoted to the Services, and they never
considered women as much more
to necessity. We were treated as
men—everything made on
Earth, stepped up in pieces,
and assembled by the biggest
crew in space. But in spite of all
advantages and after orbiting
Mars successfully, it never came back.
All we had were ghastly accounts
from the surveyor’s account of
troubles of some kind on the
surface.

Now, three years later, we
were the Army’s only hope to send
the other services to the planets.
But the Army had no platform,
and had to use its Moon Base.
That meant an almost impossible
drain on the mining of ores and
the necessary of fuel we’d pain-
fully developed there. It meant
abandoning parts from other ships,
including labor that invited mis-
takes. It meant cutting down to
twelve men or three ships and
continuing on prayer for success.
With less than a hundred men
altogether, we’d done it, though.
We’d built the ships in the closet,
fastest ships we could around the
Moon. We still lacked speed
enough, so we took a page out
of Moon’s old ideas and blasted
back toward Earth, giving our
ships and fuel the kinetic energy
of the fall through all that gravity
field. We were less than three
hundred miles above Earth,
whipping around her, when we
made the final burst to use up
that energy where the mass of

The skipper sat behind his lips thoughtfully, "And I checked our weights! I tell you, your machine infrared some valve. If we ever get back, I'll have somebody's head!"

Pete started something, then shut up. Sparks jerked suddenly, and began blurring, and we all turned to him. A few seconds later, he looked up and mumbled, "We check out. Earth says we're dead on course."

For a second, that lifted our spirits. Then Pete began whistling seriously again, and I watched Beeman tense up. I swung around carefully to neuro-gray, I'll draw first galley duty, and it would be something to do.

She was standing in the doorway, listening with a little frown. She was wearing short and biker, with a little cap-affair to hold her hair down, she looked bored and mean. She also looked beautiful, as she always did to me. I don't think a man on Moon Base could have described her: after a few years without seeing another woman, a man loses any basis for comparators. But she looked the way a woman should look to a man—something most women can't even understand, much less try for.

"Hello, Johnny," she said quietly. "We made it, I see. His lip was swollen where she must have bitten it, but she had a touch of a smile then."
The others jerked around. Pete had a look of holy ecstasy on his suddenly white face, and the other two were changing fromSomervy's shock to delight. The Skipper nodded at her. "Hi, Min-
sic. I guess you're Pete's hundred pounds plus, eh? I suppose you
had it checked out on the Base computer to make sure we were
under munition?"

"It figured out safe, even allowing for emergencies, did," she told
him. For a second, the smile was deeper and almost amused. She
must have known we wouldn't be stupid enough to quiz her about
how she'd gotten aboard, but the man—or men—who'd done it must
have had ways to take care of all the details. How she'd taken care
of persuading him was her business. Then she shrugged fairly. "I've
got coffee and food ready whenever you can take a break."

Ronsen looked around for a second before reaching his pencil
onto the magnetized table. "Now's as good a time as any, Spade.
Tell the other ships on the short-range set, no well find a way to
get her over to them shortly. I'll relieve you in ten minutes."

"Yes, sir," Spade said. He was used to long duty. Then he
discharged. "1 was going to be tough on Base while we're gone."

"They'll live until we get back," Pete said, blushing now, and the
Skipper nodded. It wasn't "If"
The third day there, I saw Minnie coming out of the underground caisson on her way to the computer shift. It was a shock, because I knew the Army was dead set against women on the men's, or on having married men sent there. They couldn't afford to send up wives at what a single man cost, and they were right about that. They also felt they couldn't take the chance for scandal that might come from a few women with all those men so far from home control, particularly since the head of the Military Affairs Committee in Congress was a famous moralist in his speeches. But I figured that she must be the Commander's wife, and the only exception, it was two days later before I learned better, and that from observation, by accident.

She must have seen my expression as she came out of the chamber. But her answering look wasn't shamfaced or strained. She smiled at me and held out her hand. "Hallo, John!"

I cut her dead, but the smile never changed, and she had a good safe smile naturally.

I learned about her in the weeks following, while I tried to re-establish my faith in the Army and its space. It helped a little to know that she was strictly here without official knowledge. And in time, I even began to see that she might serve a purpose.

In the early days, the psychiatrist had been the most important man on the Moon. Half of the cost of maintaining one position on the Moon had been in carrying replacements and taking back new. It was something the admiral fumed over on a major scale; even men who'd been able to take three months solid untrained duty on atomic subs cracked up on the Moon.

But some of them came back for a second try—and they all had one thing in common. There was a girl who worked at the recreation center cafeteria, and her name was Minnie. Men on the way down were told to look her up. Even the Psychiatrist, when he cracked up, had his minnie.

Eventually, of course, the Army became officially aware of her—there were officers’ wives and packers’ wives and plenty of others about to see to that. Minnie disappeared.

A month later she was on the Moon. All she ever said was that nobody on Earth helped her, and she only admitted that to make sure nobody there would be told about her. Somehow, somebody established a link that would get her around a ship and get her out again without being detected. It must have been quite a link, and it took pull. But the idea was her own—she had been planning toward it for years, and she made it. Minnie would.
Lady of Space

It was the psychiatrist who persuaded the Commander—or so the story went—that the Army couldn't take the scandal that would come from having a woman able to steal away on an Army ship—not when the Navy was pulling strings and the Air Force was getting appropriations for a trip to the planets. In the end, nobody explained her. She wasn't on any list. Eard had raised the psychiatrist a higher rank when he found it possible to have fifty men stay on the moon for indefinite periods and get along, and that was that.

The agreeing thing was that few matters sprung up over her. That's something nobody ever explained—or even bothered with, apparently. Minnie was fair, somehow, she had some personal system of rewards and punishments for men—something no man ever fully understood, but which seemed to be honestly agreed on by the men she used them on. There was one fight during her first month, and after that things settled down.

I could recognize all the var- rons that eventually led to her being so new to Moon Base as the atomic generator that pro- cessed it. I could even recognize that she was something unusual—who had to be, or there would have been judgments and remem- bers. The amount of time she spent in the big computer shack

could have caused trouble and rumors, but didn't. Minnie was fascinated by the computer, so far as the men were concerned, and that was as it should be.

But it didn't fit with my ideas of the man who would lead mankind out into space and a brighter, newer day. I'd get my ideas from novels, not from the sociological studies of plainer towns. And it grieved at me like a cancer in my veins. Maybe I'd have developed something anyway, and started asking for my sister and mother, but with Minnie to remind me of woman, it was worse. My work on the machine got sloppy, and my appetite fell off. I had a run-in with my room-mate, and was transferred to single quarters, which only made it worse. And I knew I was going to wash out.

Minnie came into my room without even knocking, so quietly that her perfume reached me be- fore I saw her. Somehow, she managed that and a new dress never and then. "Hello, Johnny," she said.

I turned my back to her. Half an hour later, when I thought she'd gone, I turned over, to see her sitting quietly looking at me. Then she said, "Don't suffer a basket to lives," she said.

I started to nod, before I caught myself. "It's a wish," I told her. She smiled. "Is it? Down deep, Johnny?"
"Get out!" I shouted at her.

"All right," she said. "Tell me why, and maybe I will."

I told her. Great God, how I told her. Everything that had sent me to a hell in school; everything I'd ever thought about being an officer and a space-man; everything I'd resolved to forget to remember; great affairs that had bothered me. I heard a sermon by a wandering evangelist once, and I used everything he'd said against her type of women and improved on it. And finally I fell back on the hollties that had been true in my family.

She got up quickly and went out, and I threw up all over the floor. I was shaking so hard I couldn't get out of the bank to clean up. And I was sure she'd gone for good and would never bother me again. And then I started to cry—not like a grown man, but like a five-year-old kid. If my son had come in and caught me, I'd have killed him before he could realize what I was doing.

I didn't hear her again. Instead, I felt her lifting me up and sticking a container of coffee to my mouth. "Don't show it away or you'll acid my hand as well as your face, Johnny," she warned me. So I drank it, while she cleaned up the room.

I watched her, and it occurred to me suddenly that I didn't even feel any urge to stop her, to take over myself. "You're no woman," I blurted out.

For the only time, I saw her wheel. Then she sighed. "Women aren't really synonomous with chivalry, Johnny," she said quietly. "But maybe you're right. No woman likes me.

That puzzled me, and did for months, until I realized it had to be true. I was back Earthside for a month, long after that, and had a chance to see my sister and her friends after she got married. She'll have hated Minnie, and covered the hatred with words of utter contempt. To my sister and I, we gave to most women. Minnie was the complete betrayal of the true feminin race had nothing to do with it, other, though I couldn't realize it for years.

"Even your own mother, I suppose," I said.

"My mother trained me for this," she answered, and now she was back to her normal odd personal pride in what she was. "She planned it all, after my father died in building the first space station. Feeling better?"

"I'll be all right when you get out and stay out," I told her.

She smiled at that, dropped onto the bed, and gathered me up with a strength that belied her years of moon gravity. My head came against her breast and I could feel her hand in my hair.
And I was crying again, but differ-
ently this time. She didn't make a sound—just sat there holding me, with neither contempt nor pity on her face when I caught a glimpse of it.

And finally, when the last of
it wore off me, she began undressing me and then herself. I meant to stop her, but I didn't.

I didn't want her, but the feel of her against my skin was like a sponge to soak up something inside me that needed to be drained. There was no passion then, only release, as I drifted into sleep.

In the morning she gave me the only explanation I ever really got from her.

"What are you, Mimie?" I asked. I was still a kid, I guess.

But she didn't seem to mind.

"I'm a prophet in the war between the sexes, Johnny," she said.

So I stood on the moon, and we got the smelter working, and we built a forging plant, and one of the men found how to make rocket fuel there. And space was everything I had ever expected it to be.

Now it happens to other men, too. But I didn't mind. And when one of all who came to slip out word on Mimie—cand was caught by the Com-
mander, from what I heard—I helped get his escape. The poor devil was hot in a center on the next expedition, anywhere.
They were no Martians now, at least... no sign of any animal life. And the plants were funny things that made dead sticks on Earth look like blossoming rosebushes by comparison. The only hopeful thing was the fact that we found a little more oxygen and water than we'd expected. At the surface, Mars's atmosphere could be compressed into a barely breathable mixture, though our hydroponic tanks worked a lot better, with the big sun-power sheets to give us light and heat for them.

It was a lousy planet—one to drive us mad, as somebody said.

But sometimes I caught myself planning on where we'd go on the next trip, and even on how we could settle there. And once in a great while, when Minnie stayed behind with only me in the base, we talked about times when men would be living here.

We found the first expedition, guided by hares from Earth on what had been reported. It was nearly buried by sand, but we finally dug it out. There we had the answer. Marsian. Maybe only one man had gone mad out there, with the wind whimpering and fifty people hearing to hate each other through the long months—no, one had been enough. They all must have been eating when someone touched off the expan-
tion bomb under their mate bull, letting their air out.

I saw Minnie cry then. I knew why—or thought I did. Men need something more than discipline to live squared together that tightly under such stress and such conditions. And that something couldn’t be on the Moon with us and here with these poor infants at once. There but for the grace of Minnie lay we. Maybe it doesn’t make sense, but we all knew it, including Minnie. And she was crying because she’d failed the men who needed her then.

Beacon watched for a minute and then walked back to the tractor, his face white under the stubble of beard. Pete’s face was even whiter, but he joined us in the ugly job of salvaging the few records.

Beacon got drunk that night on half our medicinal grain alcohol, and I had to drag him back as quietly as I could into our quarters. And then I had to listen while he whispered out the one story he couldn’t get off his chest to Minnie.

I’d guessed it concerned her, but it was worse than I thought. A package in a main fuel tank—probably from an unlikely source—had let the fuel evaporate and ruined the warning device in the tank. It was no fault of design or calculation—just ugly luck—but it meant our margin was out to the hogs. Beacon had found it in transhipping fuel to the return ship, and had secretly checked with the Moon Base computer. By phasing it to the hogs on every weight item, by going on minimum rations, and by getting help from a non-relied ship at maximum orbit, we could just make it back—provided we left one person behind.

“Making hundred pounds?” I asked. Then I knew how stupid it was. Add to food, the weight of the hydropneumatics tanks for one person’s air, and all the other things you have to carry, and it was a lot more—enough to mean a difference in total fuel used that was recourse. One man needs a lot of weight for more than nine months of being.

I’d never thought of a thing before—strangely, none of us had—when Minnie turned our even dozen to thirteen. Now...

And it had to be Minnie. There comes a time when the rules have to be followed, even when it means this. She was the one person who had no right with us, and she’d have insisted no other man could be killed for her. Besides, every man here was needed for the return trip—every one of us had some skill that was absolutely essential, carefully developed. It took twelve trained men to get back, from computer man to hydropneumatics expert. It had to be Minnie.
go through with everything she promised. Finally she drew away, trying to smile. “I guess that makes us even, Johnny. And maybe I’ll be in later.”

She was, but all we could do was to be miserable, trying to console each other. I could hear the Skipper, still working and singing on his bunk. And once steps went down the hall, probably toward the latrine.

“Petey,” she said softly. “Poor Pete. He tries so hard. He’s even still trying to make an honest woman of me, Johnny.”

It wasn’t funny, though she must have meant it that way. And it showed her strain, since she never tells tales about other men normally. She sighed sadly. “I know what I wanted to do, Johnny?

“Be aocket pilot when you were a kid,” I guessed. Most kids did, even girls at some stage in growing up.

She shook her head against me. “No. Never that. I wanted to be just what I became, Johnny. A woman who could follow the men into space and not hold them back. But I was helping, when that was over and we were back... Well, there’ll be Mars and Venus some day, as well as the moon. I wanted to have three daughters—one for each. But I guess that’s a better ending when you write it up in that notebook of yours back at home.”
Lady of Space

I wasn't interested in such things. "When, Minnie? Tonight?"

She nodded, not trying to lie. I knew it had to be. Once it was even partly an open secret, we couldn't face it until she was still there. At last she got up, and because I knew she wanted it, I lay there with her until the light was dim enough for the two of us to move without her seeing. And then there was a scream, cut off after the first sound, but still her voice.

I was in the hallway, almost hugging the Skipper, though nobody else seemed to have heard. A few seconds later we saw her, ripping off her helmet and pointing beyond the lock.

Out there was Pete—without a helmet. And for the first time, his blunted, distorted face looked sure of itself.

Benson shook his head like a man coming out of a dream. Suddenly, his eyes weren't bloodshot. "The fool—he damned fool. Just because I told him not to go near the ship, and now, with no companion, we're all stuck here."

I was wondering the sounds in the hall, too. Pete had listened, he had listened, all right. But mostly I was wondering just how many drinks the
truth, I guess. Or maybe it didn’t matter about some of them. What would I have done in Benson’s place?

"Better get some sleep," I told him. "We'll have to work on take-off plans tomorrow. And we'll need clear heads for that."

He smiled faintly, with the melancholy look in his cheeks. Then he left us alone.

I suppose it makes a poor ending, and a tragedy would have been worse. But we got back to Moon Base by the skin of our teeth, and even got Binnie off below the interview. And after a while, things went back to nor-

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HELP WANTED——

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VENTURE SCIENCE FICTION

527 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.
C. M. Kornbluth and Henry Kuttner died this year, and thereby science fiction lost two of its most brilliant creators. Henry Kuttner never appeared in Venture—and that was Venture’s loss. C. M. Kornbluth has been in these pages before, and his last completed work is this issue’s lead novel. There is nothing this department can say that would be as fitting as what their fellow writers feel. So we are turning over the rest of this issue’s Venturings, first to Frederick Phleb, C. M. Kornbluth’s close friend and longtime collaborator, and then to Theodore Sturgeon... 

C. M. Kornbluth

It was Cyril’s fate that in all of his life he was precocious. He couldn’t wait. At the age of eighteen he was already the author of a hundred published stories, the principal contributor to at least two science-fiction magazines, the owner of some twenty-three premises.

At twenty-two he was a discharged veteran of the Ardennes Forest, with a Bronze Star earned the hard way, operating a machinist against German tanks.

In the decade and a bit that followed, Cyril Kornbluth wrote prolifically, and as well as any writer the science-fiction field has ever known. There were the short stories and the novels: “The Little Black Bag” with its macabre, off-hand peek at a non-crewed future; “The Marching Morons,” which developed that glimpse into a powerful portrait. There was “The Minchorn,” probably the finest retelling of the vampire myth in science-fiction terms. There was “The Luckiest Man in Dead” and “The Silly Insect” and “The Cosmic Change Agent” and “The Education of Tigress Macigure” and “Eup the Dead Lin” and “The Advent of Census Twelve”—she first landed to come to mind, and what great ones have been left out?

And here there were the books.

At the age of thirty-five Cyril had published nearly twenty books—paperbound and clothbound, under pennames and under his own, in collaboration or alone, in this country and in a dozen countries abroad, first science fiction but many not. TAKE OFF, THE FIXER, THE EXPLORER, AND THE EFFECT. And output main and the space merchants. And valuing, and... and, again, so many that are left out.

It is a long, honorable list, but now it is tragically a list that has an end.

On the 21st of March, 1958, Long Island was emerging from a storm.
There had been neither heat nor light for two days. Cyril awoke, arose, chopped fireplace wood for Mary, his wife, and their two small sons, shoveled snow, made his way to the railroad station; and collapsed. It was heart failure, and the first failure that that heart had ever known. In death as in life Cyril was ahead of his years. He died at the age of thirty-five.

Still, there is this: the manner of his death was so pacific that which he had himself described as the most desirable of ways to pay the debt we all owe—in all but time—that sorrow hardly proceeds to this man who has died untimely young. It belongs to his wife and family; it belongs to his friends; and it belongs to the unremunerated person, in this country and in a dozen others, who knew and loved his work, who hoped for more, and who now by his death are left forever poorer.

Henry Kuttner

There was a thing about his face that was different from other faces; and it took a while to realize what it was. It was nothing you could see at the time, but only afterwards, by wondering and remembering hard. And it was this: that always before he smiled, his eyes would shine.

He had a soft voice and he was soft-footed. He seemed to move always a little faster than he had to; faster, at least, than you would. When you got to know him a little better you were sure of it, and you could understand that it wasn’t just part of the way he sprang upstairs on his silent weathered feet, there really was something subtle in him which could move a little faster than you might, or faster than you could.

He was full of story. He could shape a whole novel to its last two words, and make them what the whole thing was for. His was the soup spoon which thickened at the edge when it approached a man’s mouth, puckered up and coldly kissed him. His was the leg-room of the former Gallegers, whose hands would stay vacillated over the console and produce wondrous soliloquies, some poetical and others belonging to problems he couldn’t remember until that oft last paragraph. His were the chill, strange, kind visitors of “Vintage Season” and to “When the Bough Breaks,” whiteny-horror, and more, so much more.

I never heard a bad thing about Henry Kuttner. I never saw evil of any kind in him. I never knew I could miss as very much someone I had seen so seldom. He shouldn’t have died.

Thodore Escobaro
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