

THE

RHINBOW

BRIDGE



SPRING 1978

member—



Spring 1978

VOLUME II

Published by
the students of
Woodbridge Senior High School
Woodbridge, Virginia 22191

Printed by Woodbridge Printers

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**RAINBOW
BRIDGE**

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The Ballad of a Frustrated Poet

A lightning flash within my mind-
inspiration and a light to think
"Aha!" I shout, "This is the night
to frame my thoughts in ink."

With quill in hand I sit alone
and dare the empty page,
But desperation takes my soul,
my thwarted ego screams, outraged.

Frustration runs its full course
upon my tortured brain.
I vow to never try and write
a poem - ever again.

For poetry is far too hard-
I haven't got the mind
To structure ideas into rows
With metered feet and rhyme.

So "why?" - you ask, do I recede
these pointless poetic woes -
It wouldn't bother me so much
if I could just write prose.

- Chuck Briggs



Confusion

Confusion is like the spinning and violent uncertainty of a whirlpool, twisting the thoughts and ideas of man.

It is the tossing and turning of the raging sea, sending the mind back and forth in time.

Confusion is the destruction of a rampaging tornado, pulling man into an uproarious circle of disillusioned reasoning.

Cathi Smith

Kyong Choe



Terri Haley

A Wish

For a moment, I looked out the window into the rain and I noticed a bird flying high over the trees, its destination unknown. And for that moment I sat and I wondered what it would be like to live as he did.

I wished for an instant that I might soar alongside that majestic creature, playing in the cool spring turbulence, seeing all the hidden sights no man has experienced. To be free, to ride the wind, to glide across the land, limited by nothing at all.

Then I noticed the bird had disappeared over the horizon, and I was once again captive of reality. □

Ellen Denson

A Dragon's Fond Reflections

Mark Bumgarner

Good day! I am, as you can see, a dragon. You may remember me from my last misadventure in which I broiled a certain knight, Sir Roderick. Right now I'm answering my front door. Whoever is out there woke me from my beauty nap so he'd better have something important to say. If not, I may be forced to eat dinner early.

"Well, what do you want?" I snarl.

"Are you the dragon who -uh- well - dispatched Sir Roderick?", the somewhat dullish fellow asks.

"Yes," I answer.

"So," the man continues, "since Sir Roderick is - er - was our champion, that makes you our champion now. R-Right?"

"When you put it that way, yes. Now get to the point before I charbroil your britches."

"Well, with Sir Roderick - uh - deceased, there's no one to defend us against the witch."

"Witch? What witch?"

"Isameen Witch, the meanest witch in England. She's turned the king into a toad and all our knights into rabbits! You must save us!"

"Why should I? The king is probably much more agreeable in his amphibian state and my desire for rabbit meat has grown much as of late."

"But think of all the poor helpless people, think of their defenseless houses and farms!"



Illustrations by Steve Dockery

"I don't give a fig about them."

"Think of the honor and fame you'll receive."

"I have quite enough of that already."

"Think of the gold the king will give you if you defeat the witch."

"I'll do it."

"I knew you would. The witch resides in her castle at Pebblehenge. Goodbye."

Rat's tails! Why did I say I would do it? I have more gold than all the kings of the East and what do I do? Jeopardize my life for more! The last time I met a witch I almost ended up as England's handbag supply for three centuries.

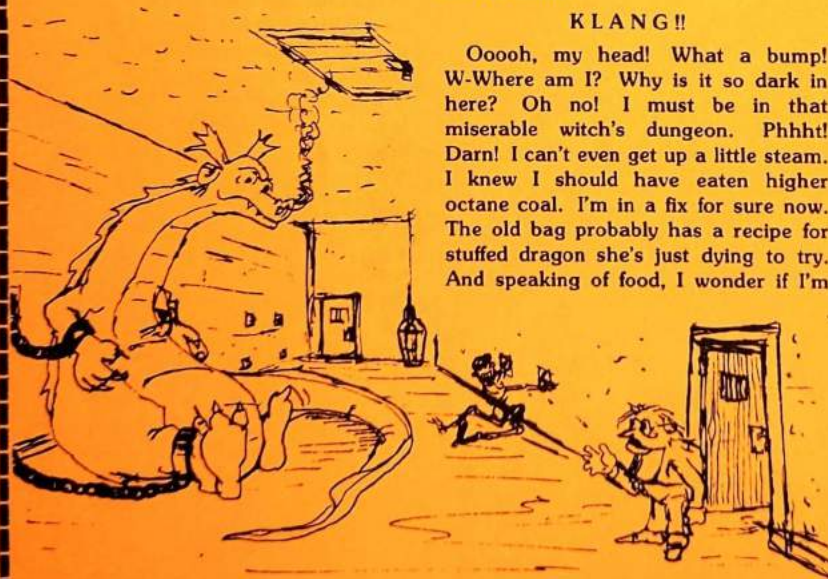
Well, I'd better make preparations. Isameen Witch. I don't believe I've ever heard of her. I'd better look her up in my newest edition of *Who's Who in Medieval Villainy*.

Let's see now, I know it's here some place. Ah, here it is. Hmmm. Isabelle Witch, Isadora Witch, - ah - Isameen Witch. Let's see now, born 450 B. C., got Ph.D. in Sorcery from Endor College at 275 years of age, struck the match that burned down Rome, caused Mt. Vesuvius to erupt, convinced Attila the Hun to invade Europe, and brought the Black Plague to England. The old girl's a regular cream puff. Oh well, I'd better work a little dragon magic and then fly on over to her castle.

Hmmm. There isn't much in the cupboard for casting spells. A little freeze-dried bat wing and some

polyunsaturated lizard eyes will do for a protective charm if I stiffen it up with some gnat brains and a pint or so of dehydrated water. Blech, that's a bitter brew. I'll have to keep some better tasting charms on hand if I must keep on endangering my life.

A little snack before I go and I'm off. Spring is in the air outside and flying is really quite exhilarating. Perhaps I'll wreck a few other castles after Isameen's just to take advantage of the good



weather. Ah! That must be her castle down there. It's an imposing structure, but a quick strafing run, followed by three tail swats and a drop kick should do nicely.

A good windup and charge! This is the first time in years I've really used my wings. They still have their old magic. In fact, I . . . where did that black cloud come from?! It's changing into something . . . a . . . a giant anvil?! Good heavens! I'm heading straight for it! Oh bother!

KLANG!!

Ooooh, my head! What a bump! W-Where am I? Why is it so dark in here? Oh no! I must be in that miserable witch's dungeon. Phhht! Darn! I can't even get up a little steam. I knew I should have eaten higher octane coal. I'm in a fix for sure now. The old bag probably has a recipe for stuffed dragon she's just dying to try. And speaking of food, I wonder if I'm

supposed to be fed. I sure am hungry. Wait! I think someone's coming!

"Hey! You in there! Wake up!" calls the voice of a young man.

"I am awake so quit shouting. My head is about to split. Ooooh!"

"The Master sent me down here to keep you company while she decides what to do with you."

Yes, she's deciding alright. Fried, baked, or ala mode. Swell.

"Uh — you wouldn't happen to have any food with you?" I ask.

"Sorry, but I don't have any. The Master is very stingy with food."

"I see. By the way, who are you?"

"I'm Irving, a misfit troll. 'Misfit' meaning I wasn't mean enough to sit under my own bridge and waylay billy goats. Since I'm not good for much else, they sent me down here to help Isameen — er — the Master. It's no easy job, let me tell you. Rumor has it that the Master ran head on into an oak tree on her first solo broom flight."

"You mean she's . . ."

"Flakey as a snow storm."

"I can appreciate your position. The dragon I apprenticed with was as mad as a hatter. Er — by the way, you don't happen to have the key to this place, do you?"

"I'm afraid not. Only the Ma — Uh-oh! here she comes."

"What? I don't hear any —"

Poof!

My cell door swings open and before me stands a robed figure of such exqui-

site ugliness that the words to describe it are outlawed. It can only be Isameen. She opens her mouth in a toothless grin and croaks:

"Well, you slime-crustled flea bag, what do you have to say for yourself?"

"Madam, there is no need to insult me."

"True enough. With a face like yours, no other insult is needed."

"My dear and gracious hag, you seem to be overconfident about the situation. I *am* a member of the Monsters, Villains, and Sorcerors Guild."

"Oh no! You're not going to pull that one on me, are you?"

"I'm afraid so. It clearly states in section 257, paragraph 41 of the *Bad Guys Handbook*, and I quote, 'When a member of the Guild falls under another member's power, he, she, or it has the right to demand a fair duel with their captor'. I claim that right and my immediate release if I win."

"You poor sport! I beat you fair and square."

"Nothing is 'fair and square' when it endangers my life. I request a duel, your choice of weapons."

"Request denied! Prepare to be

zapped!"

Witches always were poor sports. Despite my headache, a queasy stomach, and wobbly knees, I manage to launch myself through the cell door before Isameen has a chance to react. I race down the hallway, trying to find a good place to hide. Isameen is close behind me; I can hear her colorful imprecations quite clearly. I'd better duck into that room on the left.

I dart into the room and slam the door. Before me stands, gasping for breath, about three hundred dragons, all shapes and sizes. I've stumbled into a roomful of mirrors! What luck! If I position myself right, I'll have Isameen for sure. Everybody knows mirrors reflect spells. All I have to do is stand stock still.

"I know you're in there, you mangy varmint," a voice intones malevolently. "It'll be fried dragon tonight!"

The door cautiously swings inward and Isameen peers in. Her jaw drops at least five inches. The picture that greets her is of some three hundred dragons. Some are very tiny, some are much larger, and some images are even bigger than myself. She mumbles

under her breath and scratches her head. Which dragon is the real dragon?

My little plan seems to be working. Isameen is quite perplexed by the situation. If I play my cards right I – I – I – Oh good heavens! I feel a sneeze coming on. Of all the times to sneeze, it has to be now. It saved me last time but now it –

Achoooooo!!!!!!

"Ah ha! There you are, you vile scoundrel!" she howls.

She hurls a powerful lightning bolt at my head. Faster than I thought I could move, I dodge to the right. Isameen's bolt fans my ear and ricochets off the mirror behind me.

"Oh noooo!" Isameen squeals.

WACKUM!

Whew! That was a close call. Well that takes care of Isameen, done in by a sneeze and her own lightning bolt. My strength is returning and I should be able to fly out of here in a few minutes. With Isameen gone, things should return to normal around here and I'll be able to finish my beauty nap. Right now, however, I think I'll pay a visit to the royal treasury. □

THE ART OF PROCRASTINATION

John Maxey

While the rest of the population sleeps, the bleary-eyed person works on into the small hours. Under a dim light, he is surrounded by the clutter of his work — discarded wads of paper, typing correction packets, opened books, and the scraps of trash which bear the very rough draft of the assignment he is now dashing off.

It's called procrastination — unnecessary delaying of a task until the last possible moment. Many people claim to be procrastinators. Most are mere novices; I'm an expert.

The procrastinator's motto is, "don't do today what you can put off until tomorrow." I go on to say, "and don't put off until tomorrow what you can put off until the next day." This is the rigid philosophy that has governed my life.

I guess I've always procrastinated. I can't remember whether I was born late but I wouldn't be surprised. One time I had a box turtle that I kept in a crate with water, grass, and vegetable scraps that I thought it would live on. Eventually this turtle died but I didn't dispose of it for quite some time, maybe hoping that it was still living but probably more

because I didn't want to take care of the problem. But after almost two weeks the contents of the crate was really ripe and I finally decided to bury my pet.

I procrastinate on every task from the uninviting to the abominable — Christmas shopping, writing letters, packing for trips, making decisions, and of course, a multitude of homework assignments which can be drawn out for varying lengths of time. I foresee filing my income tax return on April 15, having my car inspected on the last day of the month, and paying my bills at the last moment.

I might come across as being a procrastinator from way back when but I only recently recognized my potential and then perfected my style. I have developed approaches for coming to grips with any situation. I sometimes assure myself that there is ample time to do the task and then I do what I like. Often I do a thousand "necessary" things that will cause further delay. An effective approach is to convince myself that conditions are not right. I tell myself that I'll wait to be inspired or wait for the weather to change. If I wait until it is too late to do the dreaded chore, I have an unquestionable excuse for not doing

it. Another clever method is to make a note that something has to be done and then tuck it away somewhere. This relieves the psychological strain of thinking about the subject.

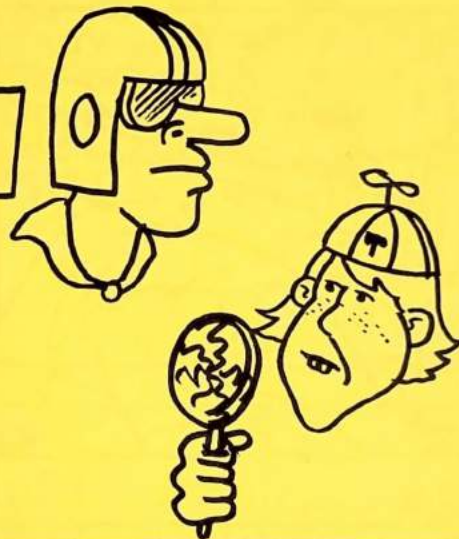
With strong self-discipline, a situation can be avoided almost entirely. In procrastinating, a person must ignore his ambition. The mind must be trained so that it has an aversion for the task concerned. Usually I find that if I break down and do the job, I enjoy it and am satisfied with the outcome. I usually don't crack until the last moment though, when time closes in and I'm pressured. The result of these last-minute efforts is usually half-baked but a person can get by on it. But the hardy procrastinator neither rejoices nor laments; the task is behind him and it's on to other things to be done.

It might be pointed out that nothing is accomplished through procrastination. However, the procrastinator is creatively wasting time. Indeed, a career can be made of it. Positions for skilled procrastinators range from elected officials, particularly Congressmen, to restaurant personnel. The future of this country is certainly waiting for the procrastinators to get around to it. □

THE ADVENTURES OF

JERKMAN AND TWITKID

By Steve Dockery

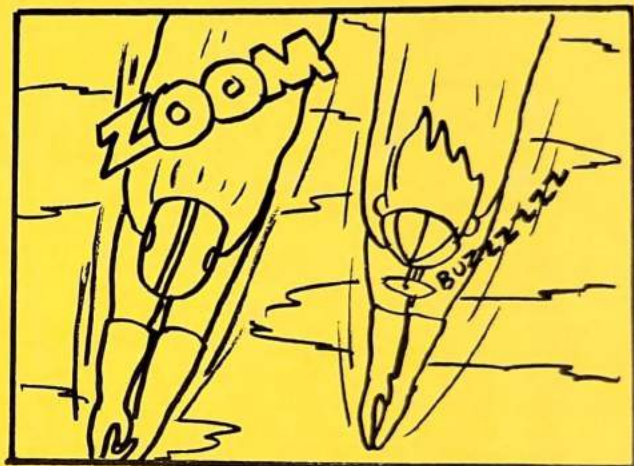


JERKMAN AND TWITKID
ARE FLYING OVER THE
TOWN OF STUPIDVILLE,
WHEN JERKMAN HEARS
A CALL FOR HELP...



WHAT IS IT, BRAVE
HERO?







It was Tuesday, November 22, and all the Juniors were excitedly getting their class rings. My hands were shaking when I handed the woman my check. She quickly handed me a small plastic bag which contained my ring. As soon as I opened the bag, I heard a strange sound. I quickly took my ring out to find it had almost suffocated. He was breathing quite heavily, and I was not sure if he was going to make it. I looked down at him through a mist of tears. Within a few minutes he was fine, and I noticed he was smiling shyly at me. That is how we first got to know each other.

I went through the usual ring-turning business, but I told everyone to be careful because my "finger hurt". Actually, I could understand how it must feel to be turned and twisted seventy-nine times.

My daily dish-washing became much fun. Not only did I wash the dishes, but my ring, too. He would squeal with delight as he was submerged in the soapy mixture and then lifted out. We got along well at first; we laughed together, and since I never removed him from my finger, we were inseparable. We shared many thoughts, and I found I could confide in him without the fear that he would tell someone else.

I also found that taking a shower was great fun. My ring would sing wildly as I hummed along.

Our first fight concerned music. The worst problem anyone could ever have with his ring is if you each like different

MY FRIEND: MY CLASS RING

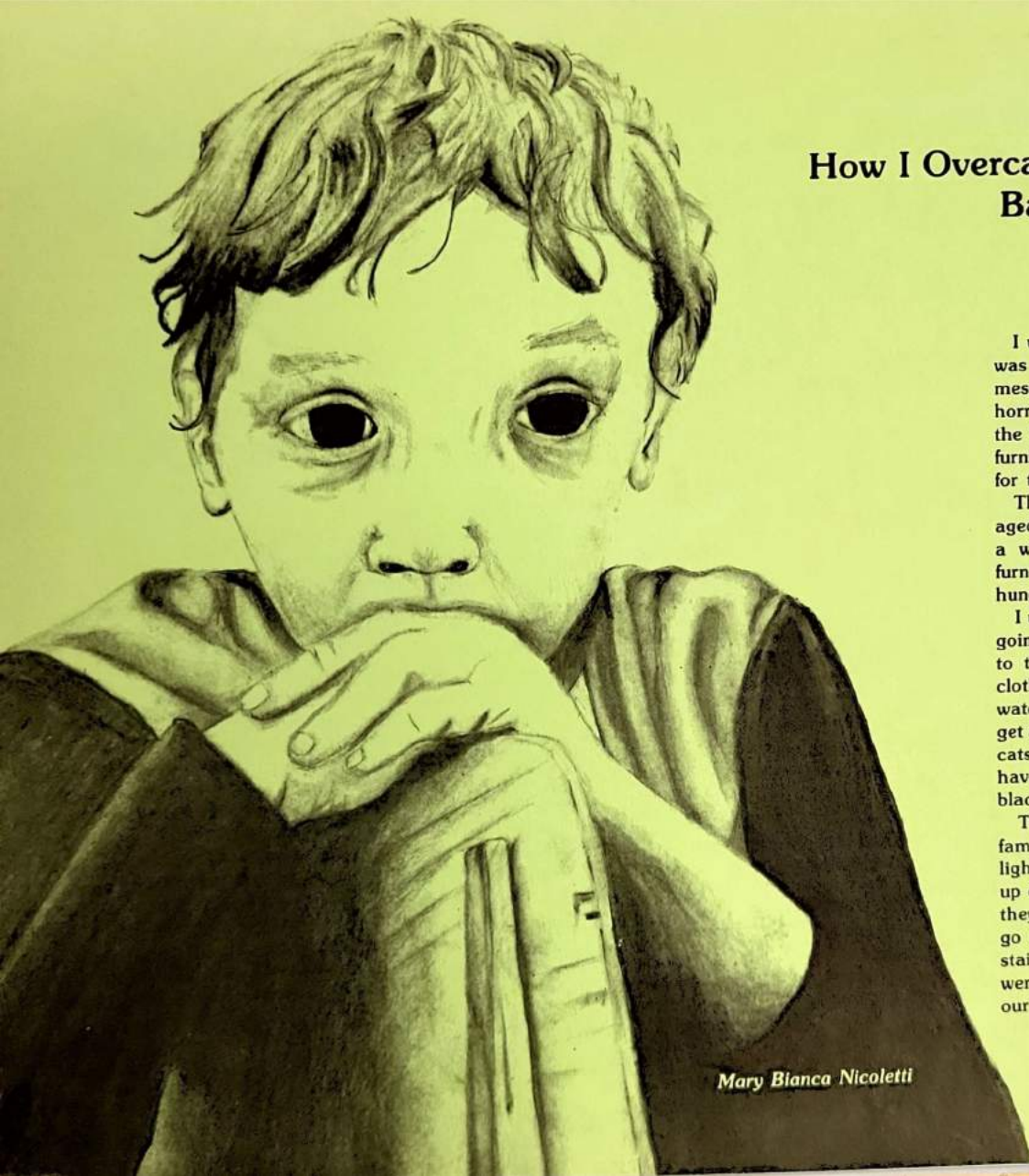
Lisa Bradie



music. Well, that was our problem. No sooner would I turn on the radio listening to Fleetwood Mac or Foreigner than he would start to whine. I liked Rock and he like Classical music. For weeks we argued and argued until I came up with the solution: I bought him a pair of miniature earplugs. He could listen to his Classical music and I could listen to Rock and neither of us would be disturbed.

Another serious problem we had was the fact that he was a "night ring". He did not like to go to bed. While I tried to get to sleep, he would be awake moving around or singing or doing something else equally disturbing. I was really getting fed up with him. We stopped talking and we hated the sight of each other.

I was washing my hair one evening when I started hearing noises. They were getting louder and louder. I suddenly remembered him and withdrew my hand from under the water. I looked at him and he looked deathly ill. His light green stone was a sick purple color. I laid my hand in a towel and started to slowly dry him. Why, he was all washed up! I had an idea and felt I must try it. I leaned down close to him and started to give him mouth-to-stone resuscitation. After a few minutes, I lifted my head and looked at him. The green was coming back into his stone and the purple was disappearing. I saw a slight smile of thanks spread across his stone. I knew then that we would always remain close friends. □



How I Overcame my Fear of the Basement

Phyllis deButts

I was afraid of our basement when I was a kid. The unfinished, cluttered mess frightened me more than any horror movie or spook house. To me, the boxes and trunks piled up on old furniture seemed perfect hiding places for the boogie man and all his family.

The noises in our basement encouraged scary fantasies, too. Every once in a while the drain "burped" and the furnace roared like a wild animal hungry for his supper.

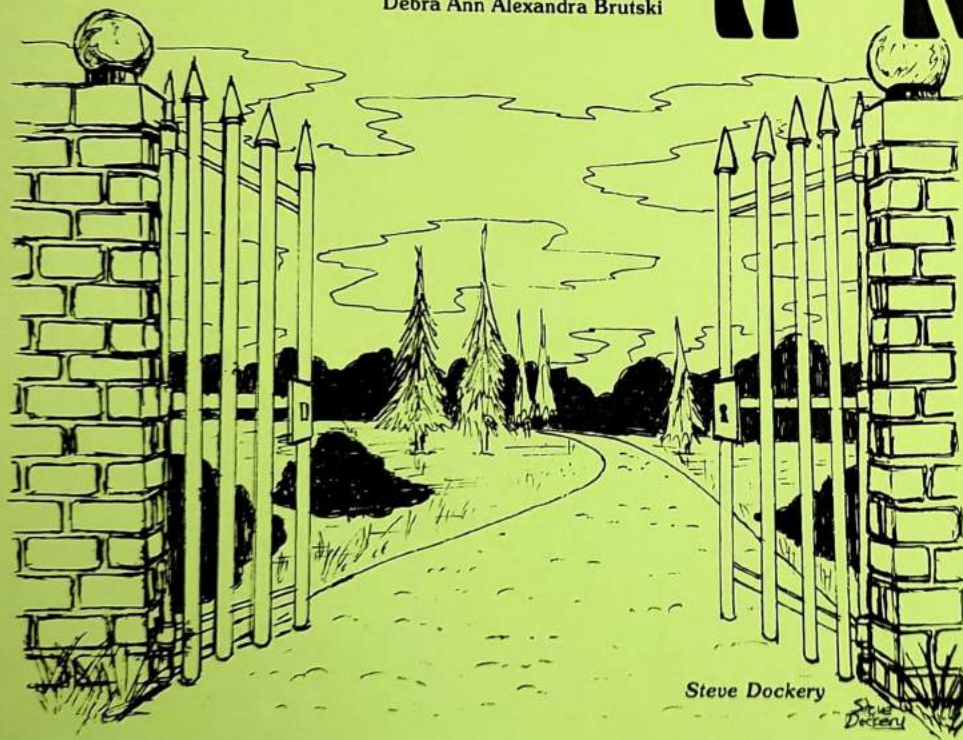
I used to go to great lengths to avoid going to the basement after dark. I'd go to the top of the stairs and hurl my clothes from there to be washed. I'd watch TV rather than venture down to get a favorite toy. And I trained our five cats to come when I called so I wouldn't have to walk blindly into that terrifying blackness to feed them.

The big change came when my family decided to install big fluorescent lights that came on by flipping a switch up on the first floor. I don't know why they did it; maybe they were scared to go down there, too. Now I go downstairs all the time, but if those lights weren't put in, I might still be afraid of our basement. □

Mary Bianca Nicoletti

Debra Ann Alexandra Brutski

A NIGHT'S



"Go away!" the sentry said firmly as I approached the wrought iron gates. "Insanity lurks within. I cannot physically prevent you from entering but I will appeal to your mental self."

But because I was young and vain I would not heed the guard's warning and gave him an arrogant wave of my hand. The man moved aside to allow my mount and me sufficient passage.

Upon entrance to the new world, the sight that bid me welcome was awesome. Situated on the horizon, there were wondersome, rich blue fountains and pools whose waters seemed to become one with the cloudless, sapphire sky and forests of tall, straight pines whose evergreen crowns swayed with lush grass carpets in time to the breezes. The cologne of flowers sweetly

floated in the air. Then I remembered I was in want of night lodgings and, seeing a well worn cobblestone way, I directed my horse down the path, figuring by logic, it would lead to a small, quaint village where I might find room and board during my short vacation.

The ebony darkness dropped quickly; I thought it strange that these parts had such short daylight hours. I felt no apprehension until the full moon came up and I was still within no sight of civilization. Breezes became strong winds. Keeping a hand on my plumed hat, I drew my cape tighter about myself. Apparently I was lost.

The sound of my stallion's hooves on the cobblestone became inaudible and I looked down to discover we were traveling over moss-covered ground.

Swiftly I brought my gaze to the rear and the smooth stone way I had steered my beast by was no longer there. I went in search of it, thinking it not far behind, but for my pains I was more sorely lost than before.

In despair, I meant to spend the rest of that evening beneath a large oak which was, strangely enough, growing alone amongst the pines. There came to my ears a strange, unearthly tune, like a mournful wailing, that rose above the ferocity of the wind. The noise sent a trembling through my tethered horse. He reared high, broke his bounds, and raced off through the forest despite my commands to come back. I was alone, or so I thought.

MENAGERIE

The fearful moaning persisted and I huddled against the tree, trying to become a part of it, to seem invisible, to wedge into the bark. Shaking and chattering, ears and eyes open to all, my senses became very acute. Then a chill coursed through my body. I shuddered and worked my jaw more violently when there came into eyeshot a low, ground-clinging mist that concealed the earth as it swirled and moved in and out of the trees. It approached and encircled me with its many seeking, groping arms and, never climbing higher than my knees, continued to grow along the land.

In the distance I perceived the blast of a horn and then the voice of a thousand feet marching and scurrying across the ground.

Thus I sat with Fear on my right and Panic on my left when I made out the overly large form of some grotesque animal many paces to my front. My eyes fixed on the figure, I noticed it rocked to and fro several moments. At last my muscles grew so stiff and tense I could not move. The creature seemed to pick this moment of all others to utter a fierce bellow and approach me, in full gallop. The closer it came, the more distinctly detailed it grew until I made out a horrid picture, indeed.

Brandishing a spear, my adversary charged upon me, a taut, menacing foe with the bestial body of a horse and the upper torso of a man. Its face was devilish and long, gnarled black hair

fluttered about its head. From the forehead protruded a lengthy horn which tapered to a sharp, slender point. As for clothing, a screaming yellow sash was tied around the area where the animal and human halves joined.

Any moment I expected to feel the spearhead lunge into my heart and yet I could not close my eyes and await my fate like most would. Just when the maddening red of his wild orbs met mine, he leaped above me. I could not turn my face to see the dreadful demon; I think he never came to earth in that bound for I did not hear the thud of a landing in back of me. However, the trees were so close and thick that he must have passed thoroughly through them!

My thoughts reverted to the point where I had first seen the repugnant centaur and my blood froze. I saw, flitting in a mad scramble past me, a phantasmagoria of abhorrences, a myriad of things so hateful and shocking that I shook at their very sight.

One of the repellent monsters strayed away from the rest and loomed increasingly close. As a raised, six-toed, ragged paw swept down upon my left arm, he vanished into nothingness, into complete oblivion, as if the dirty, foul, vile being had never been there. I was so taken by fright, I fell faint.

I do not know how long I lay unconscious. When I finally awoke, it was full daylight, and my horse stood silently,

still firmly tethered to his tree in perfect calmness. There was no eerie, creeping mist, no animal tracks, no evidence that seemed to indicate the events of the night before. I concluded that I had merely had a nightmare and, even though I thought no further about it, I felt an urgent need to be among people again. On my animal, I set out in search of the cobblestone trail. To my amazement, I found it with only minor difficulty.

I retraced my path of the day before. Finally, I came upon the gates and my former acquaintance, the guard.

Wishing to show how superstitious and foolish his warnings had been, I said, "Good day," tipped my hat and continued, "I am well, sir, and you?"

Smiling and chuckling to myself, I thought how silly it was for this man to really believe the beautiful land in back of us harbored evil.

"Fine," he answered. As my mount easily trotted past him, he added, "And you, sir, had better take care of those small wounds on your left arm. They are only scratches but, nonetheless, they might become infected."

Quickly, I glanced over and on my left forearm there were six small, clearly seen inflictions whose blood was beginning to clot. It was more than I could stand. I spurred my steed into a swift gallop for I was only too happy to get as far from the fragrant pines and deep blue pools as possible. □

BATHING A DRAGON

by Cheryl Locher

Bathing a dragon can be hard unless a person follows six easy steps. But before you can even begin bathing a dragon, your first step is to catch the male dragon, which, as everyone knows, is more docile than the female of the species.

After you locate a male, you can catch him easily by chasing him. You have to wear your armor suit, carry your lance and ride a white horse. That's to give the dragon a little bit of encouragement. Now you are ready to begin the chase, but remember to watch out for the fire he breathes. Set up a rig in a forest between two trees, using two ropes. In the middle of the ropes, attach a duzzle (a muzzle-like contraption for a dragon).

Get the dragon to head straight for the trees. But be sure he has a long distance to run so he'll be out of his fiery breath. If you're lucky the duzzle will hit the dragon squarely in the mouth. If you're not lucky, try step one another day.

When the dragon has got the duzzle stuck on his mouth, you jump off of your horse and onto the dragon's back. From there you hang on for your dear life and tie the ends of the ropes together behind the dragon's neck. After you have tightly secured the duzzle, jump back onto your horse. This takes plenty of skill, so practice.

The next step is to get the dragon to the water. The best thing to use is a giant swimming pool. Put a fake dragon (of the opposite sex) into the pool to lure the male dragon. In this case you would use a gragon which is a girl dragon. Chase the dragon with your lance until he spots the gragon.

Now he is in the water so you have to bathe him before he finds out that the gragon is a fake. When the dragon is close enough to the gragon and the edge of the pool, drop sleeping powder on him. Make sure he is close to the edge of the pool so his head will land on the concrete walkway; this is to prevent drowning.

Now comes the time that you've been waiting for. If you have a broom or mop and a couple truckloads of soap powder you're ready to begin. If you want your job to look professional you might use a little bit of Snowy bleach. Now wet his back

down thoroughly and carefully rub in the soap powder or bleach. But you only have an hour to wash every shingle on him because that's when the sleeping powder wears off. It would be a good idea to wash him in the same direction that his shingles are going. Don't forget to wash behind the dragon's ears and under the edges of his shingles.



Now that you've washed him thoroughly and he is shining all over, you can untie his duzzle and take it off. When you've got it off, be sure you're on the other side of the pool because his sleeping powder has almost worn off. He is usually so mad that he starts chasing you. Just head straight for the woods and lose him — an angry dragon (even if he is clean) is nothing to tamper with! □

Untitled

I live my life not only for me,
but for you.

For only through sharing can we discover
the hidden treasures of life.

I can share with you the greatest joy of life,
Love.

— Susan Rickert

VENGEANCE OF A PLANET

Tim
Ferguson

"... and it will come when the giver will receive; and the servants recognize the master."

From the first book of the Pentateuch of Markell, prophet of Quar.

Professor Penson looked at the meter again.

What could it be?

He stood, walked to the seismographic computer in his office, checked the printouts again, and walked back to his desk.

Picking up the phone receiver, he dialed four digits.

"Miss Warren, has the doctor left yet? What? Ten minutes ago? Thank you."

Again he checked the meter and the printouts.

The sudden knock on the door startled him.

"Come in, Bill."

The door opened and in walked Doctor William Bolan, a short man in his mid-fifties, who was slightly overweight and wore a puzzled expression.

"Hello, Greg. What's the problem you're having with the computer?"

"I don't think it's the computer; come here."

Professor Penson walked to the computer printout sheet and held it up for Bolan to see.

"And look at this," said Greg Penson, as he walked over to see the seismograph.

"This is strange, isn't it?", asked Dr. Bolan after a few minutes of looking at the needle; pulsing, pulsing.

"Strange!" exploded Professor Penson.

"Not only is it strange, it's downright impossible! Do you realize that it started at two o'clock this morning and has kept the exact same pace for over seven hours? What can it be?"

"As to what it is, I don't know, but perhaps if we ask what it isn't...?"

Greg Penson thumbed through his computer handbook and began to punch coded buttons.

Miner Cole Marston stepped into the elevator. He didn't know what to make of it. Here he was, in charge of his own division after nine years as a miner of "The Project," and things just wouldn't go right.

The Project.

That great and glorious strip mining expedition that made all others look like gopher holes. After one and one-half years, they had expanded the mine to fourteen miles in diameter, and about three thousand feet at its deepest. After they had depleted the mine of its coal supply everybody was ready to leave.

Then somebody discovered what turned out to be the largest and deepest vein of gold ever discovered. Descending deeper and deeper, almost sixteen miles now, they seemed intent on digging to the depths of Hell itself. The men went down in one month shifts, eating, sleeping and working beneath tons of dirt and rock.

"I don't want to start any rumors or anything, but something is going on that I don't know how to explain."

Marston stepped out at the seventh level, the lowest. He glanced at his watch.

"Forty-two minutes, these new 'vators really do work", he murmured to himself.

As he walked, he saw all the things that were familiar to him; the roughly hewn walls, the hypnotic monotony of the lights on the walls, stretching down the hall and disappearing around the bend.

A group of grimy miners met Marston on his way down the corridor.

"Lou, what's the problem?" Marston called out to the largest man in the group, his managing assistant, Louis Powers.

"I don't know, chief; it's right down there though."

He followed Powers down the shaft until they were out of sight of the other men. They stopped.

"Marston, I don't want to start any rumors or anything, but something is going on that I don't know how to explain."

Powers paused, looking back down towards the other men uncomfortably.

"It's the tunnels, Marston, they're filling up," Powers whispered.

After a moment of amazed confusion, Marston said, "Run that by me one more time, only slower."

"They're filling up, I tell you, just come here."

Marston followed. Still puzzled over the situation, he kept his mouth shut, hoping the answer would come at the end of the line.

"In here," directed Powers, motioning towards a tunnel with a sign strung across it reading "Unsafe Area, Do Not Proceed Beyond This Point".

As they entered the tunnel, they turned on their hand torches and continued on for about five minutes.

At the end of the tunnel they were facing a wall, not of rock, but of a lava-like substance with small pock marks in it.

"How did it get here?" asked the Chief Engineer, gingerly touching it; it was the temperature of all the other walls, cool, not like just hardened lava.

"Don't ask me, but I was lucky enough to discover it first, so no one else knows. But that's not the bad part; this morning I made four marks with my power drill, each about one foot apart and moving toward the entrance, and look."

There was only one mark showing.

Captain John McClusky of the New York Coast Guard stood on the bridge of his ship in puzzled contemplation.

What the Hell? he thought. The Government's paying for it all anyway.

He was on what he considered a wasteful assignment. Some rather prominent personage was reported missing by his wife after he failed to return from a yacht trip that was supposed to conclude a "business" deal. That was the report; his orders were to find the missing man.

He knew what to look for; an expensive yacht with three businessmen aboard, probably three young, pretty fortune-seeking girls; or about a million dollars worth of smuggled, high grade dope. The latter would probably mean three very deadly guns.

Then one of his three ships, the *Sand Piper*, radioed in with a distress signal,

engine trouble or something, then completely cut communications. He couldn't raise them, so he ordered the ships to converge on the *Sand Piper's* last position. That was when he received reports of the Gulf Stream changing course drastically. That scared him; something that big meant earthquake, and that meant tidal waves.

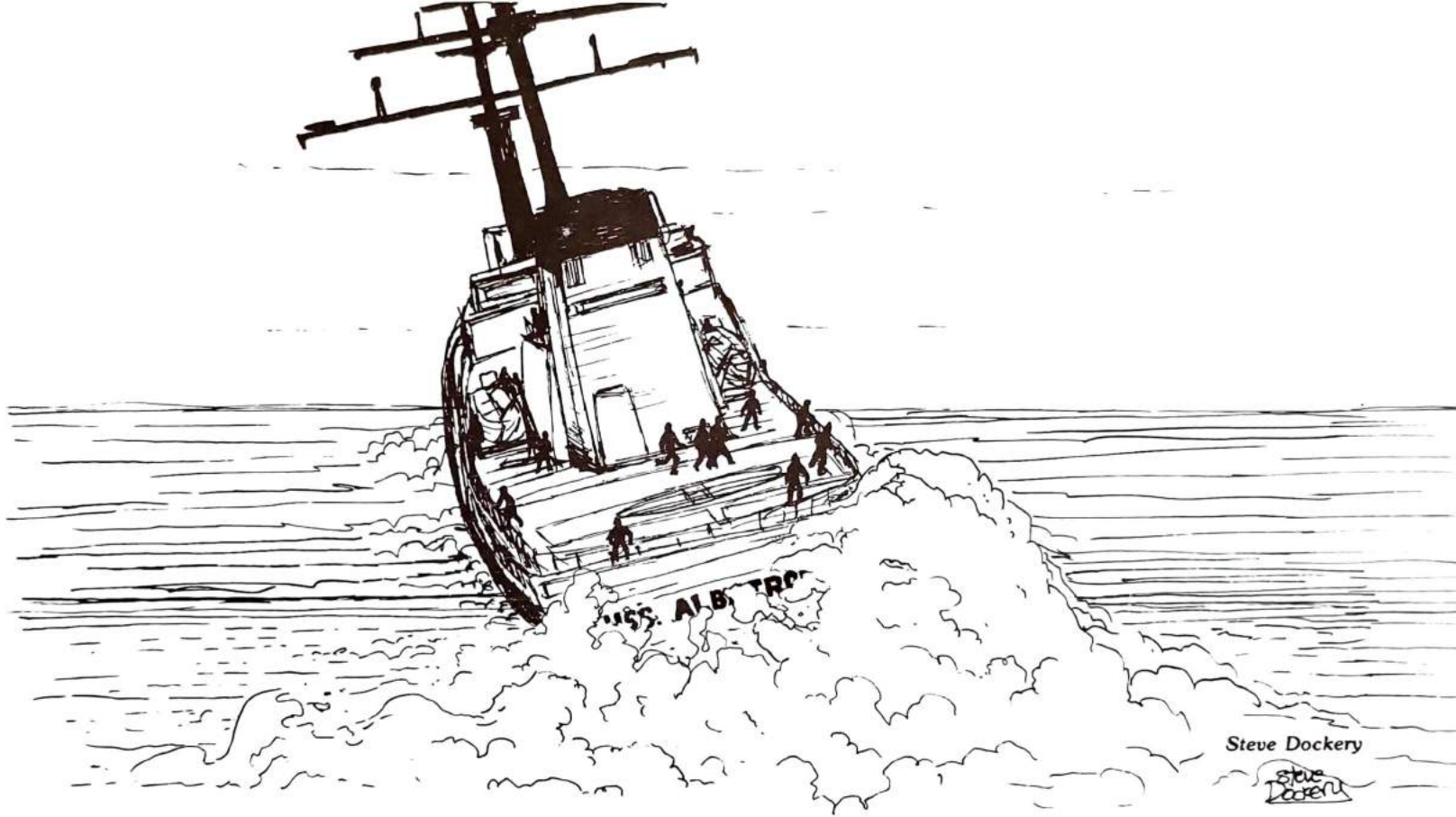
When he arrived at the designated point, he received a report that the Humbolt current was altering its course too.

"God, that's weird," he thought. Then he glanced at his companion ship, the *Albatross*.

“. . . reports of the Gulf Stream changing course drastically. That scared him; something that big meant earthquake, and that meant tidal waves."

There was something big and seemingly formless clinging to the rear of the *Albatross'* hull, wrapping itself around the props.

"That's all I need, a damned giant squid."



Signaling the helm to pull along side the *Albatross*, he radioed headquarters and explained as best he could what was going on, gave his present position, and kept channels open.

He could no longer communicate with the *Albatross*.

That's when he saw the problem, a sort of dirty white foam was spreading

over the entire stern and port sides, creeping towards the bow.

The crew had abandoned ship, and was now in a life boat, throttle opened wide and racing toward them.

"Matt - what...?" he called urgently.

Captain Matthew Combs of the *Albatross* looked almost dead, his face

was ashen, his manner dazed. He was apparently in a state of shock. He glanced back at his ship.

"Jennings, sir and that... stuff, it... he... stepped on it and it spread up his leg, fast. He just sort of... dissolved away, there was nothing we could do."

At that moment the ship lurched.

"That's it sir, it did the same thing when it attacked our ship."

Captain McClusky remained calm.

"Pierce, request an emergency air pickup immediately! Men, get all the spare gas, pour it..." he choked. All the men stared at the *Albatross*. The water all around it was in turmoil, and the ship was being pulled under, slowly at first, then it snapped under, and was lost from view and the ocean calmed again.

The ship shook again.

"A 14-222 sea plane is on the way, Captain," said Pierce.

"The water all around it was in turmoil, and the ship was being pulled under, slowly at first, then it snapped under, and was lost from view and the ocean calmed again."

"Fast, now, get that stuff in the water and light it," ordered Captain McClusky.

A black cloud of smoke rose.

"It's working," someone shouted.

Nevertheless, headquarters lost communications about two minutes later, and even the sea plane gave up after searching an hour and a half.

The computer said no earthquakes, no tremor, and no foreign weapons.

Professor Penson looked again at the printout. There were twelve men in his computer room now, all top scientists.

"Well, gentlemen, this proves that not only is it not a computer malfunction, but it seems to be a natural phenomenon. Any ideas?"

There were twelve long faces in Prof. Penson's computer room; none of them spoke.

Several events of this magnitude occurred in the next two months. The Project, along with deepsea mining and oil drilling was abandoned, for the immediate future anyway. The tunnels were almost filled, and no amount of drilling or blasting could impede the progress of this "rock".

All ships and boats were beached. Fishing companies were strongly opposed to this, but they lost every vessel they put out and the fishermen simply would not sail. There were several accidents on the rivers until it was realized whatever was plaguing the oceans was also plaguing the rivers.

There were several international accusations; the Chinese blaming the Russians, the Russians blaming the United States, and the United States insisting they were not responsible and placed the blame on some leftist terror-

ist group. In turn thirty-nine ransom notes were received from various terrorist groups claiming they were responsible.

Two more weeks went by.

When Carl Overton, a professor at Wichita State University, contacted Professor Penson at his office in San Francisco, He said that he had something important to tell him, and that he should assemble all the scientists, archaeologists, and anybody else working on the problem.

The next morning found over two hundred eager intellectuals awaiting an explanation.

Professor Overton walked in, and all heads turned in his direction. He walked directly to the podium at the front of the room.

Without pause, he spoke.

"Gentlemen, a friend of mine, Dr. Percival Greene, has made a discovery that will be sure to shock you," he intoned gravely.

"When I first heard of the problem, I was in the company of Dr. Greene. After hearing the news, he plunged himself into a deep study of the subject; he probably knew as much about it as anybody in this room. Then two days ago he locked himself in the computer room. Last night, a student came to my house and told me that he heard a shot from my office. Hurrying to the laboratory, I unlocked the door and went in."

He paused.

"I found Professor Greene lying beside the chair at his desk. He had committed suicide. He had recorded a message on his tape recorder before he shot himself; I'm going to play it for you now."

He set up a tape recorder, and started the tape.

"Carl, I have concluded something; I hadn't even thought of it before. You and I, and the three hundred billion people of the earth are parasitic bacteria. Except for the miners; they're like hookworms.

"You and I, and the three hundred billion people of the earth are parasitic bacteria . . . the world is quite literally coming alive . . ."

"A few explanations: the moving "walls" in the mines and oil wells is the Earth's parallel to blood clotting. The Deadly Foam, as it has become known, is a protective and purifying system in the oceans and rivers of the world. They are amazingly similar to our white corpuscles. The changing of the currents of the world is much like the change in the blood vessel pattern changing in an unborn human.

"As you have probably guessed, Carl, the world is quite literally coming alive, and it is systematically cleaning itself of parasites. I don't know how yet, but the Earth will find a way to get humans on land. It's too late to organize any kind

of immigration to the moon, even if we could supply such an expedition. I see no way to kill the Earth without doing so to ourselves also. I will not stay around to witness the massacre."

And again, Professor Greene died. □



Steve Dockery

You are drowning, not in his love,
but in your love for him.

You live in a sea of blind emotion, while he is
an unseen beast, feasting on your innocence,

And he will feast, but only to his own contentment,
leaving you, a torn and confused child.

After him, you will know not of present,
or love to be, but only the bitter past.

Daniel Burrows



Ricky Knutson

Linda, You've Been There

Look what they've done, Linda, they made me cry.
They did it to you, Big Sister, how'd you get by?
Where do I find the faith, when the faith won't come?
How do I stop the tears? It's my heart they're comin' from.

They're makin' a mold and tryin' to fit me in.
I can't help thinking that maybe they're gonna win.
You know, it scares me. What if I'm not strong?
How will I ever know if I was right and they were wrong?

I'm just a child, at least that's what they say.
Well, if they're grown up I never want to get that way.
I don't want to hurt the ones that love me so.
I don't want to be afraid to let my feelings show.

I know that you're listening,
I know that you care.
You know what I'm feeling,
'Cause Linda, you've been there!

Sue Pearson



Amy Gethins

Butterflies

What is a butterfly?

*A butterfly is a few inches of gossamer,
A twinkle in the sunlight,
A beautiful thought grown to full maturity.*



*It is almost impossible for words
To do a butterfly justice.*

*For how can one describe a thing so delicate,
So fragile,
That a mere gust of wind can extinguish
Its shimmering light.*



*A butterfly is a small glimpse of beauty
That touches our lives for but a moment,
But leaves an everlasting impression.*

Ralph Miller



My First Interview

Susan McKeeman

I had never interviewed anyone, but since I'll be graduating this year, I felt I might as well add this feat to my high school accomplishments. Looking for a good start, I began making a list of questions while babysitting. My charges, a very precocious young lady and her baby brother, could not be allowed out of my sight for one second. So I came up with the idea — why not interview *them*? I needed practice, anyway. Besides, it might make a good giggle. My first interview was born.

"My name is Tanya, and I'm four," was the solemn answer to my first question. Her brother, Andy, gave me a toothless grin — which was his answer to each and every query. He was only about eighteen months old.

"What do you think is the most important thing in the world?" I asked, expecting to hear "cars" or the "T.V."

"A purse," was the answer.

"Why?" I had to ask.

"Because there's important stuff in it. It has to be important, too."

I must admit, I admire her logic.

"Tanya, who is the most important person in the world?"

"Me 'n' you."

Flattered I asked why again.

"Because we both have purses."

"Oh." I couldn't argue with that.

"Tell me, what do you want to be when you grow up?"

"A crossing guard," she answered.

"And how old do you think you will get to be?"

"Five. Or maybe six. But if ya get any older do you know what happens?" She drew close to me, eyes wide and truthful. "You get wrinkles" she breathed, pulling at her face to show me just how they look.

"What do you like to do more than anything else?" I quickly asked.

"Play. And cook Mama dinner."

"Tanya do you ever have any problems?"

"Uh-huh"

"Big ones?"

"No. I only have little ones."

"like . . . ?"

"Well, I want Tuesday Taylor. I want

a flower too. But I have to wait. And when I grow up, I'm gonna have babies. They're supposed to be trouble."

I was having a wrestling match on my face. The smiles were harder and harder to keep down.

"Do you think you are pretty?"

"Oh yes!" Her hand went up to her tousled blonde hair, and she curled a lock of hair self-consciously.

On an irresistible urge, I blurted quickly.

"And who is prettier — you or your mother?"

"Me," came the answer, without a moment's hesitation.

"What do you do during the day?" I asked as serenely as possible.

"Play. And I help Mommy a lot. She needs me."

"Are you a good girl?"

"Yes." She bounced on a chair for emphasis. Beneath her, their dog yowled. "And Cinder's a nice doggie, too," she quickly added, giving the cocker spaniel a loving pat. Cinder got up and went to the couch.

"Who are your friends?"

"WendynTinaNatalie," she said importantly.

"And do you love your family?"

"Yes. But sometimes I don't like Andy. He drools, you know," and she proceeded to give a demonstration.

When she was finished, the interview

continued.

"What do your parents do?"

"They're not my parents. They're my Mommy and Daddy," she answered sternly.

"Well, what do Mommy and Daddy do?" I asked a bit flustered.

"They work. Mommy works al-l-l day at home and Daddy goes away to work because it's too big to take home. He mows the lawn too."

"What do you do when you're all together?"

"We go on trips. Cinder comes too. She runs all over, only we don't. We water the flowers. If we ran around we might hurt them."

I could just see her mother and father running through a field trampling flowers. It was oddly relaxing. I looked at my watch. Eight o'clock and I was already tired? I decided to re-charge myself, and flicked on the electronic child-calmer. As Donny and Marie exchanged raunchy jokes, my whirling brain wondered vaguely if the next generation was going to be more logical. I think so. □

SIZZLING in the Sun

Mary Bianca Nicoletti

As I lay on my back porch, trying to acquire a reasonable facsimile of a tan, my mother came to the back door to say she was going shopping and asked if I needed anything. The only thing I needed then was an oasis and a camel, the kind with four legs and a hump. I asked her to buy me some suntan lotion and went back to my sheet.

I was, at the time, practicing all the Do's of sunbathing: I had a scarf to protect my head; two towels, one for drying off and the other for a pillow; a flyswatter to combat the hoards of Japanese Beetles; the last drops of my suntan lotion "avec sunscreen"; and a timer. I intended to spend a maximum of thirty minutes in the sun. As I alternately combatted a barrage of beetles and sizzling heat I realized that I was hot and thirsty. Due to the fact that the wooden sundeck was at the broiling point I lightly pranced to the door and gave the handle a good clean jerk. It wouldn't budge, so there I was trapped like a bug in a jar. With fertilizer on the grass and the door locked, I took the only action possible — I wrapped myself in the sheet Bedouin style and took refuge in the porch shadows to watch the sun encroach bit by bit on the remaining shade.

Needless to say, when my mother returned from her two-hour-long shopping spree she received a lecture on locking doors, and returned the favor by giving me one on skin cancer and the benefits of fresh air. I'll admit that there's a bit of humor in almost every situation, but it's absolutely no fun whatsoever to be stranded on the back porch in ninety degree weather. □

Make Sure You Mean It

Do you remember the night we met?
We went parking and drank some beer.
As you held me I asked myself,
"Where to from here?"
When you kissed me goodnight
You fell backward down the stairs.
You quickly memorized my number —
I thought of good times we would share.

Well, good times grew into love.
Love grew strong and fast.
We never had any questions
About how long it would last.
Remember the walk in P.W. park?
You carved our names in that tree.
Then you added "4-EVER"
And said how much you loved me.

Dreams of getting married
And all our other plans.
Remember how good it felt
When we were holding hands?
What happened to our love?
I guess I'll never know,
What made you change your mind?
Where did the feeling go?

Lord knows why I wrote this
Maybe just to let you know
That I do still love you,
Though I'd never tell you so.
Sometimes I even cry at night.
The pain stings my eyes.
Those are the nights I lay awake
And wait for the sun to rise.

Let me offer a bit of advice —
I say this because I've seen it —
Before you say, "I love you."
Make sure you really mean it.

Sue Pearson



Valerie Petersen

HALLWAY PATROL

MIKE WILSON

This is the school — Woodbridge Senior High.

(Dum Da Dum Dum . . . !)

Thirty-five hundred students will pass through these halls today. Of those about five hundred will be traveling while under the influence of school lunches and half of them will be stopped for skipping.

(Dum Da Dum Dum Dum . . .)

My name is Joe Disciplinarian. I was working the lunch shift in the library when in she walked; she was a tall picturesque blonde. Her innocent smile didn't fool me a bit. After freeing my tie from the card catalogue, I nonchalantly approached the suspect.

"Excuse me miss, may I see your pass?"

Her reply left me confused.

"Here? Now? In front of the reference books?"

Her surprised look told me that she had misinterpreted my question. I asked her again, "Do you have a pass to be out of class?"

My suspicions were aroused when she attempted to answer my yes or no question by caressing my shoulder and making sensuous noises with her lips. Obviously she was trying to seduce me, but why? Perhaps she just couldn't resist my animal magnetism, or maybe she didn't really have a pass at all. I dejectedly ruled out the first possibility as wishful thinking.

Realizing there could be only one explanation for her reaction, I grabbed her by the arm and said "OK, honey, the jig's up, you're coming with me down to the office."

(Dum Da Dum Dum . . .)

The story you have just read is totally absurd. The names have been changed to protect the author.

(Dum Da Dum Dumb Dumb . . .) □



Tony Beasley

Ugly City

The city is a junkyard
It thrives on junkies' souls
The junkyard is a city
Rats and night-time trolls
Both live together
Giving no mercy nor pity
The ugly night-time world
Of Satan's black-hearted city

Chuck Rote

Neon Christmas

i'm living in a jungle but i'm unable to roam
from this great metropolis that some call home.
people scurry about, it's christmas all around
but for me the joy and cheer can't be found.
i'm searching for an old-fashioned christmas
just like my grandma had,
but all i got is a potted plant on the
table in my run-down pad.
the pretty lights are flashing, music fills the air
but somehow the meaning of christmas just isn't there.
i look out and see all the people down on their luck
they're all asking for money — even santa needs a buck.
i hope and i pray for a little christmas cheer
but it doesn't look like i'm going to find it this year.

Mike Wilson

Ambitions

John Maxey

Wayland's Ice Cream was not unusually busy for a Friday afternoon in June. Three children sat on stools at the counter spooning in the flavorful coldness. Four high school boys had just left and once again failed to put their water glasses in the rack. The store owner, Davis Wayland, took care of the glasses and removed the ice cream dishes from the table. Wayland, an easy-going man of twenty-three, was usually seen with shirt sleeves rolled up.

As he wiped off the table, the bells hanging on the door tinkled, signaling a man who walked in and up to the counter. Wayland glanced up and not seeing Anne, his helper, at the counter, told the man, "Be with you in a minute. Have a seat if you like." He finished and stepped behind the counter. Looking at the customer, now sitting, he lit up in recognition. "Jim McDowell! I figured you'd get hungry for some good ice cream up there in Detroit."

McDowell smiled. "I'll have a strawberry sundae. Make it a large one."

"With nuts, right?"

"Precisely right," Jim acknowledged.

With that, Davis went to work on the sundae.

He had known Jim since they were

kids. They had hung around together and gotten into trouble together. Even after Jim went off to college to study business management, the two of them had gotten together when Jim came home for breaks. Since his graduation, Jim had been working as a supervisor in an automobile factory.

Davis had gone to work in a furniture factory when he got out of high school but he soon found that work didn't suit him. His supervisor had stood over him and all the workers, keeping them operating at full capacity. They were allowed a lunch that was just enough time to run downstairs, eat a sandwich, buy a coke, and guzzle it down. Aside from the conditions he worked under, Davis got no satisfaction out of doing his bit of work on a product he never saw the

"The business didn't make him much more than a living and even then he was in debt, but he was happy with his work."

completion of. He was acquainted with the other workers only by the job they did except a few whose names he knew but he never became friends with anyone. He hated every day he worked but it was steady work and steady pay.

While he worked there he took some business courses at a community college and when he was able, he quit his job, borrowed some money, and set up the ice cream store.

The business didn't make him much more than a living and even then he was in debt, but he was happy with his work. Selling ice cream did not require a lot of skill but he took pride in making what he sold, whether it was a simple ice cream cone or one of his masterpieces of ice cream, sponge cake, flavored syrup, fruit, whipped cream, and chopped nuts. He enjoyed serving the customers their pleasure and talking to the people that came to his store, sometimes only to laze and talk.

Davis picked up Jim's sundae and a lemonade for himself. "Have a seat over here," he said walking to one of the four well-used tables. The two friends settled into their chairs.

"What brings you back this way?" asked Davis.

"Oh, just visiting. I've got a week off."

"How's your job going?"

"OK," Jim answered unenthusiastically, "I'm pulling in a fair amount but the job's not a challenge anymore. I don't expect to get any higher position." He ate another spoon of ice cream. "If I could get another job, I'd quit."

The bells on the door rang. As the children left they turned and said, "Good bye, Mr. Wayland."

"Goodbye," he returned. He turned back to Jim. "How long have you been back in town?"

"... the job's not a challenge anymore. I don't expect to get any higher position."

"My parents drove up to the airport to get me just this afternoon — one o'clock."

"So you haven't seen anyone else yet?"

"No. I did notice that a bakery moved into where Felden's was."

"Yeah, that's a good place for it. Good doughnuts too ... Mr. Felden died in November."

Jim reflected a moment. "Remember that time I loosened the top on the ketchup at Felden's and Rodney Decker went to shake it up and ketchup flew everywhere!"

Davis quickly acknowledged. "Yeah, Mr. Felden looked straight at me when he saw!"

The both laughed over the escapade.

Again the bells tinkled another, older man walked in. Davis got up and stepped behind the counter.

"What will you have, Mr. Casner?"

Mr. Casner contemplated the list of flavors on the wall. "A scoop of raspberry and a scoop of orange sherbet — orange sherbet on top" came the decision.

"A scoop of raspberry and a scoop of orange sherbet" Davis repeated as he took a cone in one hand and a scoop in the other. He walked over to each of the two flavors, and reached in to fill his scoop. Holding the cone up in front of

himself he earnestly packed the ice cream on and shaped it. Mr. Casner kept his eye on it and swallowed in anticipation. On its completion, Davis handed the cone to Mr. Casner. "Here you are," he said and he beamed.

"And here you are," Mr. Casner said and handed Davis the exact price. He then started in on the delectation. As a smile came across Mr. Casner's face, Davis' expression too showed satisfaction.

Davis remembered Jim who was bringing his empty dish up to the counter. "Oh, Mr. Casner, this is Jim McDowell. I don't believe you know him but he used to live here, up on East Branch Road, and he's back visiting."

Mr. Casner now casually working on his ice cream and facing the two younger men, said, "The name sounds familiar but I can't place it. When did you live here?"

"I lived all my life here until about five years ago. My parents still live here. My Dad works in the State Bank. He has for thirty-some years."

Mr. Casner probed his memory. "No I just can't connect 'McDowell'," he said thoughtfully. "I'd sure like to stay and talk with you all a while but my wife wants me home early today. Seems that she's got some vacuum cleaner salesman coming over this evening. He's supposed to leave something free. I think how 'free' it is will depend on how quick I can get him to leave."

They all chuckled at this. Mr. Casner started towards the door and turned his head back. "How long are you going to be around, Jim?"

"About a week," Jim answered.

"Well I'll see you later, maybe tomorrow."

"OK, see you later," Jim said.

"Good luck!" Davis called after him.

Davis rested his forearms on the counter and leaned against it, looking out the window. Jim took up a position on one of the stools and they went back to talking.

"Do you remember Mary Linden?" Davis questioned. "I was going to go to see her tonight. She's got a girl living with her that's real nice so maybe we could all go out and see a movie or something ..."

.

During the next few days Davis and Jim got together frequently — running around, visiting friends, a couple of parties — trifling. When they were away from the store Anne handled the business.

One of the ice cream freezers gave out one day and so Davis had to move all the ice cream he could to other freezers. So that the remaining two partially empty five-gallon cartons didn't go to waste, Davis and Jim went searching for customers, promising them all the ice cream they could eat for almost nothing. They were able to assemble eight people who, along with Davis, Jim, and Anne, ate their fill of the cold stuff. It turned out being a lot of fun and Davis scarcely considered it a loss.

Davis and Jim found the trouble with the freezer was a torn compressor belt. They were able to get another belt from an old pump Jim's dad had. They restored the freezer to operation, making them quite satisfied with themselves.

One afternoon Davis and Jim were sitting in Wayland's, Jim with his usual strawberry sundae and Davis with a banana split. No customers had been in since after lunch and Anne went down the street for a newspaper. They were just eating and listening to the music, which was much louder than in the evenings when families came in for ice cream.

Davis placed his spoon in his empty dish and took a drink of water before he spoke. "You know, this business is really a struggle sometimes and I was thinking that it would be nice to ease the burden a little . . . What I'm getting at is that if you want to buy up half the store, we can run it together."

Jim ate a little slower and thought for a minute. "That would be cool . . . but I don't know, I'd have to think about it."

"I think we could do well together. It wouldn't be big-time management like what you're used to but it's a nice life. It would get you out of the situation you're in now anyway and you could always move onto something with more potential if you get a chance."

"That's true," agreed Jim, quickly running the idea through his mind. "I'll have to see where I am now and where I want to go."

"Anytime you decide you want to make a go of it, you let me know." With that, Davis stood up and went to get a share of the paper from Anne, who had just come in.

.

Davis was watering the plants on the table up at the front of the store one morning as the bells on the door shook.

Jim entered with a "Howdy."

"Good morning, Jim," Davis replied and continued tending to the plants. "You know this plant here has all the light it needs yet it insists on growing out in the way of the others. I just have to keep cutting it back."

"Don't let them get out of hand, Davis," Jim joked. "Remind them who's boss."

Davis finished watering them and set the pitcher down. He turned to Jim. "So what's up this morning?"

"Nothing in particular. Just getting ready to leave tomorrow . . . Davis, I've been considering your offer of partnership and it's come to look real good."



"So you want to make a go of it?"

"That's right."

"Well, whenever you want to come down and settle in is fine with me."

"I was figuring on staying on at my job until this project I'm in charge of is through — about a month."

"That'll give me some time to make whatever legal arrangements are necessary. Nothing very binding. We'll make it so that if you've got a better opportunity somewhere else, you can get out and I'll buy back your share. All at your approval of course."

Jim reached out his hand. "Let's call it a deal for now."

Davis extended his hand and they shook. "I'll have to make a double order of strawberry sauce."

They both laughed.

.....

The deal went off just as planned. It couldn't have been more fair. Jim bought half the business. They were then able to pay off the debt. The sign on the store window was changed to "Wayland-McDowell Ice Cream." Sometimes they worked at separate times, other times they could be found at the store together. Anne had no trouble getting along with Jim. Both Davis and Jim were able to get second jobs, although their main concern was still the ice cream store. All the regular customers still came in.

.....

The owners were sitting in the store a few months into their partnership doing the month's books. Davis, who was in an idle moment while Jim entered the figures, remarked, "It couldn't be better, could it? — I mean the set-up we have going."

*"it seems like we could be doing a lot more business."
... 'Maybe, but I'm content.'"*

Jim finished adding a column and looked up. "Yeah... well you know, actually, with a city of well over ten thousand, it seems like we could be doing a lot more business."

Davis thought a minute. "Maybe, but I'm content."

"I've been doing some thinking on how we could best improve our business. It occurs to me that we should try to get affiliated with a chain. Mind if I check into it?"

"No. Go ahead and see what you can find out," replied Davis without interest.

.....

"It will really be a boon!" Jim was restraining his excitement. "We'll get advertising in papers and on television! People everywhere will know what we are. Becoming an Ice Kreem store will really move business."

Davis considered. "And how will the pie be cut?" he questioned.

Jim figured Davis was sure to like the

answer. "We're guaranteed 125% of our current average and after that we get the low end of a twenty-eight split. Quite a deal, don't you think?"

"Yes, it is." He couldn't match Jim's enthusiasm. "Looks like a golden opportunity for advancement."

"I knew you'd agree. I can arrange to close a deal with Mr. Dwyer before the week's out... You do want to go through with it?"

"Well, yes if you think it would be best."

"I know it is. I'm confident this place will see progress."

.....

And sure enough, it did. A big lighted sign was put on the store and the lettering on the front window was removed. The emblazoned name of Ice Kreem brought in throngs of customers. So many, in fact that the personnel didn't recognize most of them, but there wasn't a moment to talk to them anyway. Customers now reached for the numbers that entitled them to be served.

There were other changes too. The old unmatched tables and chairs were replaced by new furnishings that were easy to care for and economical. Davis, Jim, and Anne, along with the two

other hired girls had to wear uniforms; it seems that people would consider it to be a cleaner establishment. The napkins too were standard Ice Kreem print. Orders were now served in paper cups and eaten with plastic spoons. Davis no longer got a chance to make his specials because they weren't on the big bright price list of Ice Kreem products. Anyway the art of making one could not be instilled into the transient workers. And there was no room for Davis' plants up by the window. The art work that Davis' friends had done for his walls had to be taken down; it wasn't in harmony with the store's decor. And the music — it had to go too, for fear that it might displease some of the patrons. The bells on the door were kept, though, because Mr. Dwyer, the Ice Kreem man, thought they gave the place a "homey" atmosphere.

But the important thing was that they weren't a struggling business any longer. Neither of the managers needed a second job or could spare the time for one. They had made it, been elevated. It was an accomplishment they could be proud of.

.....

"Why do you want to sell me your half of the business?!" Jim could not understand what he was hearing.

Davis tried to explain. "There's just nothing in it for me anymore. I don't enjoy the work. It's not like it used to be."

"Well you can't shy away from progress."

"It's not that. I just want to find a niche and work myself in and be satisfied with the size of it. As it turns out, the niche I was in got too big for my liking."

"Maybe we could change it back, at least partly."

"No. We won't be able to put our shoes back in the same tracks. I don't want to stifle your ambition either."

"What are you going to do then?"

"When I was painting signs part time I got right good at it and I was told I could come back if I wanted . . . I think that might suit me fine." □



Untitled

If the sun were to set
And never to rise,
You would lead me
With the light from your eyes.

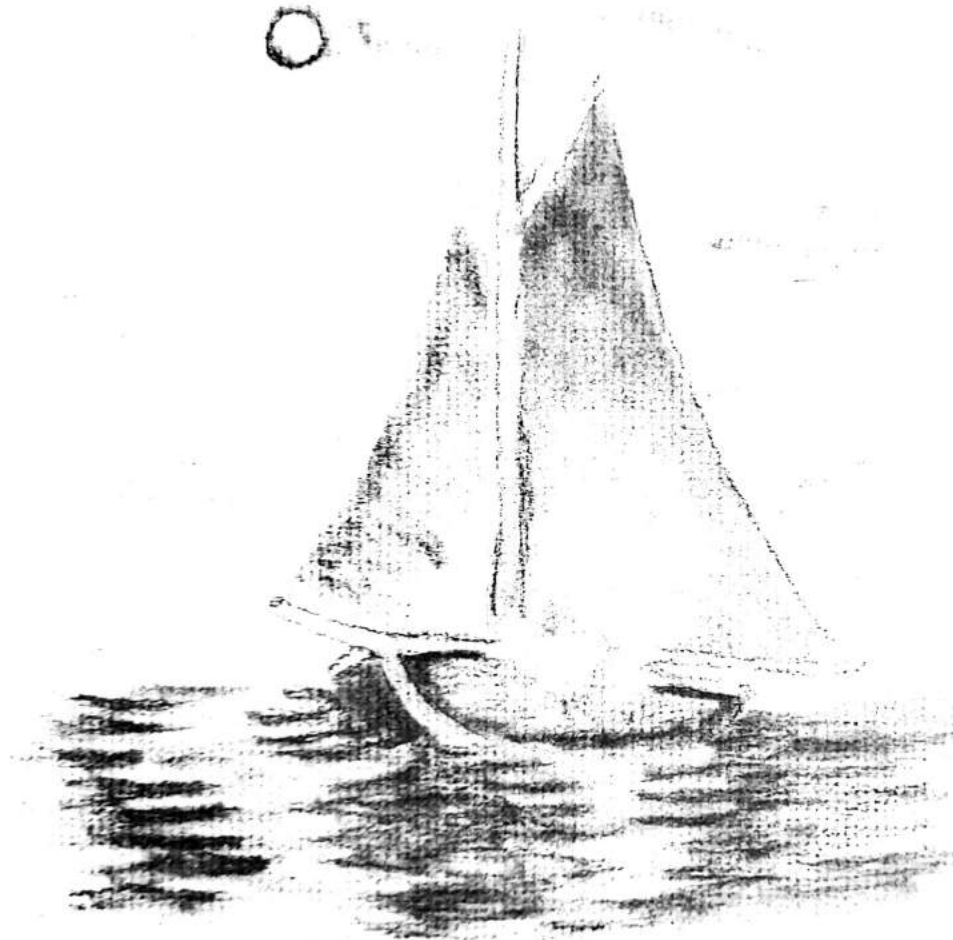
You'd guide my steps
Through each passing day,
We'd walk together
And together we'd stay.

We'd live and we'd love,
Forever happy we'd be
In our own little world
Of just you and me.

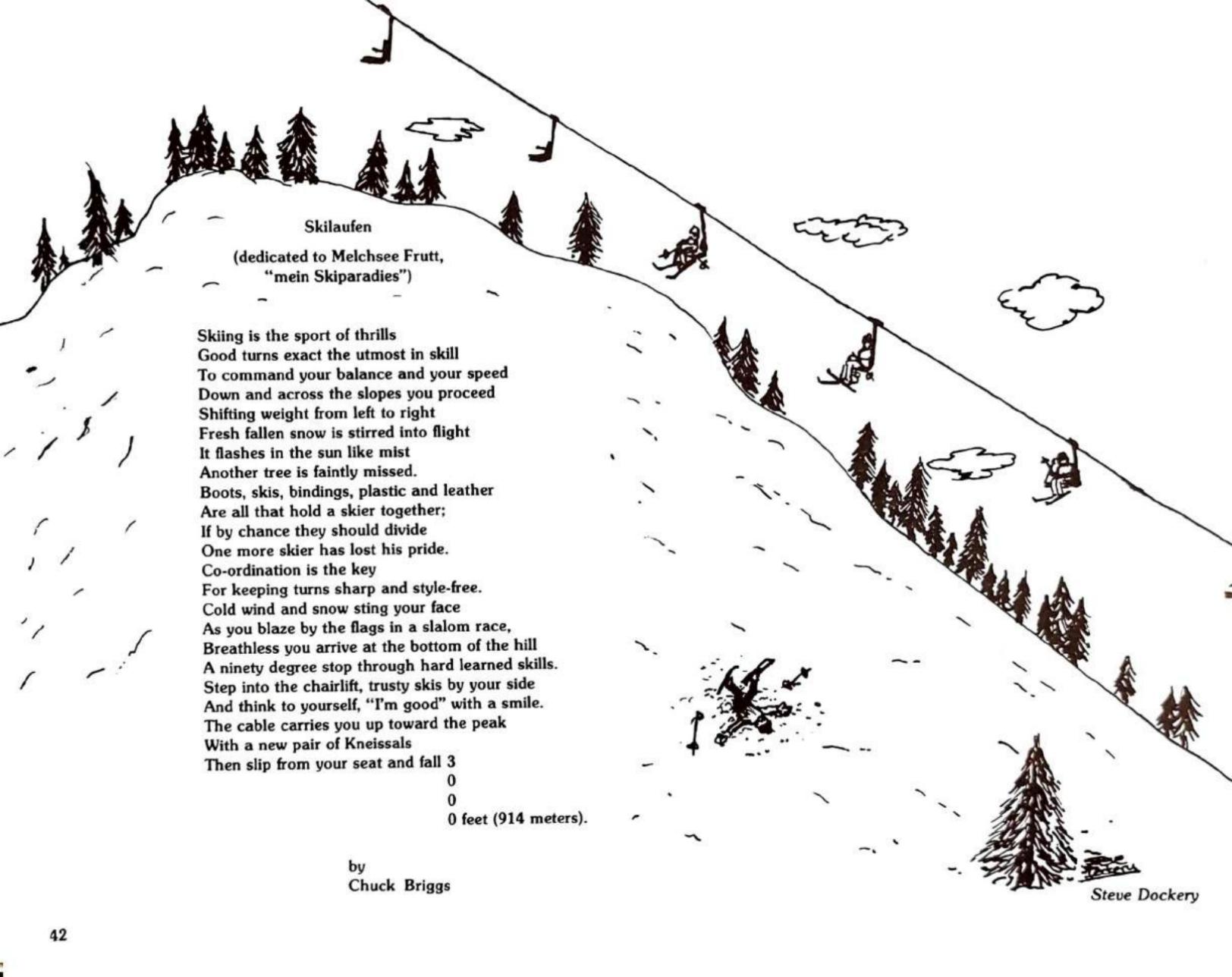
But though the sun sets,
It will rise again
And pushing all fantasy aside,
Our time together must end.

So now you and I
Can say our goodbyes,
But I wonder what would happen
If the sun didn't rise.

Hope Bell



Kevin Riley



Skilaufen
(dedicated to Melchsee Frutt,
"mein Skiparadies")

Skiing is the sport of thrills
Good turns exact the utmost in skill
To command your balance and your speed
Down and across the slopes you proceed
Shifting weight from left to right
Fresh fallen snow is stirred into flight
It flashes in the sun like mist
Another tree is faintly missed.
Boots, skis, bindings, plastic and leather
Are all that hold a skier together;
If by chance they should divide
One more skier has lost his pride.
Co-ordination is the key
For keeping turns sharp and style-free.
Cold wind and snow sting your face
As you blaze by the flags in a slalom race,
Breathless you arrive at the bottom of the hill
A ninety degree stop through hard learned skills.
Step into the chairlift, trusty skis by your side
And think to yourself, "I'm good" with a smile.
The cable carries you up toward the peak
With a new pair of Kneissals
Then slip from your seat and fall 3
0
0
0 feet (914 meters).

by
Chuck Briggs

Steve Dockery

SNOW JOB

starting

to fall lightly,

gradually building up

more and more, overpowering

almost comical, at the climax

THE WOOL IS COMPLETELY COVERING HER

EYES, just then she realizes that she

has been snowed, cleverly she hides

her knowledge of the scheme,

s, stt

then all of a sudden

she zings him — his

little charade

backfires.

STAR BORES

Story and Illustrations
by Steve Dockery

It is a period of civil war. (Actually, war is never civil, but that's the way it goes.) Rebel spaceships, striking from a secret base, have won their first small victory against the rotten GALACTICAL EMPIRE.

During the battle, rebel spies managed to steal the plans to the Empire's ultimate weapon: THE DEAD STAR, an egg-shaped battle station with enough power to destroy a whole planet. (Well, maybe not a *whole* planet — would you settle for a dirt mound?)

Pursued by the Empire's nasty and sinister agents, Princess Leia Organic races home aboard her private spaceship, custodian of the plans that can bring "truth, justice, and the American way" back to the galaxy.

As our story opens, a gargantuan (that means big) Imperial Star Cruiser overtakes the Princess' rust bucket, and imperial "Barnstormers" savagely attack the poor defenseless slobs within it. Inside the rebel ship, two robots, one tall, thin and fussy, and the other, short, squatty and intelligent, rush down a corridor. The tall jerky one, See- Creepio, speaks first.

Creepio: We're doomed!

Arttoot- Detour (The midget one): Bleep-doop? Translation: Am I going to be stuck with this hopeless case of a robot for the rest of this film?

In the midst of battle, the two robots are separated. When Creepio looks into a nearby door, he sees Arttoot at the far end, with the Princess adjusting his controls. She hears Creepio approaching and ducks into the shadows.

Creepio: Arttoot, this is no time to be sneaking off with your girlfriend! We're in serious trouble!

Arttoot: Zeep-fweet! Translation: Shut up, you fool, and listen to me! The Princess has given me the plans and we are to climb into an escape pod and make a clean getaway. Got it?

Creepio: What plans? What're you talking about?

Arttoot: He's not just stupid — he's also deaf!

Arttoot leads Creepio to a large doorway, and then rolls into the escape pod.

Creepio: Hey! You're not permitted in there!

Arttoot: Vreep! Translation: Come on!

Creepio: I'm not getting in there!

Arttoot: Would you rather be blasted into smithereens by the Imperials?

Creepio: Move over, Arttoot, what're we waiting for?

Our heroes blast off in the pod and land on the desolate world of Tatooine. We next find our clanking adventures trapped in the cargo hold of a Ja-Ja sandcruncher. Suddenly, the sandcruncher lurches to a halt and several short Ja-Jas herd Arttoot, Creepio, and several other crusty androids outside. They are lined up for sale as Duke Flystalker and his Uncle Bowen look them over. Duke inspects Arttoot and calls to his uncle.

Duke: Uncle Bowen! I found something we can use — a new vacuum cleaner!

Creepio: That's no vacuum cleaner — that's my friend Arttoot Detour!

Bowen: All right, I'll take the dorky-looking one (points to Creepio) and the fire hydrant.

Creepio: That's no fire hydrant!

Duke: I know, I know . . .

Duke takes the robots to his uncle's garage. While cleaning Arttoot, Duke accidentally hits a button, and a 3-D image of Princess Leia appears.

Leea: Help me, Ugly-one Krumoldy...
Duke: What's this?

Creepio: Artoot says it's only a soap-opera rerun. Pay it no mind.

Duke: Wait — there's an old hermit near here whose name is old Bum Krumoldy. I wonder if they're the same person.

Creepio: They probably are, sir. How many people do you know with the name 'Krumoldy'?

Duke and the robots set off the next morning to find Krumoldy. They meet him in the desert, and he takes them to his home.

Krumoldy hands Duke an odd-shaped device.

Duke: What is it?

Bum: It's your father's 'laser saber'.

Duke: What's it for?

Bum: It was the weapon of a Giddy Knight. They were all killed by Darf Veeder, who was controlled by the dark side of the farce.

Duke: Why's it called the 'dark side'?

Bum: I guess it's because those under its control weren't very bright.

Duke: Oh. What's the 'farce' anyway?

Bum: It controls everything, determines our destiny...

Duke: Like a second rate god?

Bum: Something like that, but your mind's too weak to understand it completely.

Duke: What's this button do?

Duke has been holding the laser saber too close to Bum, and as he presses the switch, the bright blade shoots through the old man's chest.

Bum: Now do you know? You're lucky in two ways. First, if I didn't have the farce, I'd be dead. Second, if I wasn't so righteous, I'd clobber you right now! So, would you please turn that thing off?



After viewing the Princess' message, Duke and Bum are off to Moss-Eyely spaceport. Upon arriving, they enter a nearby bar to find a star pilot to take them to the Princess' home planet of All-bran. As they walk in the door, Duke notices that the bartender is mixing something with water. Duke asks what it is.

Bartender: It's 'Kool-aid.' We import it from a place called earth. Want some? It's pretty strong stuff.

Duke: No thanks. What else have you got?

Bartender: We got grape Nehi, but we're not allowed to sell hard liquor to kids.

One of the aliens in the bar walks (or rather, slithers) up to the bar. The bartender pours him/her/it some Kool-aid, and the mutant drinks it with one *slized*. It immediately staggers away. (Duke finds it hard to figure out how something with no legs can stagger.)

Meanwhile, Krumoldy has located a likely pilot. His name is Sam So-So.

Sam: I hear you're looking for passage to All-bran.

Bum: If it's on a fast ship.

Sam: You bet it's fast. Haven't you heard of the Millennium Clunker?

Sam's ship is indeed a clunker. Duke is disgusted to see the giant hunk of wreckage.

Duke: What a junk-pile!

Sam: She may not look like much.

Duke: You're right. She doesn't.

Sam: Shut up and let me finish! You wanted a fast ship, so I had to give up something for speed.

Bum: It's called battle follows.

Suddenly, a horde of Barnstormers bursts into the docking bay. The whole crew of heroes leaps into Sam's ship. Sam sits down in the cockpit next to his co-pilot. The co-pilot is a hairy thing called a wook. This particular one's name is Crunchie.

Sam: Crunchie! Get us out of here!
The Wook grunts alarmingly.

Duke: What's wrong?

Sam: My Wook co-pilot says it's hard to get off the ground with excess weight on board — namely, passengers.

Krumoldy: Why's he called a Wook?

Sam: Well, when the first explorer visited their planet, he saw one and named it, saying 'Wook over there!'

Duke: Very funny.

Sam: I'm a starpilot, not a comedian.

Several hours later, they arrive at the solar system of All-bran and make a shattering discovery.

Sam: I've made a shattering discovery! We've arrived smack-dab in the middle of a meteor shower!

Duke: What's this about a shower? I didn't bring any soap!

Sam: I meant that All-bran has been blown up!

Duke: I didn't know they made a pump big enough to do that.

Sam: You idiot! I meant that it's been destroyed!

Krumoldy: What's that up ahead? It looks like an egg.

Sam: It ~~looks~~ ^{seems} to be an egg.

Krumoldy: Then it's a space station!

It is indeed a space station. The Dead Star itself! The Millennium Clunker is drawn inside by a magnetic beam. Once inside, the crew rushes to the station's control room.

Sam: How'd you know where this room was?

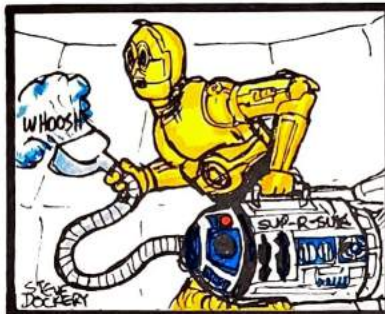
Duke: I didn't — but the writer thought we were too stupid to find it ourselves.

Creepio: Sir, Artoot has found the computer terminal.

Krumoldy: Tell him to plug in.

Artoot inserts his information probe into the socket. Smoke immediately pours from his seams.

Creepio: You ninny — that's a power outlet! THIS is the computer terminal!



Artoot plugs into the right circuit, and starts receiving information.

Creepio: Artoot says that it should be simple to sneak up to the tractor beam generator and turn it off.

Krumoldy: I don't think you boys can help — I'll have to go it alone.

Duke: Glory hog!

Creepio: You'll have your chance to be killed. The Princess is being held prisoner, and you guys can rescue her!

Sam: Not me!

Duke: You're chicken!

Sam: It's better to be a live chicken than a dead duck!

Duke: That's an old joke.

Sam: Like I said — I'm a starpilot, not a comedian.

Duke finally convinces Sam, and they are off to the detention block.

They run into Leea's cell.

Leea: Don't you ever knock? What took you so long, anyway?

Duke: How'd you know we were coming?

Leea: Easy — I read the script. I had to have something to do while I was here!

An explosion nearby tells them they've been cut off. A laser bolt shoots directly at Duke's head.

Leea: Duck!!

Duke: My name's not 'Duck', it's 'Duke'!

Duke tries to fire at the Barnstormers, but he trips and blows a hole in the floor. As he falls into it, the others rush to where he was. Much to their dismay, they are no longer standing on anything. They all tumble into a huge garbage room.

Sam: Ugh! This garbage smells ripe!

Leea: At least we're safe in here!

Suddenly, the walls begin to close in.

Leea: I had to open my big mouth...

Meanwhile, the two robots are still in the control room. Barnstormers blast the door down.

Head Barnstomer: Who are you?

Creepio: I'm- uh- I'm from Acme Vacuum Cleaners Incorporated. This, (he points to Artoot) is our model R2-D2. Want a demonstration?

Barnstormer: Get lost — we're not interested!

Creepio and Artoot go out into the hangar where the ship is. Creepio's walkie-talkie beeps.

Duke: Creepio! Shut down all the garbage mashers on the detention level! Do you copy?

Creepio: I never cheat!

Duke: That's not what I mean!

Creepio: Don't worry, we'll take care of it.

Artoot plugs into a computer terminal. Suddenly the lights go out.

Creepio: Wrong circuit, Artoot!

Artoot finally saves them, and they are out being chased by Barnstormers again.

Sam: I think I liked it better in the garbage room!

Ugly-one (Bum) Krumoldy has finally succeeded in turning off the tractor beam, and is heading back to the ship, when a dark form enters the hallway in front of him. Darf Veeder, Krumoldy's arch-enemy.

Veeder: I have been waiting for you, Ugly-one . . .

(He switches on his laser saber, and Krumoldy does the same with his.)

Krumoldy: You foul, miserable scum!

Veeder: Ah, but those are only my good points.

Krumoldy: Did you know that these laser sabers make great weiner roast sticks?

Veeder: Do not try to confuse me, old man . . .

The warriors clash in battle. Suddenly, Krumoldy's sword blade sputters and dies.

Krumoldy: Oh, bother. My batteries have gone dead.



Veeder: I use DURACELL!

Krumoldy: No matter — I'll replace these with Eveready Alkalines.

Veeder: You devil! That's cheating!

Krumoldy sees out of the corner of his eye that the others have reached the ship.

Krumoldy: Now I'll give myself up as a diversion so they can get away.

(He lowers his saber and waits.)

Veeder swings, but his blade gives out too.

Veeder: Now mine are dead also!

Krumoldy: What — no spares?

Veeder: Forget it!

(He pulls out a gun and blasts Krumoldy. The old man's cloak flutters to the ground — empty!)

Veeder: You think you've tricked me, but I know I'll find you! A 90 year-old naked man is not hard to spot!

The others arrive at the secret rebel base on the fourth moon of Yurvin. There, the plans in Artoot are analyzed, and an attack on the Dead Star is planned.

Before the battle, Duke climbs into his space-plane with Artoot secured in behind him.

The thirty rebel pilots take off toward the Dead Star and swoop down into a trench on its surface. Suddenly, Imperial TIE fighters (bow ties) zoom down and attack. The rebel commander tells his pilots about it over the radio.

Commander: Enemy fighters coming your way!

Duke: My scope's negative — I don't see anything!

Commander: Pick up your visual scanning!

Duke: Huh?

Commander: Use your eyes, stupid! A tremendous battle follows.

Rebel Pilot: Duke, have you seen Red four?

Duke: Yeah — I think he's that spot on your left.

Pilot: Thanks loads!

One by one, the rebels are gunned down until only Duke is left.

Duke: I've lost Artoot!
Creepio (on the radio): Did they shoot him?

Duke: Naw — He forgot to fasten his seat belt!

Darf Veeder's ship skims up behind Duke.

Duke: Now all I've got to do is shoot at a little tiny hole and hit it, and the Dead Star will explode. Talk about asking for the impossible . . .

Veeder: I'll shoot you down before you can do that.

Duke: Come now, you know the good guys always win!

Veeder: Rules are made to be broken!

Duke: That stupid pounding music on the soundtrack is distracting! I'll be lucky if I . . .

. . . USE THE FARCE, DUKE . . .

Duke: Bum — I thought Veeder dis-comboobulated you!

. . . TRUST YOUR FEELINGS . . .

. . . LET GO, DUKE . . .

Duke: Well, okay . . . Duke releases the controls, and the plane dives.

. . . I DIDN'T MEAN THE CONTROLS . . .

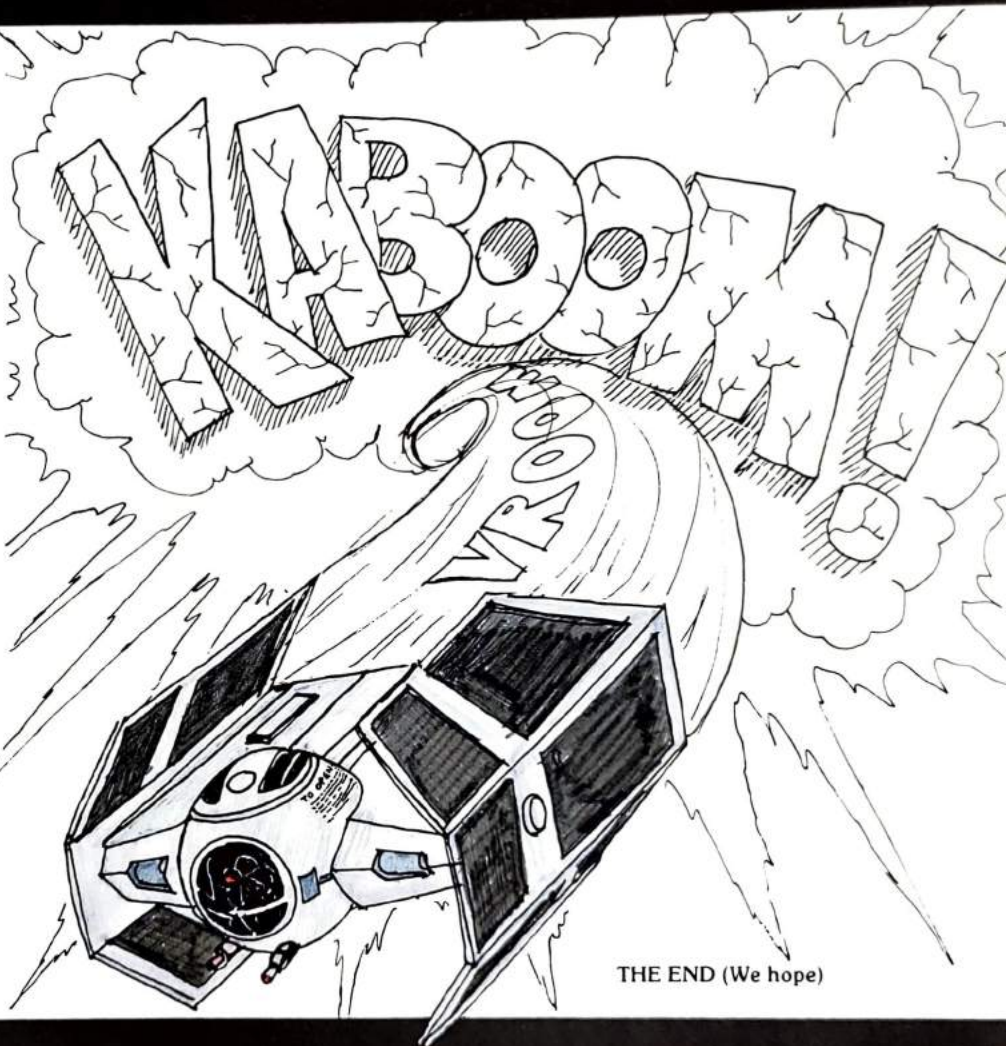
Duke: Oh.

He presses the firing button.

!!!!BOOM!!!!

The Dead Star has exploded!

Meanwhile, Darf Veeder has been thrown off into space. He snarls over his radio as he speeds away . . . CURSES! FOILED AGAIN! □



THE END (We hope)

The King, my liege lord, is a discouraged man. We understand and do not question him, for the war has been long and bitter and there are so few of us left. We sympathize with him, having lost his queen, for we loved her too. But, since the queen of the Blacks died with her, the loss of the queen does not mean the loss of the war. Yet, our king, he who should be a tower of strength, smiles weakly and his words of attempted encouragement ring falsely in our ears because we hear in his voice the undertones of fear and defeat. Yet we love him and we will die for him.

One by one we die in his defense, here upon this bloodied, bitter field. We can only have faith and never become cynics and heretics, like my poor bishop Marcus. "We fight and die, yet we know not why", he once whispered to me, earlier in the war, at a time when we stood side by side guarding our king while the battle raged in a far corner of the field.

But that was only the beginning of his heresy. He had stopped believing in God and had come to believe in gods, gods who play a game with us and care nothing of us as individuals. Even worse, he believed that our actions are not our own but that we are puppets fighting in a useless war. Still worse — and how absurd — that on the cosmic scale it does not matter who wins the war!

Of course, it was only to me, and in

whispers, that he said these silly things. He knew his duties as a bishop. He fought bravely and died bravely, that very day, slain by the lance of a Black knight. I prayed for him.

Without faith we are nothing. How could Marcus be so wrong? We must win. Victory is the only thing that can save us. Without victory our companions who have died here upon our embattled field shall have died in vain.

And you were wrong, Marcus, so wrong. There is a God and so great a God that he will forgive your heresy, because there was no evil in you, except as doubt — no, there is error in doubt but no evil.

Without faith we are nothing.

But something is happening! Our Rook, he who was by the Queen's side in the beginning, swooped toward the evil black king, our enemy. The villainous one is under attack and cannot escape. He dies by the Rook! We are victorious!

"Checkmate", a voice from the sky booms.

We have won! The war, this bitter, strange battle, was not in vain. Marcus, you were wrong, you were wrong . . .

But what is happening now? The very earth tilts one side of the battlefield! The battlefield rises and we are sliding — white and black alike — into—

Into a monstrous box! I see that it is a mass coffin in which we already lie dead.

It is not fair! We won! God, was Marcus right?

It is not just!

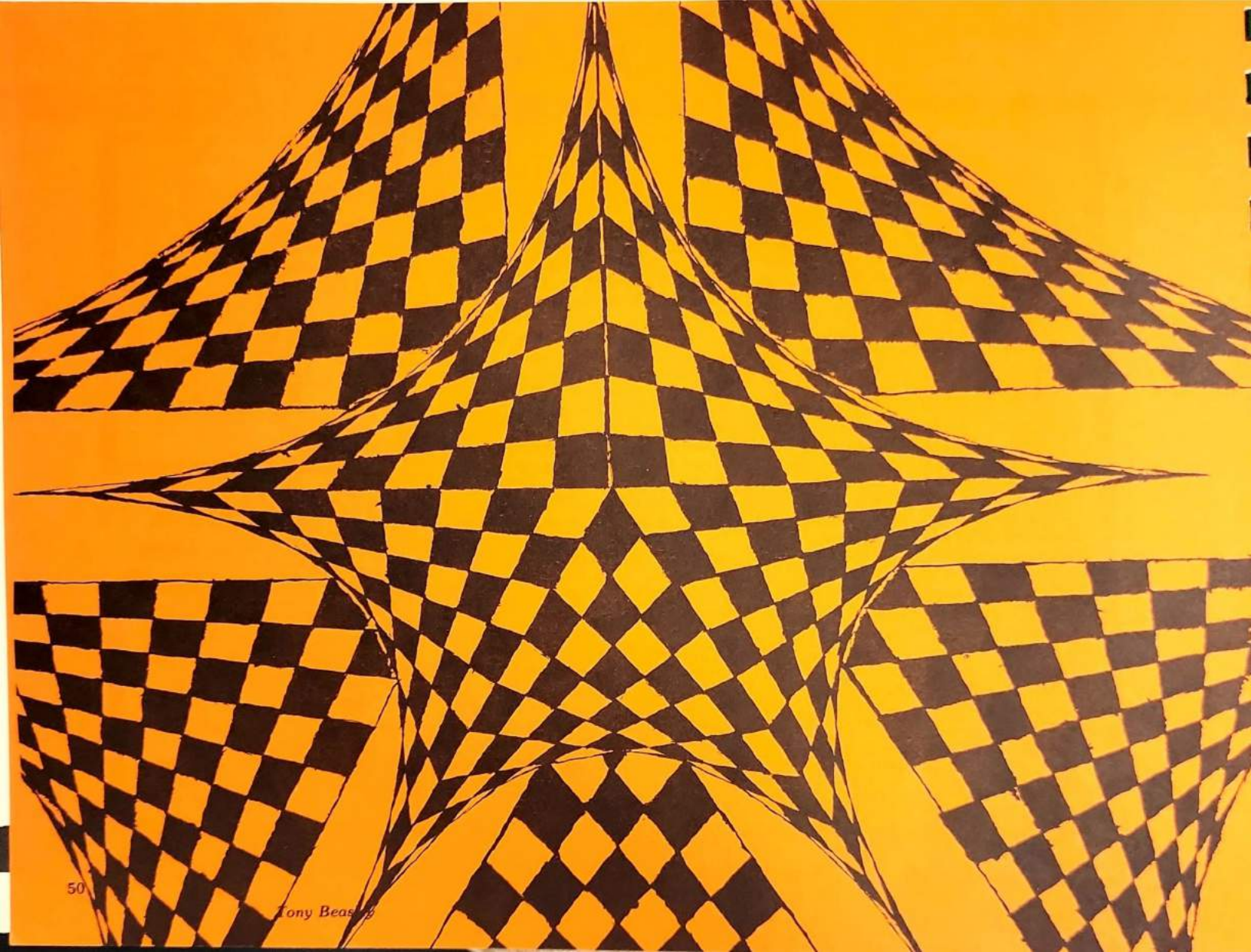
It is not right!

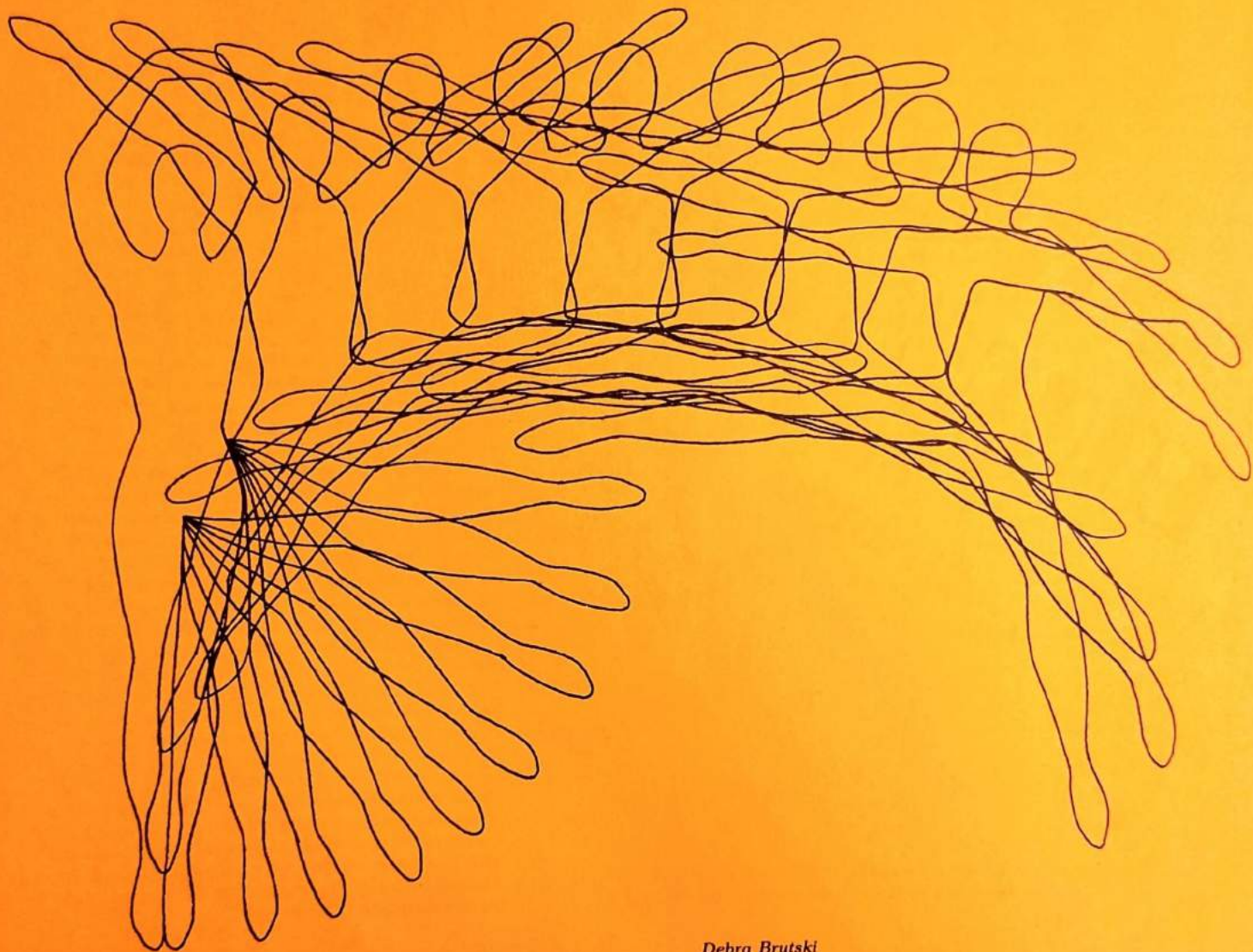
It is not fair!

It is not □

RECESSIONAL

Tom Schottle





Debra Brutski

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: of the strange kind

Once upon a midnight queer,
I saw Scott Krein jump off the pier.
Into the ocean, deep and blue,
I thought his mortal life was through.
But then I saw what no man dare,
'Twas Aqua-Jock come up for air.
That super hero of the sea,
Was little Scott. How could that be?
I always knew that Scott was strange;
Can super heros be deranged?
But then he spied me standing there,
And thrust himself up in the air.
He looked at me and then looked back;
He knew I caught him in the act.
He asked me if I'd go and squeal,
And ruin his super hero deal.
I said I would not say a word.
"I have a secret no one's heard.
I'll tell you for it's only fair,
Now see that dumpster over there?
Just a moment is enough,
Unless the dumpster's full of stuff."
I dived inside to change my clothes.
That place does wonders for your nose.
I leaped back into the moonlit night;
I'd transformed into Simpsonite!

We came upon a little town,
 The amber sun was going down.
 The people were nowhere in sight,
 This puzzled Scott and Simpsonite.
 Where could we be we asked each other,
 Scott said, "I'm scared, I want my mother."
 But while we stood there on the street,
 A stud bug crept up to my feet.
 "You nasty stud bug go away,
 And come again another day."
 And as I looked at Aqua-Jock,
 That bugger clamped down on my sock.
 "You did it now, you stupid bug,
 And when I'm through, you'll be a slug."
 I saw it change before my eyes,
 Gosh darn, that was a good disguise.
 Now could it be that what I saw
 Was not a tiny bug at all,
 But something off the late late feature,
 An ugly slimy evil creature.
 With powerful legs it leaped at me,
 While Aqua-Jock climbed up a tree.
 "Help me, help, you chicken gizzard,
 Before I'm eaten by this lizard."
 Another second and I'd be dead,
 Just then A.J. jumped on its head.
 That super hero's blood ran hot,
 There was one thing that I'd forgot,
 For when A.J. gets wet again,
 No evil thing can ever win,
 For while he sat upon that limb,
 A hairy squirrel spit down on him.
 Although he did not grow in length,
 That bit of moisture gave him strength.
 And now he fought with all his might,
 To try and rescue Simpsonite.
 He drove his fist into its gut,
 And knocked the demon on his butt.



Before the thing had time to turn,
 Then Simpsonite put on the burn.
 That macho, muscular doer of right,
 The world famous hero, Simpsonite.
 A.J. said, "I have a plan,
 A dynamite duo of fish and man.
 Together we'll protect the world from big
 Hairy grub worms that eat Volkswagon
 Hubcaps and silicon-saturated slime bugs
 That feed on mailbox flags . . ."
 (please remember that Aqua-Jock is a super
 hero and not a poet.)
 So off we go to save man-kind,
 While leaving memories behind.
 So beaten now and full of pain,
 It slithered down a sewer drain.
 Although it was a job well done,
 We didn't think that town was fun.
 And as we walked away from there,
 Adventure called from everywhere.
 I bet you think we have it rough,
 But super heros like it tough. □

Richard Simpson

*I'd like to thank Scott Krein, who is a member of the Quantico
 swim team, for allowing his name to be slandered.*

R.S.

THE FIRE DRILL

A Burning Issue

David Mathew

One thing I remember from high school was the fire drill. Our school was sort of modern and had a special alarm. In the old schools you'd hear this bell "Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding" and the teacher would say,

"Alright class, this is a fire drill. Go to the exit."

Right? But in our school they had a buzzer. Class would be nice and quiet . . . we'd be writing something, "scribble scribble scribble" and then "BLAHHH!" this buzzer would go off. The teacher would climb off the ceiling and say,

"Class, this is a fire drill. Exit the room, go down the stairs, make a right at the bathroom, go past the typing room and exit the building."

I used to jump three feet when the buzzer went off. Fortunately, my desk broke my fall — and my legs. I had bruises on my knees for three days after the fire drill. Everybody would limp out of class. It's a wonder I wasn't crippled by the time I was a sophomore. Little Arnold Limberger would start crying and screaming,

"We all gonna die!"

The kid was always a little insecure, but fire drills bring out the worst in people.

The fire drill was always pulled on the lousiest, rottenest, ugliest looking day of the month. You knew when there was going to be a fire drill . . . Hurricane going on outside? Twenty-seven feet of snow? We had a fire drill during the worst monsoon weather ever to hit Virginia. It was raining so hard, one kid stepped in a chuck hole and swoosh — he was never seen again.

The fire drill always happened conveniently during tests. You'd be all set to dig into your "ancient Euclidian tribal practices" history test — just finish writing your name, then "BLAHHH!" there's a fire drill. By the time you got back in, the period's half over.

In our school, we had an organization called the Norsemen. The sole purpose of Norsemen was to trample freshmen. They would prow the halls looking for likely victims. The Norsemen were usually varsity linemen or Sumo wrestlers. I think most of them were psychotic killers too. When a fire drill

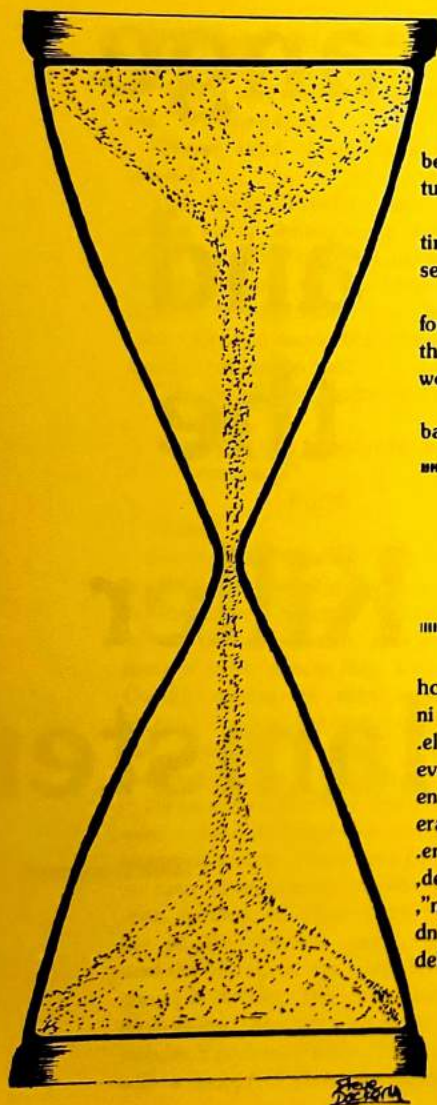
occurred, the Norsemen would charge off to check the fire alarms in hopes of killing the person who pulled it. Unfortunate people who were in their path were immediately scrunched. I used to wonder why the freshmen class was always so small . . . until I found out about Norsemen.

When (if?) we got outside, we'd have to face away from the building. **YOU MUST FACE AWAY FROM THE BUILDING. THE BUILDING COULD EXPLODE. YOU COULD BE STRUCK BY FLYING OBJECTS AND KILLED.** But won't you get hit even if you face away from the building? yes, **BUT YOU WON'T KNOW WHEN IT HITS YOU.** They always think of our welfare.

The odd thing was, we never had a fire drill between classes or during lunch. I guess fires weren't supposed to happen at that time. If they did, they were immediately rescheduled for convenience and —

"BLAHHH!"

Oh well, here we go again! □



The scientist opened the door and walked into the room. He walked to a small stand that stood before eight other important scientists. Behind him sat a squat machine with wires, levers, dials and tubes sticking out at odd places.

"Gentlemen," the scientist said, his voice ringing off the bare walls, "I have build the world's first time machine." He paused to let this settle in. "I will test it today before you," he continued. "I will send a small metal cube back into time." Total disbelief held the eight scientists.

The speaker picked up a metal cube off the podium and walked over to the machine. "This is a four square inch, solid, stainless steel cube." He placed it on the shelf that stuck out from the front of the machine. "I have never tested this machine but I have other scientific proof that can prove it will work." He turned back to the scientists and smiled a wan smile.

"Gentlemen," he said this time in a low whisper, "all I must do now is flick a switch." He turned back to the machine and flicked a switch near the shelf. It went click-

EMIT

Tom Schottle

hctiws a dekcilf dna enihcam eht ot kcab denrut eH "hctiws a kcilf si wen od tsum I lla", repsihw wol a ni emit siht,dias eh",nemeltneG".elims nac a delims dna tsitneics eht ot kcab denrut eh ".krow lliw ti evorp nac taht foorp cifitneics rehto evah I tub enihcam siht detset reven evah I" enihcam eht fo tnorf eht morf tuo kcuts taht flehs eht otno ti decalp eh." ebuc leets sselniats, dilos, hcni erauqs ruof a si siht".enihcam eht ot revo deklaw dna revo gniklat saw eh dnats eht ffo ebuc latme llams a dnes lliw I" ,deunitnoc eh, "uoy erofeb yadot ti tset lliw I" ,sllaw erab eht ffo gnignir eciov sih ,dias tsitneics eht ,nemeltneG".secalp ddo ta tuo gnikcits sebut dna slaid ,srevel ,seriw htiw enihcam tuaqs a tas mih dniheB .tsitneics tnatropmi rehto thgie erofeb doots taht dnats llams a ot deklaw eH .moor eht otni deklaw dna rood eht denepo tsitneics eHT

Dr. Strange sat in his study in silent contemplation of his life. He was a master of the mystic arts and a pretty good magician too. He had once been a brilliant surgeon, but his hands had been damaged by an automatic juicer, forever destroying their sensitivity. Seeking a cure, he went to find the Ancient One. When he found him, instead of restoring his hands, the old wizard taught him the secrets of sorcery. Strange uses those powers for good, fighting threats to mankind and the insidious Baron Voodoo, the Ancient One's son who has gone bad.

Strange was aroused from his reverie by Wong, his loyal Chinese servant. He had just brought in the mail with the morning tea.

"Good morning, Wong. Anything interesting in the mail today?"

"Nothing much, sir. The usual bills, a note from the IRS, another hate letter from Mandrake, and this."

Wong handed Strange a white, legal-sized envelope. The address was done in stunning calligraphy which had a strange glow. Strange opened the envelope.

As he flipped open the flap, a small wisp of smoke escaped from the envelope and quickly made its way to the center of the room. There it expanded into a shape not unlike a miniature rain cloud. The cloud then lighted up brightly and an evil, black bearded visage appeared on the cloud, the face of Baron Voodoo! The face spoke menacingly —

Dr. Strange

"From darkest crypt
and blackest tomb
I bring you
word of nearing doom.
I speak —"

"Oh cut the melodramatics, Boris," snapped Strange. "Get to the point."

"Alas Stephen, you never did appreciate good speeches. Well, I'm just here to tell you that I've concocted another diabolical scheme to conquer the world, enslave mankind and spread nastiness."

"Ho-hum, Voodoo," Strange sighed, "do you honestly believe you will defeat me this time?"

"Ha! Victory is mine! To defeat me you will have to go to the darkest, most vile place on the face of the Earth!"

"You mean —"

"Yes! Cleveland, Ohio!"

"You fiend!"

At Strange's final oath the face disappeared laughing and the cloud proceeded to rain on Strange's living room floor. The magician was wrapped in thought, however.

"I'm afraid this is Voodoo's most devilish scheme yet, and could not have come at a more inopportune time", he said finally. "I was planning to eat lunch at Cleo's. Oh well, such is my lot. Wong, fetch me the latest edition of *Spells Directory*.

and the Killer Hamster

Mark Bumgarner

Wong exited and reappeared shortly with a large dilapidated book.

"This is all I could find, sir. It's a bit old," Wong explained.

"Never mind, Wong. You are dismissed."

The *Spells Directory* was a very unique tome, offering spells that would whisk one away to almost any place on the globe. After a few seconds of page flipping, Strange found it — Cleveland, Ohio. Quickly memorizing the spell, he stood erect and recited:

"By the Milk of Magnesia and Oil of Olay

From this tiny house, now whisk me away!"

POOF

"Rats!"

For the third time that year a direct-ory spell had landed him in a dumpster. The spells were designed to land him in out of the way places, but he could think of better places than a trash bin. Quickly exiting the smelly container, Strange removed the banana peels and fish smell with a simple spell and proceeded to get to business.

He turned off the little side street and onto a main thoroughfare and found it strangely empty. There were no people, no cars, no movement or noise whatsoever. Strange advanced down the middle of the deserted street, glancing occasionally up at the gray, forbidding clouds in the sky. The eerie silence was maddening. Strange was beginning to wonder if perhaps Voodoo had come up with a fool-proof plan, something even

more terrifying than his conqueror snails. Strange shuddered at the thought. Suddenly, a high pitched cackle broke the silence.

"I've been waiting for you, Stephen," the evil Baron Voodoo hissed.

"I'm sure you have," replied Strange. "But have you been waiting for this?"

Faster than one would think possible, Strange turned to Voodoo and hurled a mystic fireball. Voodoo easily dissipated it in mid air with his jewel-studded wand.

"Really Stephen, you must have something more potent than that."

"I do Voodoo, but I'm doing my part to ease the energy shortage by cutting back."

"Energy shortage? What energy shortage?"

With that, Voodoo hurled the most energy guzzling lightning bolt he had at Strange.

"You cad!" exclaimed Strange, dodging the bolt. "You're not only nasty and rotten through and through, you're UnAmerican!"

"Aw, I'm hurt deeply," Voodoo chuckled sarcastically, all the while hurling lightning bolts at Strange.

Strange was in trouble. There were not many spells with good EPA ratings and most of those were fairly useless. He had to think of something quickly though; he could not dodge the bolts much longer.

Voodoo, not having gotten the best of Strange in many years, was gleefully watching Strange jump up and down.

In his happy state his aim was slightly off and gave Strange time to think. Finally he remembered a spell he had used successfully before.

"To think you have me sure is dumb

I'll coat your wand with bubble gum!"

Immediately Voodoo's jeweled wand became coated with a sticky pink substance and after several attempts, he hurled it away. Voodoo's face was twisted in rage.

"Do you think you can defeat me so easily?" he hissed. "If so, you are mistaken. For now I will unleash my newest terror on you!"

He motioned towards the alleyway directly behind him. At first nothing appeared and Strange thought perhaps Voodoo had brought back the invisible anteaters. Then a large, slowmoving bulk became visible in the shadows, accompanied by a low rumbling. Strange caught his breath as the thing lumbered closer. It must have been three stories tall.

"See it, Strange?" asked Voodoo triumphantly. "It's my most awesome monster yet. Prepare to die, Strange, for you have met your match — the Killer Hamster!"

From the shadows of the alleyway it burst into full view. It was indeed a hamster, a giant one. It had long, saber-like teeth and an evil look in its black eyes.

"Voodoo, you scoundrel," Strange cried. "How could you pervert such an innocent little creature into that sinister monster?"

"With very little trouble," snapped Voodoo. "Prepare to meet your doom!"

"I'll win yet!"

"Oh yeah? Sic 'em, Sniffie!"

The furry colossus charged. Strange dodged in the nick of time, sending the creature crashing into a light pole. The thing wasn't even phased.

Strange worked up two mystic fireballs while trying to brainstorm another spell like the bubblegum. He hurled his fireballs at the giant rodent, producing only an angry squeal. Strange took a giant jump in the air as the monster charged on. He was getting tired and wouldn't be able to keep it up much longer. On the next leap the beast ran headlong into a bread store. Strange stared at it hopefully but in a few moments the creature emerged with a mouth full of crumbs. Then Strange had a brilliant idea. If only he could find one!

Using his last reserves of energy he sped down the street, searching frantically. The hamster was in hot pursuit, getting closer to its prey with every step. Finally Strange found what he was looking for. He placed himself directly in front of it and tensed his muscles. The killer hamster stared at him curiously. It then crouched and leapt — right into an ABC store. A few minutes passed and then the beast reeled out, quite intoxicated. Strange knocked it out with a mystic baseball

bat; there is nothing quite as docile as an inebriated hamster.

Strange turned to see Voodoo sobbing over the defeat of his latest creation.

"You foiled my plan again and it was such a good one," he pouted.

"When will you learn that good always triumphs over evil?"

"Ha! You've just won this round, Strange. I'll be back to put egg on your face another day!"

And with that he disappeared.

Strange shook his head in pity for the poor, frustrated villain. It was a shame his powers could not be used constructively. The hamster hiccupped.



Steve Dockery



Kevin Riley

Requiem for The Barbarian King

A sword grows notched and stained with gore
to make a small king great
To slay the men of distant shores
their fertile lands to take

To kill them in their fortress keep
and take their maidens fair
To drive the knife blade ever deep
and burn their guarded lair

He took a world with iron nailed hand,
by axe, and spear, and terror
Played God did he, but just a man
fell dead from a silent arrow.

Mark Bumgarner

THE WEEK

Mark Bumgarner

As I sit in my padded cell trying to write legibly with a rubber pencil, I think back to the week that sent me "over the edge".

Perhaps its impact on me would not have been so great if the weeks before had gone as smoothly as they had. I knew it would be a pretty rough week because of Festival Band competition and after school rehearsals leading up to it. But I had weathered this before and could certainly do it again. This belief left me totally unprepared for ...

The
Week.

I knew I was in trouble if I had to look forward to Monday. However, there was some news to brighten my day. I would have three major tests on Friday, one in every academic class except English (taught by a kind, gracious teacher whose name I have forgotten). It was interesting to note that Festival, the climax of two months torture, was on that same Friday evening. Thrills! This predicament left me somewhat demoralized. I decided, however, that I had an iron will and that nothing could shake my resolution. Nothing, that is except Tuesday.

"... I think back to the week that sent me 'over the edge' ..."

Sunday was Pre-Festival, a kind of practice run for Festival. I'm never quite mentally prepared for when we perform. It never ceases to amaze me how many lights they manage to shine on that little stage. The only experience comparable to it is watching a supernova at point blank range. All in all, though, we did a "Bang up job," – but an ominous stomach ache made me feel "bloody awful." But so what? I could look forward to Monday.

Tuesday. A lab in chemistry. The experiment was a chain reaction. My lab partner stepped on my foot, causing me to react vigorously, which led to the spilling of a 70 per cent solution of sulfuric acid on the teacher's grade book. The resulting chemical was hot water. I slept through English, gym, and lunch. In band I found new ways to torture my lips on the trombone, and got to practice the new technique an hour and a half after school.

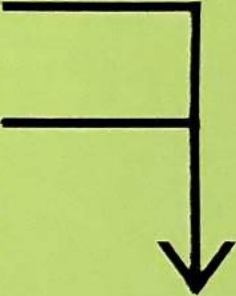
Then came Wednesday. I was kept from making any more breakthroughs in chemistry by an appointment with destiny in guidance. In other words, could I convince my counselor I needed four study halls in my schedule next year? I put up a valiant fight but her powers of persuasion were very convincing (blackmail always is). I beat my record for most fouls given in a basketball game in gym and managed to fail pop quizzes in both German and Algebra. I was informed after school that my English teacher kindly assigned a five page paper while I was in guidance. That was the last straw. Now even my English teacher was against me. It was me, alone, against the world. I had a sneaking suspicion who would win.

It was Thursday, the day before The Day. Another lab in Chemistry. My partner and I found out what happens when you mix water and sodium. It was an earthshaking revelation. I slept through English; what could I do in a "Comedy and Satire" course when I felt like "Deathwatch"? In basketball I ran

to keep the ball in bounds, forgetting that a cinder block wall was in my path. My brain said "Stop" but my feet wouldn't listen. I spent the rest of the school day trying to figure out who I was. My Math teacher told me my name eventually, and that rudely brought back all my happy thoughts.

It was Friday. *The Day*. When I got my test in Chemistry I thought we must be studying Ancient Sanskrit. I spent the rest of the period wondering why I forgot two hours worth of studying. I got to English and remembered that my writing assignment was sitting on my desk at home. I broke my record of fouls received in basketball, culminated by a kamikaze attack by a 250 pound football player.

Then it happened. After throwing three freshmen out the window, I claimed their lunch table and prepared to eat. I unwrapped my sandwich. It just sat there. It was the fifth bologna sandwich I had had that week. It was too much. I'm not sure what happened after that, but they said the lunch room was unfit to eat in for two weeks.



I'm at the end of my rubber pencil now. They're coming to feed me and they may bring me a rubber ball to play with. I sure hope they don't bring me bologna again . . .?□

Chester W. Fuddlebee, Explorer Extraordinaire

Mary Bianca Nicoletti

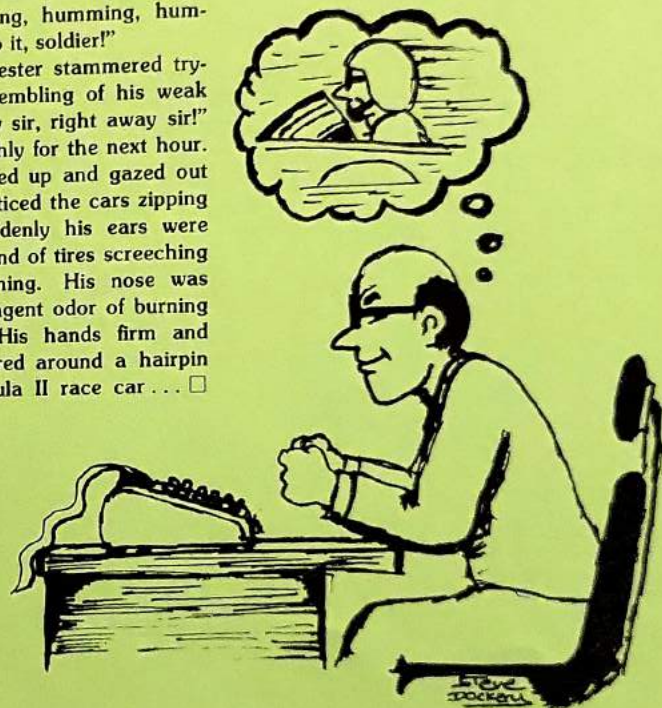
Chester Fuddlebee really wasn't much to look at. He rather resembled a malnourished beanstalk; from his turtlelike neck with its protruding adam's apple, down to his broomstick legs encased in baggy trousers which didn't quite reach to his ankles. For a final touch, fate had blessed him with a prematurely receding hairline and spectacles which almost looked like headlights. Wearily he settled down into his swivel office chair for another day of counting numbers.

After a while he stared through the office window, past the rows of desks with their humming machines and clicking calculators, past the rows of cocked heads and flashing fingers, to the rich green shrubs outside... And suddenly he was on a jungle safari, a glamorous blonde at his side, an elephant gun clasped tightly in his firm hand, and a queue of chanting bearers in his wake. Suddenly there was a blood curdling roar from somewhere deep within the heart of the primeval forest. The undergrowth rustled and parted and a huge animal leaped through the air. He raised his gun and fired. The lion lay dead at his feet. As he discarded the spent shell the girl rushed into his arms cooing, "Oh Chester, you're so-o-o wonderful."

"Naturally my dear, and now..."

"Chester W. Fuddlebee!!! What on earth do you think you're doing?" the redfaced supervisor bellowed. The coal-black eyes and crimson flush sent a chill down to the base of Chester's spine. "Do you know what I wanna hear Fuddlebee? I wanna hear that calculator humming, humming, humming. Now hop to it, soldier!"

"Y-yes sir," Chester stammered trying to still the trembling of his weak jaw, "cer-certainly sir, right away sir!" He worked feverishly for the next hour. Then as he glanced up and gazed out the window he noticed the cars zipping past... And suddenly his ears were filled with the sound of tires screeching and brakes jamming. His nose was filled with the pungent odor of burning oil and grime. His hands firm and steady as he veered around a hairpin turn in his Formula II race car... □



Steve Dockery

DEATH OF A MONSTER

Mark A. Bumgarner

John Stockton arrived home late, dead tired and angry. It was the seventh night that month he'd had to stay at the job til eight. His boss was running him ragged and there was little he could do about it. If he quit his job now, he would lose all the things he had worked so hard to get.

He silently undressed and sank into bed. He lay there awhile, wallowing in self-pity. First he would decide to quit his job, and then decide not to, fearful of unemployment and poverty. He finally fell into a light, fitful sleep. And somewhere a cosmic door opened and a strange transfer took place.

He awoke. His first sensation was of a strong, icy wind against his naked chest, followed by disjointed shouts and hoots. Though it was night outside, numerous torches lit up many moving figures. He suddenly felt a great weight on his shoulders and looked down at himself. He caught his breath. Across his muscular, bronzed chest were wrapped several feet of black chain. He was clad only in a loincloth. The strangest thing was that his legs were hinged and hooved like a goat's and covered with thick, dark fur. He was trying to collect his wits when he was startled by a fierce bark from behind. He turned to face a huge warrior clad in black plate armor. Though the contours of his face were human, the skin

was scaly and a long, forked tongue darted continuously in and out of his mouth.

"Move along, Satyrian dog," the ebon soldier snarled.

Stockton moved ahead, unsure of his footing, slightly dizzy from a throbbing pain in his head. He saw that there were many chained figures before him and reasoned that there were more behind.

They trudged steadily on into the night. Though Stockton could not tell if it was from recollection or deduction, he knew that he and those with him had been in battle recently and taken prisoner. He did not care to conjecture about his fate.

They presently came to the massive doors of a dark, and, forbidding castle. A few impatient shouts and the huge doors swung inward. Inside there were hundreds of soldiers carousing about the courtyard. At sight of the arriving prisoners, some of the revelers surrounded them and began hurling insults as well as food and stones. Stockton wanted to fight back but it was useless. His chains were too strong.

The somber entourage soon entered what Stockton supposed was the palace. They were led down long ill-lighted halls until they came to two ornately carved doors. The lead trooper pushed

the doors inward and the rest of the group filed in after him. The doors clanged shut behind them.

The great hall was relatively well-lighted and, he could now see, for the first time, that his fellow prisoners were not of his race. They were tall, blond humans with long, muscular limbs. He felt alone and naked, even among those who shared his lot. He fought off a great urge to cry out in anger and frustration.

Looking between the shoulders of the blond giants, Stockton saw the end of the room where sat a large and chillingly reptilian figure on a beautiful marble throne. It was the king. The sinister visaged monarch was conversing with one of the more impressively armored soldiers. Shortly the figure on the throne rose. He was clad in a long purple robe that hid all but his clawlike hands and bald, green tinted head. The robe was worked intricately with silver thread and was bound at the waist with a golden cord. He raised both his arms in a magnificent gesture and the throne room fell silent. He walked across the floor until he stood within six feet of the chained group.

"So, men of Anthros. Is this what you meant when you said you would tread on the floor of the Saurian king? If so, rejoice, for it has come true!"

Stockton gritted his teeth and strained against his shackles. He wanted to wring the demon's neck but it was useless; his chains were too strong. The Saurian king spoke again.

"Do not fear for your lives though, brave warriors," he mocked. "You will be well cared for by the people of Sarus and Torog."

He motioned to the shadows beyond the throne and from them emerged a massive beast which came and stood by the king. A murmur of fear went through the group, prisoner and soldier alike.

The thing was perhaps a yard taller than the king. It was a three-headed stalker, an animal spoken of only in fearful whispers. The thing was a broad and powerfully built mammal covered with thick, sand-colored fur. The beast was neither wholly canine nor wholly feline but possessed the most fearsome qualities of both. Its three massive heads moved smoothly from side to side, the keen, soulless eyes surveying the trembling throng before it. The creature's jaws appeared frighteningly powerful; its three pairs of saber-like teeth were scarred and stained through much use. A deep rumble issued from one of its heads and the whole group stepped back. The king laughed.

"Do you not like Torog, my brave warriors? If you work hard in the furnaces of Saurus, perhaps you will not meet him."

With that, he turned and walked to



his throne, leaving Torog standing alone, its heavy, unsynchronized breaths causing terrible echoes throughout the hall. The prisoners gladly left when directed to do so.

The following time interval was disjointed and confused for Stockton. All he could clearly remember was shoveling coal into huge, fire-belching furnaces. He could not rightly say how long he had been working; a day, a week, a month, he dared not guess. He could not remember stopping to rest or eat and feared that he had not. The strain on the mind and body was maddening. The terrific heat charred men's skin and blasted their souls. The workers moved as if in a dream, not speaking or gesturing, just mechanically performing their tasks.

After this timeless interval there was a period when Stockton knew rest. He and others were brought to a large room and locked inside. No word was said. They all dropped to the floor exhausted. Stockton half smiled at the feeling of sleep crept over him.

Before he could drift into the protection of sleep, fate played its hand. The castle began to tremble violently. Stockton's fellows rose to better determine what was happening. They died before they had all risen. They disappeared in an explosion of dust and rock as the ceiling collapsed and crushed them. Stockton, crouching against the wall, remained almost unscathed. He came to his hooves as the dust cleared and examined the scene before him.

Amid the tangle of stone and limbs sat a huge, scarred boulder. He smiled. The keep was under seige from the outside, being pummeled by catapults at that very moment.

Among the fallen bodies, there was a soldier from one of the levels above. Stockton quickly relieved the carcass of its mail shirt and sword belt. He then set to getting out of the room. The door had held fast and would probably do so til the castle burnt down. He decided to jump up to what was left of the room above. His legs were not made for jumping, but by mounting onto the rubble he managed to scramble up.

Stockton quickly exited what must have been the guardroom. The halls were filled with smoke and dust. Shouted commands and agonized screams filled the air. At that point Stockton knew what he had to do. Amid the death and confusion he had to make his way to the king and slay him. For a moment an urge to flee fought within him but he quickly dismissed it.

Using the sense of direction and location native to his species, he ran as fast as his hooves could take him, dodging into shadows as troops ran frenziedly by, yelling useless and contradictory orders.

Presently though, the cries died away and the halls became empty. The new silence was ominous and Stockton proceeded more cautiously, cursing the racket his hooves made. The quietude was soon broken by a strange, irregular

throbbing. The sensation felt familiar, yet Stockton could not place it. As he turned a corner he saw what caused it. It was Torog.

The mightily brute loomed menacingly in the hallway. Its tawny fur was splattered with the blood from half a dozen Saurians whose mangled remains lay at his feet. The monster's three pairs of eyes examined the creature before him expectantly. A chill went down Stockton's spine. He drew his sword.

His first instinct was to run but that would be pure folly; the beast would be upon him before he took two steps. Attack seemed little better as a course of action. Stockton chose to wait. Let Torog spring and maybe he could drive his blade into its belly. But when would it spring? Would Stockton be quick enough?

Torog crouched low, preparing for the death lunge. Its three heads were held directly forward, ears back, jaws slightly open, eyes intent on the prey. The giant's whole body quivered mightily with anticipation as its tail swished violently back and forth. Stockton stood frozen, ready to duck, leap, and thrust. But when, when? The furry leviathan's icy orbs betrayed no intent, no thought, no warning. Stockton cursed and waited. Torog sprang.

Stockton crouched low and thrust upward. The blade skimmed lightly cross Torog's right rib cage; the beast had somehow sensed Stockton's intent

and had swerved slightly.

Stockton instantly decided that strategy was useless and with a yell of savage fury, he straddled the giant terror as best his shaggy legs could. Gripping a tuft of fur in his left hand, he tried to maneuver for a mortal thrust with the sword in his right. The task was impossible; at such close quarters he could not handle the blade and stay on the thrashing beast. All seemed hopeless. Suddenly, he lost his grip on the beast and slid down its right flank. In desperation he threw himself against the beast's side. He caught the creature off balance and it toppled over on its back. Stockton lept in, confident of victory. Mounting Torog's stomach in the same manner in which he had straddled the thing's back, he poised for the death thrust. He waited a split second too long. The blood mad colossus roared and brought its powerful hind legs into play. Applying them simultaneously, the beast's claws struck Stockton's side like twin maces. They sheared through his mail shirt as if it was paper and tore deep into Stockton's naked flesh. The impact threw him against the far wall, nearly knocking the wind out of him.

To Stockton, death seemed near and that was what saved him. Furious at the thought of defeat, he sprang forward and thrust blindly. The beast, unprepared for such a desperate measure tried to veer off but took a yard of steel in its breast instead. The thing lurched forward and died.

Stockton rose to his hooves, dazed and blinded by pain. He wanted to fill his lungs with mighty breaths but it caused excruciating agony to his side. He removed the shredded mail shirt and tried to stem the bleeding as best he could with a banner torn from the wall. He wanted to stop, wanted to rest, wanted to die in peace but he had not finished his task. Drawing a long, saw edged dirk from his sword belt, he limped off in the direction of the throne room.

The doors to the great hall stood carelessly open, unguarded. Stockton took a breath and entered the chamber.

The floor was covered with dust and debris. Stockton directed his already failing eyes to a corner of the room where he heard hurried activity. He smiled. It was the king, frenziedly loading saddlebags for his escape. Stockton advanced silently. No escape.

The king suddenly became aware of Stockton's presence and turned quickly. The king's black orbs looked with horror into Stockton's madness fired eyes. He threw out his hands to stop the oncoming blade, but it was a useless gesture. Stockton's dagger sank deep and the king died, choking on his own gore.

Stockton swayed momentarily over his fallen foe and then felt a rush of air and darkness. A cosmic door had opened again.

He awoke. At first he was confused. What had happened to his terrific wounds? Why did his legs feel so strange? Suddenly, Stockton became aware and knew where he was and that he had dreamed. It was all so strange and clear.

He decided to forget the dream but it stayed with him and had a bearing on the decision he made at work that day. A decision that opened up a new and in many ways better life for John Stockton. He defeated his monsters. □



illustrations by Steve Dockery

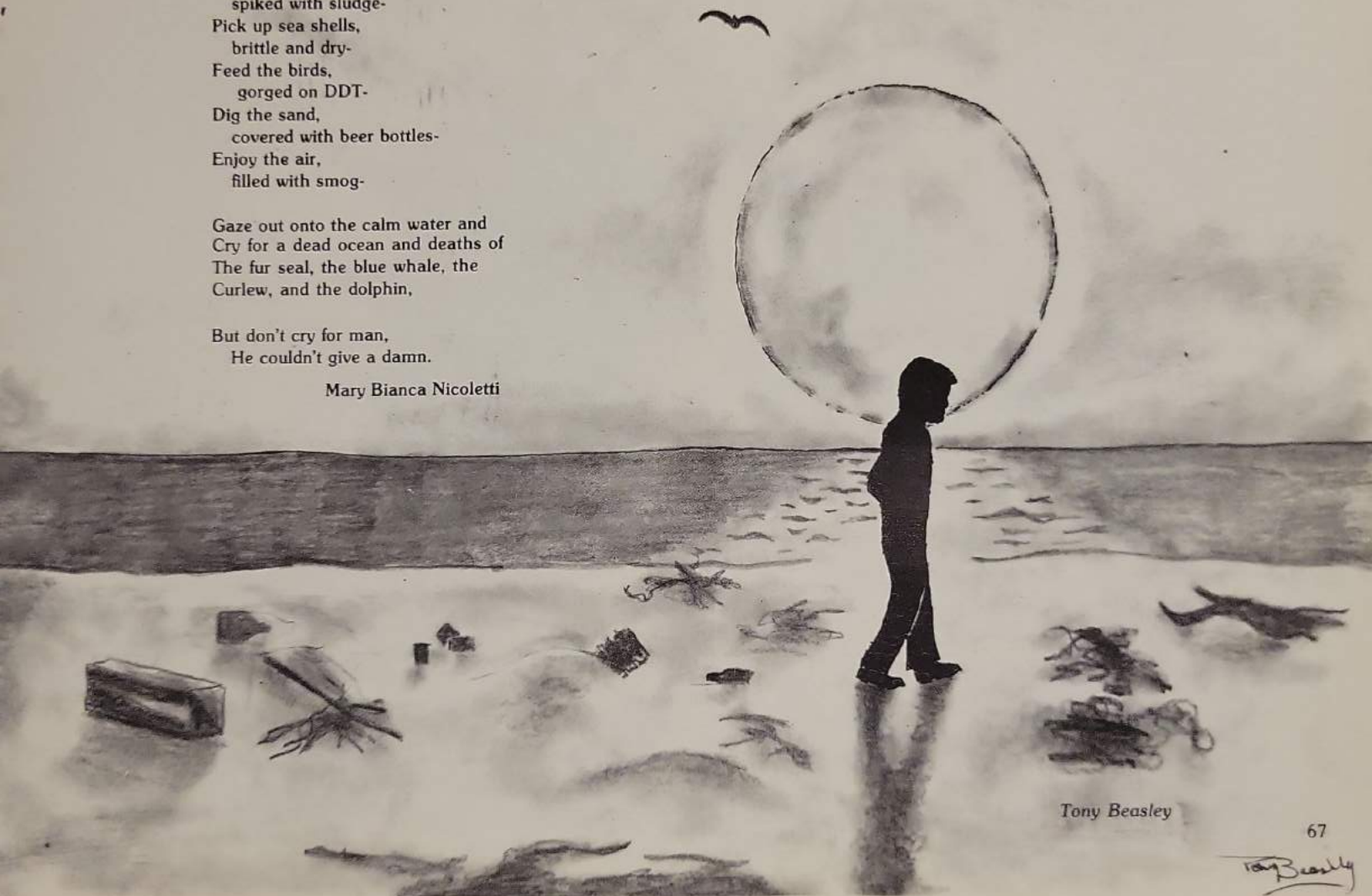
ATLANTIC EPITAPH

Along the beaches,
all fenced in-
Play the dolphins,
covered in oil.
Swim in the water,
spiked with sludge-
Pick up sea shells,
brittle and dry-
Feed the birds,
gorged on DDT-
Dig the sand,
covered with beer bottles-
Enjoy the air,
filled with smog-

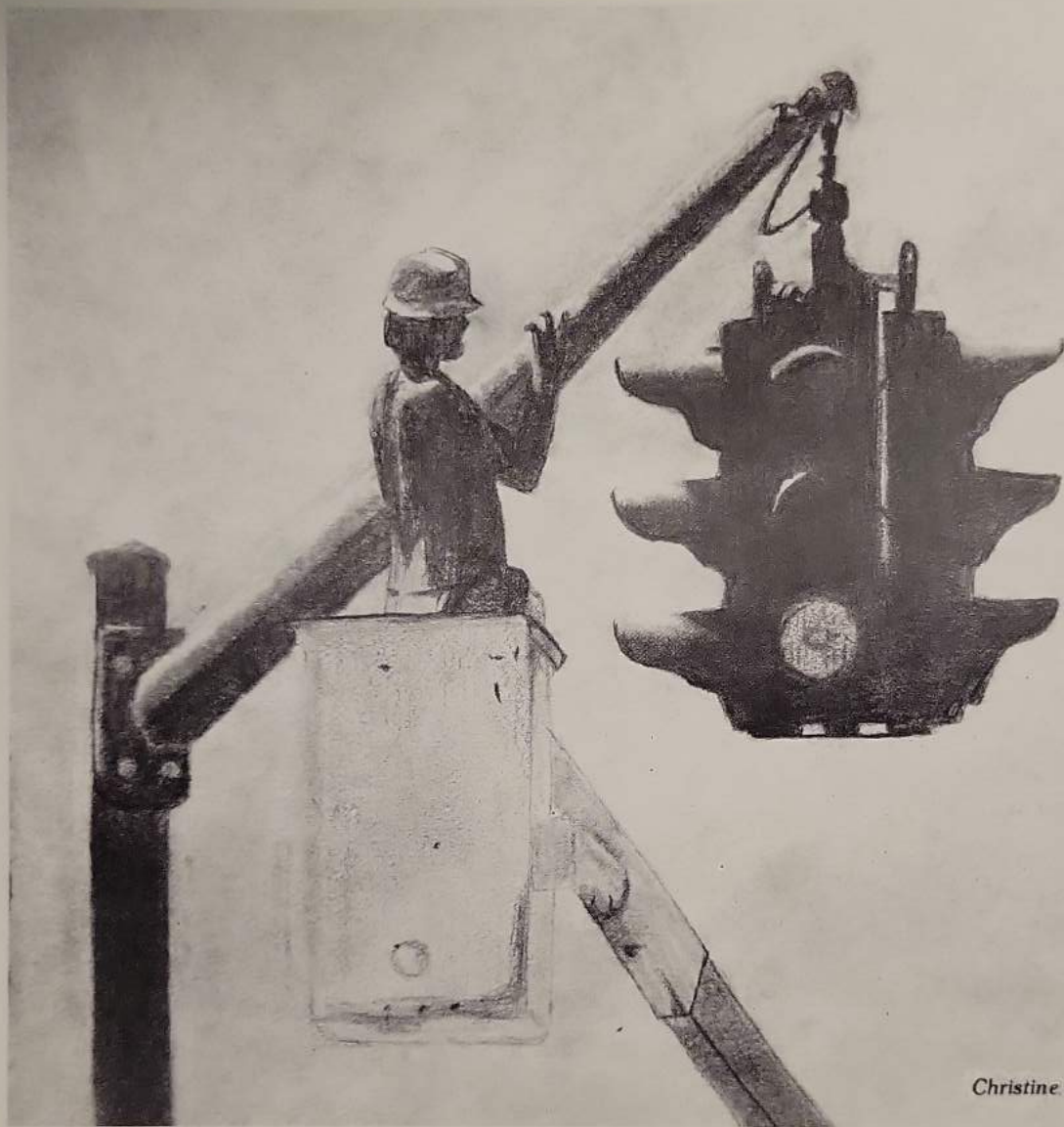
Gaze out onto the calm water and
Cry for a dead ocean and deaths of
The fur seal, the blue whale, the
Curlew, and the dolphin,

But don't cry for man,
He couldn't give a damn.

Mary Bianca Nicoletti



Tony Beasley



Christine Hoskins



Valerie Petersen

DUELING EGOS

Drawn out-
Tense and painful,
The battle continued.
Times of peace were
Cherished
but well-heeded.

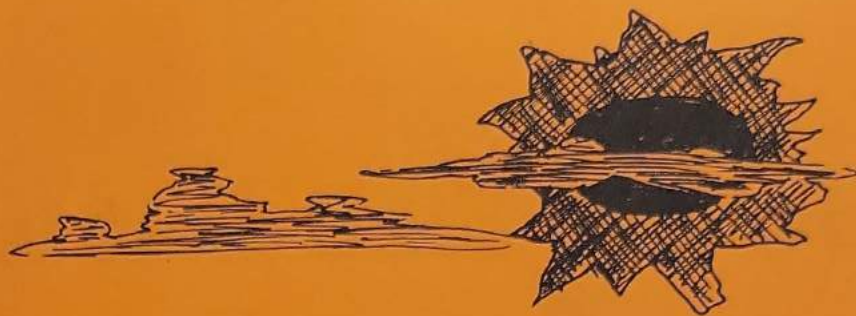
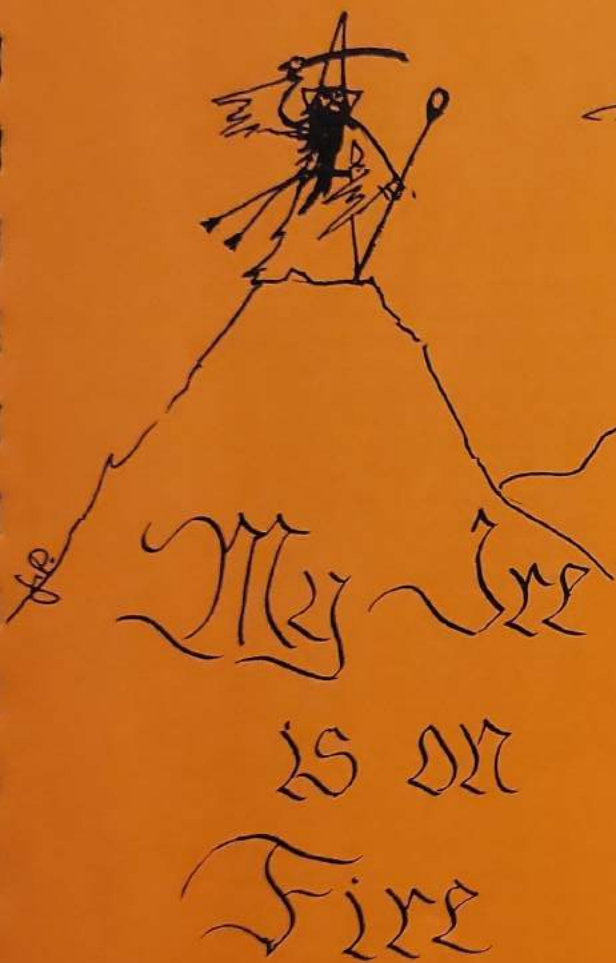
Each force had seen
Deep
Into the other.
Their tactics were
Aimed
To pierce
The most vulnerable spots.

Self-suffering was ignored
When faced with the chance of
Scoring
On the other.

To have the upper hand.

The silent challenge ever-present.

Lynda Wayne



Oh evil one, foul excrement of squirming maggots, no more shall I consider you as human. May not even as the wriggling worm and buzzing dungfly, shall I honor you after that which you have done. You shall never be forgiven for the grave dishonor you did me.

You may ask, of what do I speak. You dare forget the greivous iniquity, the horrid felonious action you maliciously committed against me. You deem it small, an insignificant matter, something not worth troubling your most illustrious self over. But to me 'tis a shameful deed, and a great dishonor, that you would deprive me of that which was rightfully mine.

Yea, verily..even that tiny, nigh on microscopic, reward that I had claimed for my own. The sickeningly clawed talons of your hand unthinking evilly grasped and bore away to oblivion that which I long desired and sought after, my precious remittance for long, taxing labor. For eating it, the last potato chip, I shall curse you forever, even with my last dying breath. □

Jeff Palm

How to Find Out if You're the Perfect Babysitter.

Silvia Low

What you think will be another boring Sunday afternoon could well be your ultimate experience. So far, you've been to church, you've eaten lunch, and presently, you are sitting in front of the TV stuffing your face with junk food. You've just been offered an afternoon babysitting job for a couple who have a three year old kid. Don't have the attitude that thousands of babysitters in the U.S. have. You probably said to yourself, "Oh no! I'm not going to waste my whole afternoon with a fiendish little brat!" Don't hesitate; take the job! You probably don't have anything better to do, so what do you have to lose? Besides, you're probably flat broke. Also, this will be your chance to straighten that brat out once and for all. Come on now, call the couple back and tell them you'll do it.

All right, you've finally gathered enough courage to call, and you're finally at the house. Oh, there he is! What a rat! Get a load of that act; pretending to be such a "goodie goodie"!

Little do the parents know what happens the minute they step outside the door. He's like a Dr. Jekyll turned to a Mr. Hyde when they leave. So here's what you do until they leave the house so you can "pounce" on the brat as soon as possible. First, you have to act like everything is going to be fine while they are gone. Be sure to ask plenty of questions such as "What can I feed him if he gets hungry?" or "Is it all right if he goes to a friend's house to play?" Then after they have answered all of your questions, show them to the door, and then sort of "push" them out casually. Oh yes, don't forget to smile! No matter how much you hate to babysit, get yourself to plaster a big smile on your face. Now, say "Bye-bye" and wave as they are getting into the car.

After they are completely out of sight, that's when you slam the door and let the kid know who's the boss. Set the ground rules, and don't let a little brat take advantage of you for a measly \$1.25 an hour! Be stern, and look like you mean business. Maybe later, after the kid knows who has the authority,

you can turn into your usual self: a lovable, all-around "softie" at heart. Who says babysitting can't be fun? It all depends on who hires you, how much you get, and who you have to babysit. If you get stuck with a real angel who couldn't hurt a fly and will listen to your every command, you've got an easy \$5.00 coming to your hot little hands for 4 hours of smooth sailing. But if you unfortunately get a rotten prankster whose parents know they're getting their money's worth of babysitting service when they leave their kid with you, here's the different alternatives you can take: (If the first plan doesn't work, move on to the next. You're bound to succeed with at least one of them.)

Plan A: Send the kid to his room and lock the door from the outside. Leave him there until his parents return. Disregard the threats and screaming.

Plan B: First offer him some candy and then take it away from him. Start eating his candy slowly and tell him you won't return his candy until he starts behaving himself. Disregard all the screaming and tantrums.

Plan C: Tell him you're going to blow up his room and kill his rubber duckie if he doesn't behave.

Plan D: Tie the kid up in a chair with ropes and gag his mouth. Then build a circle of fire around him and tell him that if he doesn't behave, you're going to burn him at the stake and scalp him. Here you won't have to worry about screaming because of the gag.

Plan E: Send the kid to his friend's house and let the friend's mother worry about how to take care of the kid.

Plan F: Give him a taste of his own medicine. Be as obnoxious as you possibly can, and beat him at his own game. Mock him, cut him down, laugh, cry, and run around like a maniac. Tell him you won't stop until he stops, but don't wreck the house while you're at it!

Plan G: (If nothing else works, this is the fool-proof plan.) Torture him by using that famous line: "I'm going to tell on you! When your mom comes home, I'm going to tell her everything you've done, and she won't love you anymore!!" This line usually works, but with kids nowadays, you never know. If his reply is "SO WHAT! I DON'T CARE AND NEITHER DOES MY MOM!! SO BLAH ON YOU!!", you might as well hang it up forever. Maybe babysitting isn't for you. Let him run around and do anything he wants. If he wrecks the house, that's not your problem - he did it! □





REQUESTS TO THE WINDS

Four Winds come and lend an ear
So that none but you may hear
What I ask of you to bring
Upon our next gathering.

North blow swift and sweep the land.
Carry back upon your hand
An urn, brim full, with beauty rare
Such as to make all men stare.

South and East go search and find
Grace and charm of ev'ry kind.
Of these manners choose the best
And fetch them to me in a chest.

West seek well throughout the realm
A voice that will overwhelm
Fellows with its melody.
In a cup, give it to me.

These requests shall make a brew
In which I'll bathe to rise anew
And show all that even I
Can weave a spell to please the eye.

Amy Gethins

Debra A. A. Brutski

The Baffling Case of Horace Boris

Debbie Drummond

Characters

Narrator

(a rather gabby guy)

Shleppock Homes

(famed decipherer, long arm of justice and other assorted titles including world renowned sleuth)

Dr. Watson

(dutiful sidekick, trusted companion, wimp who does the dirty work)

Susie Slousy

(maid and secret mistress of the deceased)

Hilda Gretchenstein

(cook, an elderly German hag who speaks with a lisp)

Setting: London, England on the date of February 19, 1854 at the stately Boris mansion.

Narrator: (Center stage, standing in front of closed curtains)

Although there had been many threats on multi-millionaire Horace Boris' life, fate had permitted his measly existence to continue, but this time fate was not as generous. Miss Slousy, the maid is the only known witness and as usual the suspect is the butler. The method of murder was killing until dead.

(Curtains open to reveal a kitchen and parlor scene. Shleppock Homes and Watson enter stage right. They are greeted by Susie Slousy down center stage. They are searching around for a clue to wind up the case before further work is required. The renowned magnifying glass is on the prowl.)

Susie Slousy: (Nervously) I 'ave no idea where the body t'is.

Watson: There, there, my dear, Shleplock Homes will find it.
(While scanning the room, an agile Shleplock Homes trips over a rather bulky carcass between the couch and coffee table.)

Homes: (Loudly) The Body!!

Susie Slousy: Your'e a genius, sir.

Watson: How'd you know the body was there?

Homes: Elementary, I just stumbled over, umm, into the facts.
(Watson examines the carcass while Homes scans the room for the weapon and a clue to the murderer.)

Narrator: (Stationary, down stage left)
Above the fireplace a moose head glares at the sleuth. A metal rod protrudes from the moose's nose. Can this be the weapon, a gun perchance?
(Homes has a closer examination)

Narrator: The metal rod turns out to be a metal rod. Perhaps the rod was used to knock Mr. Boris senseless over his pointy head.
(Homes pulls the rod out and the moose's jaw falls off.)

Narrator: This is not the murder weapon! Underneath the moose sits a clock on the mantel. It is suspicious for the clock reads 2:00 and the time is now 5:00. This can mean only one thing (pause), the clock is three hours off. The scene of this crime reveals no clues to help solve this mystery.

Homes: Now, Miss Slousy, do you know where I can get in contact with any other servants?

Susie Slousy: Well, there's the cook, Hilda, and the butler, Reginald but he was fired three days ago.

Homes: Aha, this could be revenge!

Susie Slousy: No, it was Reginald.
(The two sleuths saunter into the kitchen and introduce themselves to Hilda Gretchenstein.) (Stage left.)

Homes: Madam, have you seen anything or anyone suspicious?

Hilda: Thithpithouth, oh yeth, two cadth carouthing in the back yard, a fat thquatty man, about hith thize, and a tall dithpicable man, like you, rummaging through the trath.

Watson: (Angrily) You nincompoop, that was us.

Hilda: (Loudly) Don't call me nameth!

(Hilda charges towards center stage waving a meat cleaver. Shleplock Homes and Watson run like two almost headless chickens back into parlor.)

Homes: (Breathlessly) My dear Watson, we must investigate even more meticulously and see if the late Mr. Boris was gracious enough to leave us a clue.

(The detectives search around the carcass.)

Watson: (Excitedly) Mr. Homes, here's what appears to be a white granular substance like sugar or salt (tastes it) it's sugar and look! What's this on his neck? Flour, hmm, both are used in the kitchen for baking. . .

(Watson is interrupted by Hilda who brings out a batch of cookies from the kitchen.)

Watson: Are those homemade, my dear?

Narrator: Actually, Watson could have cared less if they were homemade, store-bought or slung together in a mud puddle.

Hilda: Yeth thiree. Made 'em mythelf around two.

Narrator: This rings a bell in the mind of our super sleuth.

(Homes glances at the clock and sees it is unplugged and still reads two o'clock.)

Homes: (Demandingly) The Clue! Don't anyone touch anything. Dr. Watson, gather the suspects. I again have solved the mystery.

(Homes exits stage right. Watson and the suspects sit down in the parlor. Homes jauntily enters from off stage right. He faces his suspects.)

Narrator: Besides the killer, only Shlepleck Homes knows the identity of the murderer. It is now time to point the finger at the guilty person.

Susie Slousy: (Stuttering) W - who is it M - mister Homes?

Hilda: Jittery ath a cat, knowth you got her, thir.

Homes: Don't play coy my dear and don't blame others for your foul play.

(Hilda dashes for the door, stage right and is greeted by a regiment of the Scotland Foot - lesser division of the Yard.)

Homes: The evidence all points to you and that gesture confirms it. Mr. Boris knew you'd serve refreshments. He stopped the clock at the time you baked and you left traces of ingredients on his body. Now was the murder premeditated or what? My dear Hilda, if a plane leaves New York and crashes in Mexico, where should the survivors be buried?

Hilda: Mexico?

Homes: Wrong, New York. I'm afraid you haven't the power to reason, therefore you are incapable of premeditated murder.

Watson: Perhaps the murder was impulsive.

Homes: Of course it was repulsive but why did you do it?

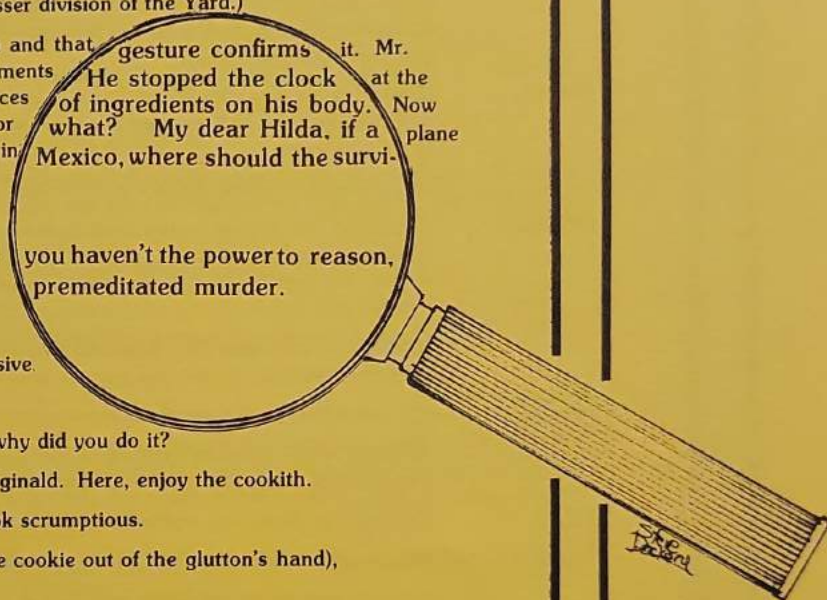
Hilda: For dithmithing my beloved Reginald. Here, enjoy the cookith.

Watson: (Jubilantly) M - m - m they look scrumptious.

Homes: Don't eat that fool (slapping the cookie out of the glutton's hand), it's poisoned!

Watson: How'd you know that?

Homes: (Cocky) Elementary, my dear Watson, that's the way the cookie crumbles. □





Etiquette at a Barroom Brawl

(Or: Retaining Grace While Mashing a Face)

Mark Bumgarner

Due to the violent nature of restaurant altercations or, in the vulgar, "barroom brawls," certain rules of etiquette have been set forth that all true gentlemen should observe.

Starting a Brawl

This part is very important. Proper execution of a start can be very impressive to the less enlightened masses.

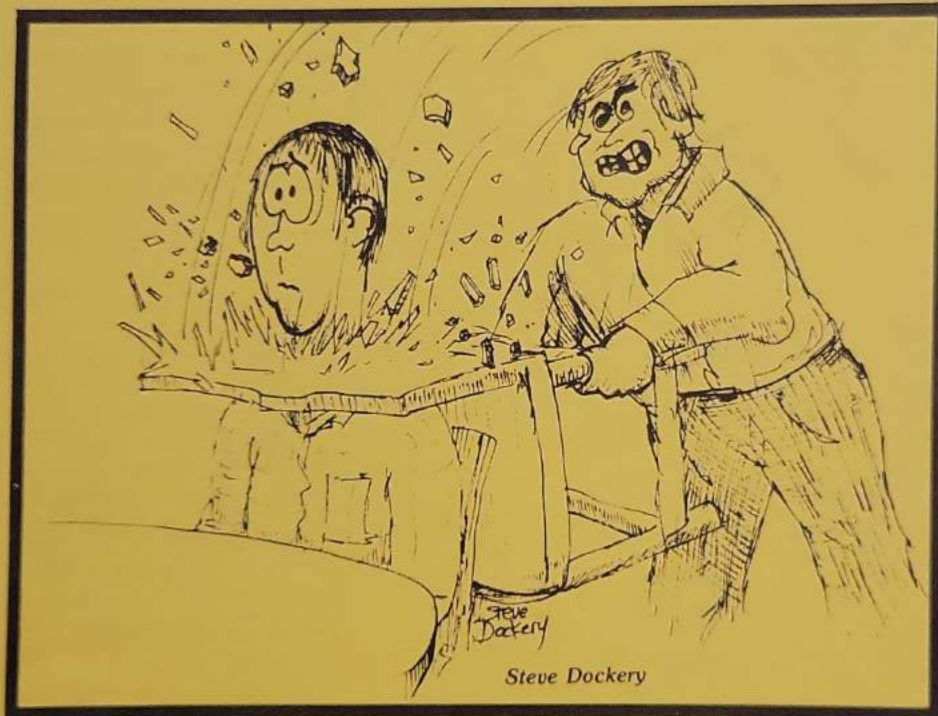
Generally, the best way to start a brawl is with an economy of word and motion. A simple "Permit me" or "Allow me" followed by a swift clout to the jaw (when feasible) is the most widely accepted method. Of course, there are variations; many people like to give a more winded opening phrase such as "Would you like to swallow some teeth?" or "Let me rearrange your face." Others prefer following the opening phrase with a sock to the nose, rather than the jaw, a practice which has become accepted in most areas. Directing the first blow to the stomach is expressly forbidden and hitting below the belt or from behind is something no gentleman should do.

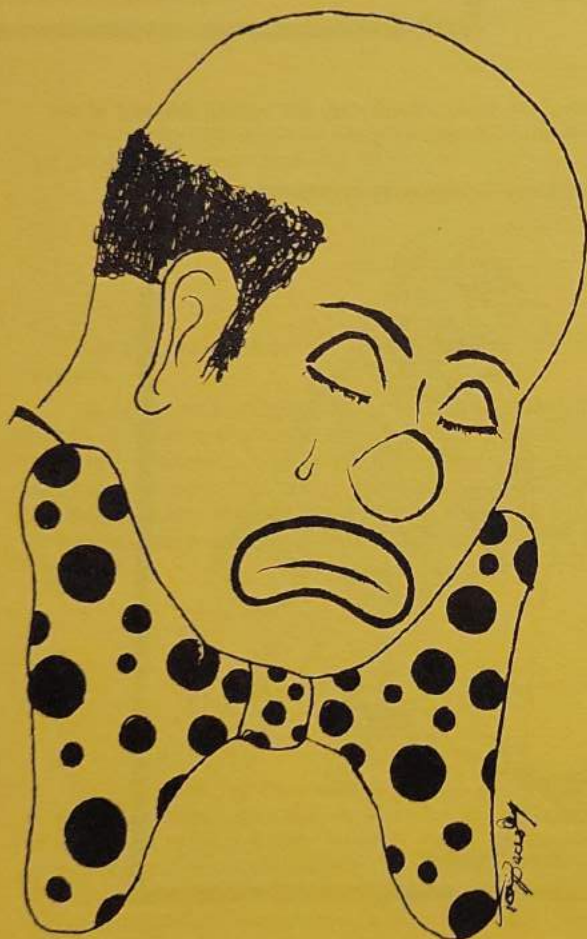
During the Brawl

During a brawl, one must learn to restrain himself and not over-indulge. Fighting must always remain fair, or as fair as circumstances dictate. Only fists may be used. Biting, scratching, kicking, and hair-pulling are all "taboo" as is striking a lady, whether she is participating or not. Using the establishment's furniture as weaponry is a controversial subject. Most firms in the West deem it permissible while those in the East forbid it. The exercising of one's better judgment should govern the use of furniture in any event. The use of bottles, especially full ones, is looked down upon by all groups. The use of Oriental self defense skills is permissible only when outnumbered by a ratio of 6.5 to 1.

Ending a Brawl

This facet of a brawl need not concern us here since the local constabulary will handle this end of the business. It should be noted, however, that no true gentleman ever gets caught.





Tony Beasley

The Jester for the Clown

The people all love him
he makes them laugh and smile
so they'll sit and listen
and talk with him a while
but when the show is over
and the curtain goes down

who's left behind

to cheer up the clown?

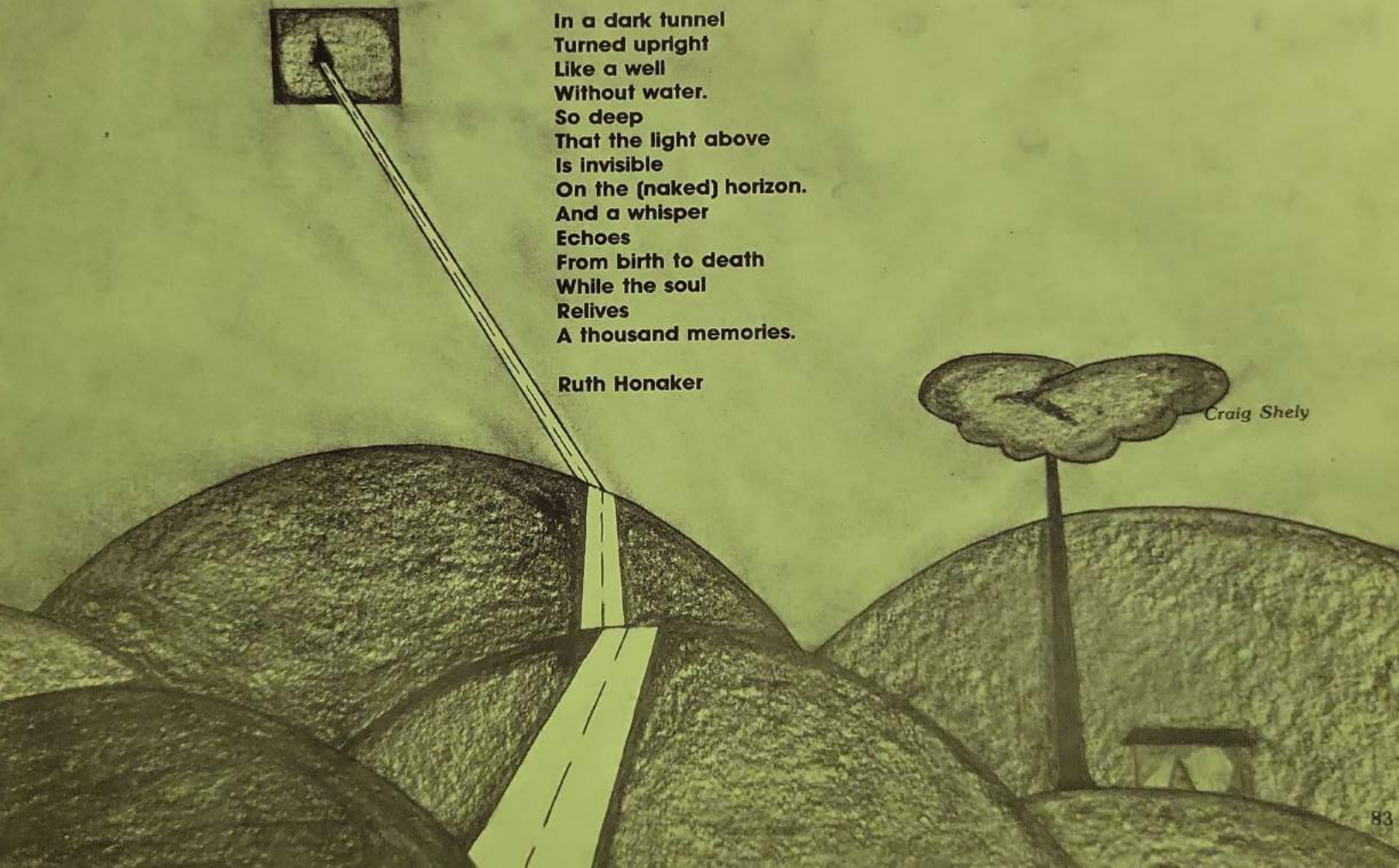
Mike Wilson

Endless Journey

In a dark tunnel
Turned upright
Like a well
Without water.
So deep
That the light above
Is invisible
On the (naked) horizon.
And a whisper
Echoes
From birth to death
While the soul
Relives
A thousand memories.

Ruth Honaker

Craig Shely



White Wishes

Floating high,
Floating free.

Oh, how I wish
that could be me.

Having no worries,
no troubles at all,
just flying free
and having a ball.

I'll say it so softly,
I'll yell it so loud,
I wish Mother Nature had made me a cloud!

David Fowler



Terri Morris

King of the Waters

Soaring high above the rushing river, the gull disappeared into the sun, and just as quickly, dove back into the surrounding sky. The preceding night had begun with the moon and stars lighting up his entire world. So bright and clear was the air, that he could see the shadows of his prey swimming near the water's surface. Yet, the quiet atmosphere diminished when angry clouds had covered the full moon. Rain and darkness had forced him to seek shelter and, now on this cool, brisk morning, he was wildly driven by his never ending hunger.

After gulping down a trout, the sleek bird steered his course toward the open seas. Near the coast, he came to a halt upon the warm sands and, flopping his wings irregularly, as one who is tired walks lazily, the sea bird settled himself in a shady tree's arm. While watching the rolling waves and hearing their quiet murmurs, he drifted into sleep.



Kevin Riley

When awakening his body shook and then took flight over the ocean's waters. Now fully alert, he continued searching for anything to quiet his stomach's growls. Luck was hiding, as were the sea creatures, so he changed his direction and coasted with the wind to find his mate. While nearing his mate's nesting place on the jagged rocks above the ocean, he searched for her among the many crevices. Crushing his impulse to let out a mighty screech, he slowly landed near his mate's nest. Chirpings of the little gulls could not be heard, so he stretched his white neck to get a better view. When he saw her lying still and no babies in sight, automatically he sensed death. After one more glance his form gave a leap and became one with the sky.

Darkness came, and in and out of the rocks he flew as his restlessness and hunger mounted. Then again, he drifted above the sea to scan its waters. After bringing his small catch to the narrow beach and, by avoiding contact with the oncoming waves, he was able to devour his meal. Then, as if by some great impulse, his mind and body soared high up into the heavens, and his lonely cry echoed among the stars. □

Sue Barton

PINK POLKA

DOTS !

Jodi Sullivan

I guess the whole thing was pretty silly now that I think back. It was as though all eyes were on me; I acted as if I was nude and not wearing a bathing suit.

I'm not sure what it was about the outfit that scared me. It could have been the cling-a-long fabric, or maybe the lack of it. The fact that most of my structure was bare might have had something to do with it also. But whatever the reason, the nervousness was still there.

To aid my cowardliness I found it reassuring to wear my beach towel as long as possible. I tiptoed up to the edge of the pool smothered in my thick purple blanket. Darting glances from side to side, I decided who was staring at me and who was just looking around.

Slowly sitting down on the edge of the cement, I allowed my feet to dangle in the water. After searching again for those staring looks, I quickly threw off the towel, jumped in the water, totally ignoring the fact that I had smacked a ruddy sunbather in the head with my shield of terry cloth.

Once in the water, it was easier to cope with my apparel. Keeping a squatted position, I managed to move from place to place. Making sure my shoulders were at water level, I found no time to notice the fact that the water was perfectly clear and that it was quite easy to observe the swimmers below.

Although I never noticed the visibility through the water, I did realize one other slight problem, getting out of the pool. Without letting panic set in, I gave the idea some thought. With the aid of my astounding brain power, I decided to conveniently leave a towel within arm's reach of the pool.

With the cover-up draped over my shoulders, I slowly slid out of the water. Once out, I carefully tiptoed to the location of my other belongings.

After safely reaching my things, I sat and watched the people go by. Each time a Farrah Fawcett-Majors look-a-like passed, I would tingle with guilt at having dared to wear a swimsuit in public, knowing the condition of my figure.

I continued to be bothered with the depressing fact about my shape until one day, while at the public pool, I noticed something unusual. There, in the corner of the fence, was a large, round object. In the center of the sphere was a patch of blue behind pink polka dots. As I continued to stare, the blob suddenly moved. Finally, I realized that the figure had not been a blob at all, but a rather large woman in a bikini. As she stood up straight it was hard for me to find the swimsuit within the many layers of excess fat.

After observing this gross sight I noticed other rounded swimmers waddling around the area. Surprisingly enough, all my feelings of guilt vanished. I didn't seem to feel nervous or scared anymore, either. To tell the truth, I was pleased with the fact that my swimsuit was visible.

Since then, I've realized that not everyone can look like Farrah. I figure that as long as I'm not offered a contract as the next Goodyear Blimp, and I still leave water in the pool after jumping in, then I'll have the courage to wear a bathing suit in public. □



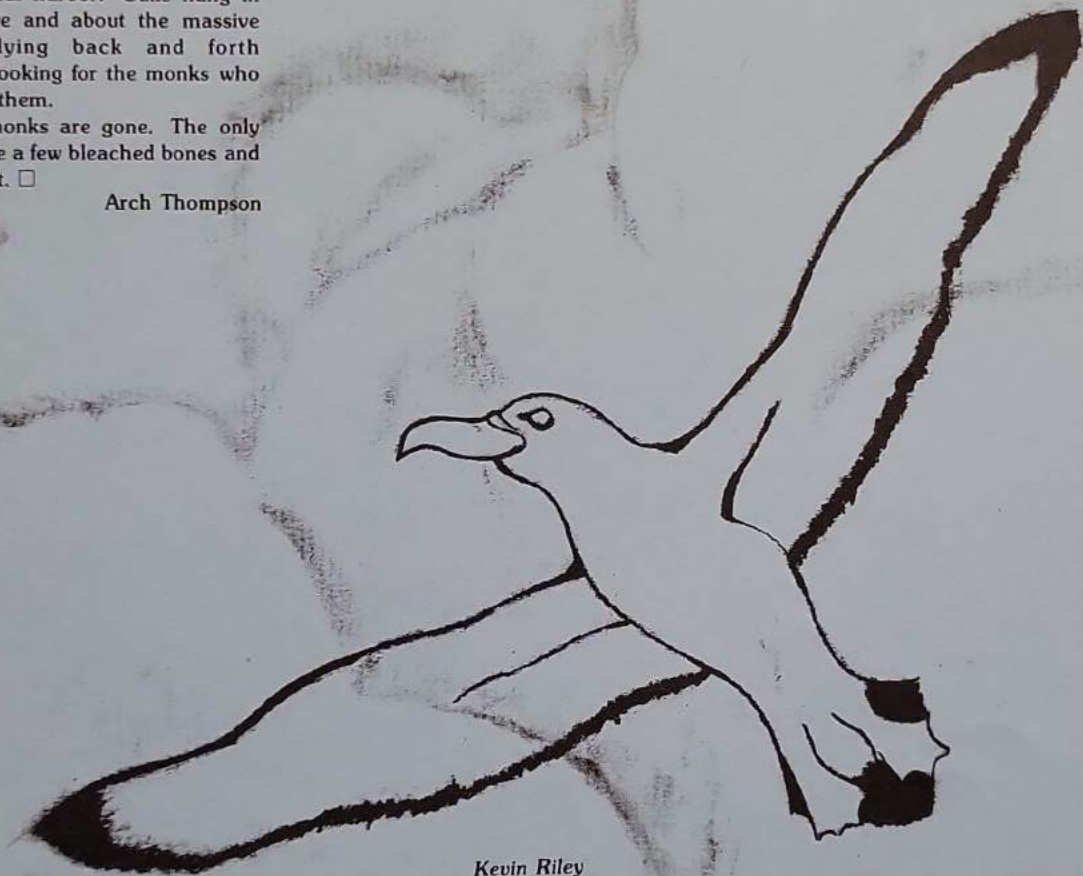
Tony Beasley

Ages Past

The monastery is centuries old. It is built of stone and strong enough to withstand hurricanes. The pinnacle rock upon which it stands overlooks a small, peaceful harbor. Gulls hang in the air above and about the massive building, flying back and forth screeching, looking for the monks who used to feed them.

But the monks are gone. The only things left are a few bleached bones and layers of dust. □

Arch Thompson



Kevin Riley



Waiting

Putting his hand to his mouth, he gave a highly audible cough as he cast a vehement glance up the richly carpeted stairs. With trembling fingers he snatched the hat from his pulsating brow and lit his fifth cigarette. Like a spring being compressed, he sat down on the sofa while placing the cigarette to his drawn lips. Suddenly springing to his feet, he let the smoke stream out from his nostrils like some outraged fairytale dragon. Above his head were the sounds of spike-heeled shoes tapping across the floor, and the murmurs of feminine voices drifted down to tease his ears.

Mary Bianca Nicoletti

Friends of the

Louise Alstork
Ralph G. Angle
Helen Bailey
Jim Baily
Thomas C. Beavers
Mrs. Linda Blair
Miss Laura Blevins
Mr. Jerry Bolling
The Bowens
Ms. Branch
Johnny Brennon
Mr. William Bridge
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State Farm Insurance
Sam Bubernak
Tony Clark
Tiffany House Restaurant
Village American
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Woodbridge Ballet Arts Center
Woodbridge Jewelers, Inc.
Woodbridge Opticians, Inc.

We, of the Rainbow Bridge,
would like to express special
thanks to those who made it
possible for the publication
of this magazine. Thank
you for all the cooperation
received; it was greatly ap-
preciated!



Liz Sellers

L. Sellers

