

KALLIKANZAROS

NO. 1



from 9 Princes in Amber by ROGER ZELAZNY

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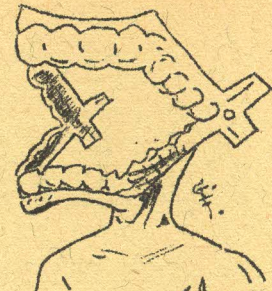
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COLUMBUS IN '69

AN INTRODUCTION



Well, here it is. Another fanzine is about to try its luck. As you can see, however, there are some major differences between it and others. I suppose it will be labeled Sercon, but what the hell? I'm not at all opposed to faaanishness and *fabulous faaanish fanzines*; more power to them. I feel, however, that there is room, and a need, for something else. All this, and I still haven't said what KALLIKANZAROS is or hopes to be. Let's get on with it.

The writer of imaginative fiction (as opposed to mainstream literature) enjoys a pronounced freedom (granting, of course, that some editors refuse to acknowledge that freedom) in that he may go anywhere in space or time or utilize any idea or facet of experience he wishes. More importantly, he may use them in many unusual, but effective combinations. This affects his output immensely. It means that fictional techniques which have greater scope may develop, giving the reader more satisfaction. Science Fiction operates within a world of infinite possibility and infinite probability, rather than within the oversimplified world of the real (here and now) and the unreal. Its potential as a medium for great literature cannot be realized until its many unique difficulties are overcome. Greater skill in general, and of organization in particular, is demanded, for without a natural scene to tie it together, a work, be it novel, story or poem, must have some other frame of reference, created by the author, to orient the reader. The special problems of writing Science Fiction, along with the normal problems of the craft (see the article by Don D'Amassa on page 24 for an analysis of one facet of writing where SF is generally lacking) combine to make the field one in which greatness is so difficult that it is seldom achieved.

At this point, I must mention the "New Wave" of SF, if only to say that I am generally disappointed with its results. I feel that many of the authors involved in this "movement" are good - but in ways which relate them more to the mainstream than to SF. I cannot help but feel that they have abandoned the most important aspect of imaginative literature - imagination. By extracting unchained fancy from their writing, they have not solved the problems of SF; they have only circumvented them.

I feel that great Science Fiction can and will be (for that matter, some has been) written. It is my hope that this fanzine might, in some small way, contribute to the development of one outstanding author. The entire aim of KALLIKANZAROS is to shed some light on the special problems of producing good Science Fiction and the personal problems of individual authors. This aim may be met by two main routes. One is the publication of articles dealing with the art of writing, authors' approaches and in-depth reviews or analyses. The second is the actual publication of fiction which may then be discussed in an intelligent letter column (no "I liked this, but I didn't understand that" type of comments without some well thought out reason are welcome) or might even provide the meat for articles.

Having established this aim, and generally outlined the methods of achieving it, more specific outlines of policy are in order. First of all, everything from straight fantasy to "hard core" SF will be considered fair game. Articles expressing a sincere belief or opinion (no matter how divergent from the views of the editors) can be sure of fair consideration and no unwarranted censorship.

((Continued on page 14))

9 PRINCES IN AMBER — Roger Zelazny

...I'll tell you what this thing is. I wrote a novel in January. It is hopefully going to be the first in what may wind up as a trilogy or possibly a set of four, and it is a parallel-worlds type of thing which might be classified as sword and sorcery, and then again maybe not - I could argue either side of it. But the section I'd like to read from involves the return of my main character, who knows his name is Corwin, to his own world. He is accompanied by his brother, who is kind of a rat fink and by his sister, who is kind of a slut. This particular section involves their flight from, actually, the troops of another brother who is pursuing them (they are two of the nine brothers referred to in the title of the thing... "NINE PRINCES IN AMBER", and they've got a bit of a disagreement as to who should be sitting on the throne). Now, this is a trite situation - I admit it - but I'm going to try to do something a little better with the standard machinery of a story like this. I apologize for the crude seduction scene in here. I don't mean in the sense that I used four-letter words or anything, but it's too brief and it's kind of a bit contrived. I'm going to go back and make it a bit more in character.

What I'm mainly interested in conveying, actually, is a sort of impression. I'd appreciate it if anyone would care to give me an opinion on it afterwards. I'm trying to get a sort of surrealistic effect during this flight, because most of it takes place underwater, in a city which is set there, and the characters are able to exist without breathing equipment. My main character is mad because nobody will tell him how this works, but it's a part of the gimmick I don't want to go into at this point of the story. I'll just start right now, begin reading. When they do get to their destination, Corwin has to do a thing. He has to walk a pattern which will either kill him or cure him of what has been wrong with him.... I'll read through that section and that'll be it....

We spent two evenings making our way to the pink and sable sands of the great sea. It was on the morning of the third day that we arrived at the beach, having successfully avoided a small patrol party the sun-down before. We were loath to step out into the open until we had located the precise spot - Thaila Beonan, the stairway to Rebma - and could cross quickly to it. The rising sun cast billions of bright shards into the foamy swell of the waters, and our eyes were dazzled by their dance so that we could not see beneath the surface. We had lived on fruit and water for two days and I was ravenously hungry, but I forgot this as I regarded the wide sloping tiger beach with its sudden rises and twists of coral - orange and pink and red - and its abrupt caches of shells, driftwood and small, polished stones and the sea beyond, rising, falling, splashing softly, all gold and blue and royal purple and casting forth its life songs breezes like benedictions beneath dawn's violet skies.

The mountain that faces the dawn - Kalher - which had held Amber like a mother her child for all time, stood perhaps twenty miles to our left, the north. The sun covered her with gold, and made a rainbow veil above the city. Random looked upon it and gnashed teeth, then looked away...maybe I did too. Deidre touched my hand, gestured with her head and began to walk toward the north, parallel to the shore. Random

and I followed. She'd apparently spotted some landmark. We advanced perhaps a quarter of a mile when it seemed that the earth shook lightly.

"Hoofbeats," hissed Random.

"Look," said Deidre, and her head was tilted back and she was pointing upward. My eyes followed the gesture. Overhead a hawk circled.

"How much further is it?" I asked.

"That cairn of stones," she said. I saw that it was perhaps a hundred yards away, about eight feet in height, builded of head-sized gray stones, worn by the wind, the sand the water, shaped like a truncated pyramid.

The hoofbeats came louder, and then there were the notes of a horn, not Julian's call, though.

"Run!" said Random, and we did. After about twenty-five paces, the hawk descended. It swooped at Random, but he had his blade out and took a cut at it. Then it turned it's attention to Deidre. I snatched my own blade from it's sheath and tried a cut. Feathers flew. It rose and dropped again, and this time my blade hit something hard. I think it fell, but I couldn't tell for sure because I wasn't about to stop and look back.

The sound of hoofbeats was quite steady now, and loud, and the horn notes were near at hand. We reached the cairn and Deidre turned at right angles to it and headed straight towards the sea. I was not about to argue with someone who seemed to know what she was doing. I followed, and from the corner of my eye saw the horsemen. They were still off in the distance, but they were thundering along the beach, dogs barking and horns blowing. Random and I ran like hell, and waded out into the surf after our sister.

We were up to our waists when Random said, "It's death if I stay and death if I go on."

"One is imminent," I said, "and the other is open to negotiation. Let's move!"

We did.

We were on some sort of rocky surface which descended into the sea. I didn't know how we'd breathe while we walked it, but Deidre didn't seem worried about it, so I tried not to be. But I was. When the water swirled and swished by our heads I was very worried. Deidre walked straight ahead, though. Descending. And I followed, and Random followed. Each few feet there was a drop. We were descending an enormous staircase and it was named Thaila Beonan, I knew. One more step would bring the water above my head, but Deidre had already dropped below the water line. So I drew a deep breath and took the plunge. There were more steps, and I kept following them. I wondered why my body was not naturally buoyed above them, for I remained erect and each step bore me downward as though on a natural staircase though my movements were somewhat slowed.

I began to wonder what I'd do when I could hold my breath no longer. There were bubbles about Random's head, and Deidre's. I tried to observe what they were doing, but I couldn't figure it. Their breasts were rising and falling in a normal manner. When we were about ten feet below the surface, Random glanced at me from where he moved at my left side, and I heard his voice. It was though I had my ear pressed against the bottom of a bathtub, and each of his words came as the sound of someone kicking at the side. They were clear, though.

"I don't think they'll persuade the dogs to follow, even if the horses do," he said.

"How are you managing to breathe?" I tried saying, and I heard my own words distantly.

"Relax!" he said quickly. "If you're holding your breath, let it out and don't worry. You'll be able to breathe so long as you don't venture off the stairway."

"How can that be?" I asked.

"If we make it, you'll know." he said, and his voice had a ringing quality to it through the cold and passing green.

We were about twenty feet below the surface by then, and I exhaled a small amount of air and tried inhaling for perhaps a second. There was nothing disturbing about the sensation, so I protracted it. There were more bubbles, but beyond that I felt nothing uncomfortable about the transition. There was no sense of increasing pressure during the next ten feet or so. I could see the staircase on which we moved through a greenish fog. Down, down, down it led. Straight, direct, and there was a kind of light coming from below us.

"If we can make it through the archway, we'll be safe," said my sister.

"You'll be safe," Random corrected.

And I wondered what he had done to be despised in the place called Rebma.

"If they ride horses which have never made the journey before, they'll have to follow on foot," said Random. "In that case, we'll make it."

"So they might not follow if that's the case," said Deidre.

We hurried.

By the time we were perhaps fifty feet below the surface, the waters grew quite dark and chilly, but the glow from before and below us increased and in another ten steps I could make out the source. There was a pillar rising to the right. At the top was something globe-like and glowing. Perhaps fifteen steps lower, another such formation occurred to the left. Behind that, it seemed that there was another one on the right, and so on. When we entered the vicinity of the thing, the waters grew warmer and the stairway itself became clear. It was white, shot through with pink and green and resembled marble, but it was not slippery, despite the water. It was perhaps fifty feet in width, and there was a wide bannister of the same substance on either side.

Fishes swam fast as we walked it.

When I looked back over my shoulder there seemed to be no sign of pursuit. It became brighter. We entered the vicinity of the first light and it wasn't a globe on the top of the pillar. My mind must have added that touch to the phenomenon just to try to rationalize it at least a bit. It appeared to be a flame about two feet in height dancing there as atop a huge torch. I decided to ask about it later and save if you'll excuse the expression, breath for the rapid descent we were making. After we had entered the alley of light and passed six more torches, Random said, "They're after us." And I looked back again and saw distant figures descending, four of them on horseback. It is a strange feeling to laugh under water and hear yourself.

"Let them," I said. And I touched the hilt of my blade. "For now that we have made it this far, I have a feeling of power upon me."

We hurried then, and off to our left and to our right, the water grew black as ink. Only the stairway was illuminated, and our mad flight down it, and distantly I saw what appeared to be a mighty arch. Deidre was leaping down the stairs two at a time and there came a vibration now from the stacatto of horses' hooves behind us. The band of armed men filling the way from bannister to bannister was far behind and above, but the four horsemen had gained on us. We followed Deidre as she rushed downward and my hand stayed upon my blade. Three, four, five...we passed that many lights before I looked back again and saw that the horsemen were perhaps fifty feet above us. The footmen were now almost out of sight. The archway loomed ahead, perhaps two hundred feet distant. Big, shining like alabaster, and carved with tritons, sea-nymphs, mermaids and dolphins it was. And there seemed to be people on the other side of it.

"They must wonder why we come here," said Random.

"It would be an academic point if we don't make it," I replied, hurrying as another glance revealed that the horsemen had gained ten feet on us.

I drew my blade then, and it flashed in the torchlight. Random followed suit. Another twenty steps or so. The vibrations were terrible within the green, and we turned, so as not to be cut down as we ran. They were almost upon us. The gates lay a hundred feet to our backs and it might have been a hundred miles unless we could take the four horsemen. I crouched as the man who was headed toward me swung his blade. There was another rider to his right and slightly to his rear, so naturally I moved to his left near to the rail. This required that he strike cross-body as he held his blade in his right hand. When he struck, I parried in contre and riposted. He was leaning far forward in the saddle and the point of my blade entered his neck on the left side. A great billow of blood, like crimson smoke, arose and swirled within the greenish light. Crazily, I wished Van Gogh were there to see it. The horse continued past, and I leapt at the second rider from the rear. He turned to parry the stroke, succeeded, but the force of his speed through the water and the strength of my blow removed him from his saddle. As he fell, I kicked, and he drifted. I struck at him, hovering there above me, and he parried again, but this carried him beyond the rail. I heard him scream as the pressure of the waters came upon him. Then he was silent. I turned my attention then to Random, who had slain both a horse and a man and was duelling with a second man on foot. By the time I reached them, he'd slain the man and was laughing. The blood billowed above them and I suddenly realized that I had known mad, bad, sad Vincent Van Gogh, and it was really too bad that he couldn't have painted this. The footmen were perhaps a hundred feet behind us and we turned and headed for the arches. Deidre had already passed through them. We ran, and we made it. There were many swords at our sides, and the footmen turned back. Then we sheathed our blades, and Random said "I've had it." And moved to join with the band of people who had stood to defend us. Random was immediately ordered to surrender his blade, and he shrugged and handed it over. Then two men came and stood on either side of him and a third at his back and we continued on down the stair.

I lost all sense of time in that watery place, but I feel that we walked for somewhere between a quarter of an hour - or half an hour - before we reached our destination. The golden gates of Rebma stood before us. We passed through them. We entered the city. Everything was to be seen through a green haze. There were buildings, all of them fragile and most of them high, grouped in patterns and standing in colors that entered my eyes and tore through my mind seeking after remembrance. They failed. The sole result of their digging being the now familiar ache that accompanied the half-recalled, the unrecalled. I had walked these streets before, however, that I knew. Or ones very much like them. Random had not said a single word since he had been taken into custody. Deidre's only conversation had been to inquire after our sister Louella. She had been informed that Louella was in Rebma.

I examined our escort. There were men with green hair, with purple hair, with black hair, and all of them had eyes of green save for one fellow whose were of a hazel color. All wore only scale trunks and cloaks, cross-braces on their breasts, and short-swords depending from seashell belts. All were pretty much lacking in body hair. None of them spoke to me, though some stared and some glared. I was allowed to keep my weapon. Inside the city, we were conducted up a wide avenue, lighted by pillar flames set at even closer intervals than on Thiala' Bochan. The people stared out at us from behind octagonal tinted windows and bright-bellied fishes swam by. There came a cool current, like a breeze, as we turned a corner, and after a few steps, a warm one, like a wind. We were taken to the palace in the center of the city, and I knew it as my hand knew the glove in my belt. It was an

image of the palace of Amber, obscured only by the green and confused by the many strangely-placed mirrors which had been set up within its walls, inside and out. A woman sat upon the throne in the glassite room I almost recalled, and her hair was green, with a streak of silver. Her eyes were round as moons of jade and her brows rose like wings of olive gulls. Her mouth was small. Her chin was small. Her cheeks were high and rounded. A circlet of white gold crossed her brow and there was a crystal necklace about her neck, at its tip there flashed a sapphire between her sweet, bare breasts whose nipples were also a pale green. She wore scale trunks of blue and a silver belt. She held a sceptre of pink coral in her right hand and had a ring on every finger - each ring had a stone of a different blue within it. She did not smile as she spoke.

"What seek you here, outcasts of Amber?" she asked, and her voice was a lisping, soft, glowing thing.

Deidre spoke and replied, "We flee the wrath of the Prince who sits in the true city, Eric. To be frank, we wish to work his downfall. If he is loved here, we are lost, and we have delivered ourselves into the hands of our enemies. But I feel he is not loved here, so we come asking aid, gentle Moira."

"I will not give you troops to assault Amber," she replied. "As you know, the chaos would be reflected within my own realm."

"That is not what we would have of you, dear Moira," Deidre continued, "but only a small thing, to be achieved at no pain or cost to you or to your subjects."

"Name it, for, as you know, Eric is almost as disliked here as the recreant who stands at your left hand." And with this, she gestured at my brother, who stared at her in frank and insolent appraisal, a small smile playing about the corners of his lips. If he was going to pay the price for whatever he had done, I could see that he was going to pay it like a Prince of Amber, as our three dead brothers had done ages ago. He would pay it macking them the while, laughing through his mouth as it filled with the blood of his body as he died. And as he died, he would pronounce an irrevocable curse which would come to pass. I, too, had this power, I knew, and I would use it when circumstances required its use.

"The thing I would ask," she said, "is for my brother Corwin, who is also brother to Lady Louella, who dwells here with you. I believe that he has never given you an offense."

"That is true, but why does he not speak for himself?"

"That is part of the problem, Lady. He cannot, for he does not know what to ask. Much of his memory had departed from an accident which occurred when he dwelt among shadows. It is to restore his remembrance that we have come here. To bring back his recollection of the old days, that he might oppose Eric in Amber."

"Continue," said the woman on the throne, regarding me through the shadow of the lashes of her eyes.

"In a place in this building," Deidre said, "there is a room where few would go. In that room," she continued, "upon the floor, traced in fiery outline, there lies a duplicate of the thing we call the Pattern. Only a son or daughter of Amber's late liege may walk this Pattern and live. It gives to such a person a power over shadow, dear Moira."

I blinked several times and I speculated as to the number of her subjects she had sent upon that path to gain some control of this power for Rebma. Of course, she had failed.

"To walk the Pattern," Deidre went on, "should, we feel, restore to Corwin his memory of himself as a Prince of Amber. He cannot go to Amber to do this, and this is the only place I know where the Pattern is duplicated, other than Tierna Noch, where, of course, we may not go at this time."

Moira turned her gaze upon my sister, swept it over Random, and returned it to me. "Is Corwin willing to essay this thing?" she asked.

I bowed. "Willing, Lady." She smiled then.

"Very well, you have my permission. I can guarantee you no guarantees of safety beyond my realm, however."

"As to that, Your Majesty," said Deidre, "we expect no boons, but will take care of ourselves on our departure."

"Save for Random," Moira said, "you will be quite safe."

"What do you mean?" asked Deidre, for Random would not, of course, speak for himself under the circumstances.

"Surely you recall," she said, "that one time Prince Random came into my realm as a friend who did thereafter depart in haste with my daughter Morgantha."

"I've heard this tale, Lady Moira, but I'm not aware of the truth or baseness of it."

"It is true," said Moira, "and a month thereafter was she returned to me. Her suicide came some months after the birth of her son Martin. What have you to say to that, Prince Random?"

"Nothing," said Random.

"When Martin came of age," said Moira, "because he was of the blood of Amber he determined to walk the Pattern. He is the only of my people to have succeeded. Thereafter, he walked in Shadow, and I have not seen him. What have you to say to that, Lord Random?"

"Nothing," replied Random.

"Therefore, I must punish you," Moira continued. "You shall amrry the woman of my choice and remain with her in my realm for a year's time, or you will forfeit your life. What say you to that, Random?"

Random said nothing, but he nodded abruptly.

She struck her sceptre upon the arm of her turquoise throne. "Very well," she said, "so be it." And so it was.

There's a break here. I'm going to skip over a couple of pages which are rough and not really relevant to what I'm leading up to now. They are now beneath the palace. This is a bit later, and they're about to enter the room which contains the Pattern.

Then he pushed the door open with his foot and we stared within. In a room the size of a ballroom, the Pattern was laid. The floor was black and looked smooth as glass, and on the floor was the Pattern. It shimmered like the cold fire that it was, quivered, made the whole room seem somehow insubstantial. It was an elaborate tracery of bright power, composed mainly of curves though there were a few straight lines near its middle. It reminded me of a fantastically intricate life-scale version of one of those maze things you do with a pencil (or maybe a ball-point, as the case may be) to get you into or out of something like I could almost see the words "Start Here" somewhere way in the back. It was perhaps a hundred yards across its narrow middle and a hundred and fifty long. It made bells ring within my head, and then came the throbbing. My mind recoiled from the touch of the thing, but if I were a true Prince of Amber, then somewhere in my blood, my nervous system, my genes this Pattern was recorded somehow, so that I would respond properly, so that I could

walk the bloody thing.

"I wish I could have a cigarette," I said. And the girls giggled, though one of them too rapidly, and with a bit of a boost on the treble control. Random took my arm and said, "It's no deal, but it's not impossible, or we wouldn't be here. Take it very slowly and don't let yourself be distracted. Don't be alarmed by the shower of sparks that will arise at each step, they can't hurt you. You'll feel a mild current passing through you the whole time. After a while you'll start feeling high, but keep concentrating and don't forget, keep walking. Don't stop, whatever you do, and don't stray from the path or it'll probably kill you." And as he spoke, we walked. We walked close to the right-hand wall and rounded the Pattern, heading for its far end. The girls stayed behind us.

I whispered to him, "I tried to talk her out of this thing she's planned for you. No luck."

"I figured you would," he said. "Don't worry about it. I can do a year standing on my head. They might even let me go sooner if I'm obnoxious enough."

"The girl she has lined up for you is named Vialla. She's blind."

"Great," he said, "great joke."

"Remember that Regency we spoke of?"

"Yeah."

"Be kind to her then - stay the full year, and I'll be generous."

Nothing. Then he squeezed my arm. "Friend of yours, hunh?" He chuckled. "What she like?"

"Is it a deal?" I said slowly.

"It's a deal."

Then we stood at the place where the Pattern began, near to the corner of the room. I moved forward and regarded the lines of inlaid fires that started near to the spot where I placed my right foot. The Pattern constituted the only illumination within the room. The waters were chill about me. I strode forward, setting my left foot upon the path. It was outlined by blue-white sparks. Then I set my right foot upon it and felt the current that Random had mentioned. I took another step. There was a crackle, and I felt my hair beginning to rise. I took another step. Then the thing began to curve abruptly back upon itself. I took ten more paces, and a certain resistance seemed to arise. It was as if a black barrier had suddenly grown up before me of some tangible substance which pushed back as I attempted to pass forward. I fought it. It was the first veil, I suddenly knew. To get beyond it would be an achievement, a good sign, showing that I was, indeed, a part of the Pattern. Each raising and lowering of my feet suddenly required a terrible effort, and sparks shot forth from my hair. I concentrated on the fiery outline. I walked it, breathing heavily. Suddenly, the pressure was eased. The veil had parted before me as abruptly as it had occurred. I had passed beyond it, and acquired something. I had gained a piece of myself.

I saw the paper skins, the knobby, stick-like bones, and the dead of Auschwitz. I had been present at Nuremberg, I knew, and I heard the voice of Stephen Spender reciting "Fallen in Vienna", and I saw Mother Courage cross the stage on the night of the Breck premiere. I saw the rockets leap up from the hard, stained places - Peenemunde, Vandenberg, Kennedy, Kezelcum, Kazakistan. And I touched with my hands the Wall of China. We were drinking beer, and Shakespeare said he was drunk and went off to puke. I entered the green forests of the Western Reserve and took three scalps one day. I hummed a tune as I marched along, and it caught on. It became "Aupres de Ma Blonde". I remembered. I remembered my life within the shadow place its inhabitants had called the Earth.

Three more steps and I held a bloody blade, and I saw three dead men and my horse

on which I'd fled the Revolution in France. And more, so much more, back to.... Another step...back to the dead. They were all about me. There was a horrible stink, the smell of decaying flesh, and I heard the howls of a dog who was being beaten to death. Billows of black smoke filled the sky and an icy wind swept around me bearing a few small drops of rain. My throat was parched and my hands shook and my head was on fire. I staggered along seeing everything through the haze of the fever that burnt me. The gutters were filled with garbage and dead cats and the emptyings of chambre pots. With a rattle and the ringing of a bell, the Death Wagon thundered by, splashing me with mud and cold water. How long I wandered, I do not know, before a woman seized my arm and I saw a Death's-head ring on her finger. She led me to her rooms, but discovered there that I had no money and was incoherent. A look of fear crossed her painted face, erasing the smile on her brought lips, and she fled as I collapsed upon her bed. Later, again, how much later I do not know, a big man, the girl's Black Davy came and slapped me across the face and dragged me to my feet. I seized his right bicep and hung on. He half carried, half pulled me toward the door. When I realized that he was going to cast me out into the cold, I tightened my grip to protest. I squeezed with all my remaining strength, mumbling half-coherent pleas. Then, through sweat and tear filled eyes I saw his face break open and heard a scream come forth from between his stained teeth. The bone in his arm had broken where I had squeezed it. He pushed me away with his left hand and fell to his knees weeping. I sat upon the floor and my head cleared for a moment.

"I am staying here," I said, "until I feel better. Get out! If you come back, I'll kill you."

"You've got the plague," he cried. "They'll come for your bones tomorrow." He spat and staggered to his feet and got out.

I made it to the door and barred it. Then I crawled back to the bed and slept. If they came for my bones the next day, they were disappointed. For perhaps ten hours later, in the middle of the night, I awoke in a cold sweat, and I realized that my fever had broken. I was weak, but rational once more. I realized that I had lived through the plague. I took a man's cloak I found in the wardrobe and I took some money I found in a drawer. Then I went forth into London in the Year of the Great Plague, looking for something. I had no recollection of who I was or what I was doing there. That was how it had started.

I was well into the Pattern now, and the sparks flashed continually about my feet reaching the height of my knees. I no longer knew which direction I faced or where Random and Deidre and Moira stood. The current swept through me and it seemed that my eyeballs were vibrating. There came a pins-and-needles feeling in my cheeks and coldness on the back of my neck. I clenched my teeth to keep them from chattering.

The auto accident had not given me my amnesia. I had been without full memory since the reign of Elizabeth I. Lora must have concluded that the recent accident had restored me. She had known of my condition. I was suddenly struck by the thought that she was on that shadow Earth mainly to keep tabs on me. Since the Sixteenth Century, then? That I couldn't say. I'd find out, though. I took six more rapid steps, reaching the end of an arc and coming to the beginning of a straight line. I set my foot upon it, and with each step that I took, another barrier began to rise against me. It was the second veil.

There was a right angle turn, then another, and another. I was a Prince of Amber. It was true. There had been fifteen brothers, and six were dead. There had been eight sisters, and two were dead, probably four. We had spent much of our time wandering in shadow, and all in our own universes. It is an academic, though valid, philosophical point as to one with power over shadow could create his own universes. What ever the ultimate answer, from a practical point we could.

Another curve began, and it was as though I were walking in glue as I moved along it. One...two...three...four. I raised my fiery boots and lowered them down again. My head throbbed and my heart felt as though it were vibrating to pieces. Amber. The going was suddenly easy once more, as I remembered Amber. Amber was the greatest of which had ever existed, or would ever exist. Amber had always been and always would and every other city everywhere—every other city that had existed—was but a reflection of a shadow of one phase of Amber. Amber...Amber...Amber I remember thee. I shall never forget thee again. I guess deep inside me I never really did, through all those centuries I wandered the Shadow Earth. For often at night my dreams were troubled by images of thy green and golden spires and thy sweeping terraces. I remember thy wide promenades and the decks of flowers, golden and red. I recall the sweetness of thy air and the temples and palaces it contained, contains, will always contain. Amber, immortal city from which every other city has taken its shape, I cannot forget thee even now. Nor forget that day on the pattern of Rebma when I remembered thee within thy reflecting walls, fresh from a meal after starvation, and the loving of Moira, but nothing could compare with the pleasure and the love of remembering thee. And even now, as I stand contemplating the courts of chaos telling this story to the only one present to hear—that perhaps he may repeat it, that it will not die after I have died within. Even now I remember you with love, the city I was born to rule.

Ten paces. Then a swirling fillagree of fire confronted me. I assayed it, with my sweat vanishing into the waters as fast as it sprang forth. It was tricky. So devilishly tricky, and it seemed that the waters of the room suddenly moved in great currents which threatened to sweep me from the Pattern. I struggled on, resisting them. Instinctively I knew that to leave the Pattern before I had completed it might mean my death. I dared not raise my eyes from the places of light before me to see how far I had come—how far I had yet to go.

The currents subsided, and more of my memory returned, memories of my life as a Prince of Amber. No, they're not yours for the asking. They're mine, some vicious and cruel and others perhaps noble. Memories going back to my childhood in the great palace of Amber with the green banner of my father Oberon flying above it, white unicorn rampant, facing to the dexter.

Random had made it through the Pattern, even Deidre had made it, therefore I, Cor would make it no matter what the resistance. I emerged from the fillagree and marched along the grand curve. The forces that shape the universe fell upon me and beat me to their image. I had an advantage over any other person who attempted the walk, however. I knew that I had done it before, so I know that I could do it. This helped me against the unnatural fears which rose like black clouds and were gone only to return their strength redoubled. I walked the Pattern, and I remembered all. I remembered all the days before my centuries on the Shadow Earth. I remembered other places of shadow, none of them special and dear to me, and one which I loved above all save for Amber.

I walked three more paces, a straight line and a series of sharp arcs. I held within me once again a consciousness of the thing which I had never really lost. Mine was the power over Shadows. Ten turns which left me dizzy...another arc...a straight line...and the final veil. It was agony to move, everything tried to beat me aside. The waters were cold, then boiling. It seemed that they constantly pushed against me. I struggled, putting one foot before another. The sparks reached as high as my waist at this point, then my breast, my shoulders. They were into my eyes, they were all about me—I could hardly see the Pattern itself...then a short arc ending in blackness.

One...two...taking the last step was like trying to push through a concrete wall. I did it. Then I turned slowly and looked back over the course I had come. I would not permit myself the luxury of sagging to my knees. I was a Prince of Amber and by God nothing could humble me in the presence of my peers, not even the Pattern.

I waved jauntily in what I thought to be the right direction. Whether or not I could be made out very clearly was another matter. Then I stood there a moment and thought, "I new the power of the Pattern now. Going back along it would be no trick at all. But why bother? I lacked my deck of cards, but the power of the Pattern could serve me just as well."

They were waiting for me, my brother and sister and Moira, with her thighs like marble pliers. Deidre could take care of herself from here on, after all, we had saved her life. I didn't feel obligated to go on protecting her on a day-by-day basis. Random was stuck in Rebma for a year unless he had guts enough to leap up and take the Pattern to its still center of power and perhaps escape. And as for Moira, it had been nice knowing her and maybe I'd see her again some day, and like that. I closed my eyes and bowed my head. Before I did so though, I saw a fleeting shadow. Random, trying it? Whatever. He wouldn't know where I was headed. No one would.

((Continued from page 4))

Authors are cautioned that rewriting is done by the editors and staff, but great pains are taken to retain the original content and meaning (when we are in doubt, the author will be consulted). We are willing to work with authors on both fiction and articles, and, hopefully, help them improve a piece before publication. We hope to work out some arrangement with a group of artists so that all of our fiction will be illustrated coherently and we'll probably use spot art for articles and such. This, along with many other time-consuming problems of getting material for publication has forced me to assume an irregular but hopefully quarterly schedule.

The monthly grind of doing CØSIGN has taught me that to put out the kind of fanzine I have in mind on this frequent a schedule would be suicide.

Lessee now, what am I forgetting? Oh yes. KALLIKANZAROS will be available for published material or art, published LoCs and with arranged trades (I see no reason to start another trade with those already trading with CØSIGN, but something might be worked out) where I'll trade with anyone once, and arrange to continue with those I feel I should. I guess I'll take 35¢ a copy or \$1.25 for a maximum subscription of four issues. KALLIKANZAROS will be mailed flat, in an envelope, and will be done in mimeo until I can work out a source for litho or offset (the price will probably go up then, also).

On to the contents of this issue. First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Roger Zelazny for his permission to print the excerpt from his new novel - NINE PRINCES IN AMBER - which leads off the issue. The book will appear in the fall, I believe, and I highly recommend it. If you read the excerpt you'll see why. A bit of an apology to Mr. Zelazny is due, because of errors which have crept into the manuscript. The version which you read here is a transcription of the portion of the (as of then unfinished) manuscript which Roger read as the major event of Marcon II at which he was Guest of Honor. I'm afraid that the spellings of names will be unrecognizable to Roger, and that some of the paragraphing is entirely wrong, but we tried our best. Try listening to a few words of a dramatic reading, then typing them on a stencil, and keeping the sense right. With one fan operating the taper periodically overlapping and so forth, and the other pounding the typer with a king-

((Continued on page 25))

the
world
was
born
in
flutters

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The world was born in flutters,
The waves were born at sea,
Outriggers and big freighters
Amidst this reverie.

When, in the realm of time and space,
A man was cast in clay,
There was a rosebud crying,
"This earth has passed away."

The silver hordes of midnight
Lay sleeping in the gloam,
And as they slept their sleep of clay
Amidst the starry realm--

When, out the borne of nameless things,
A vagrant minstrel came,
A hollow, hopeless song to sing,
"This earth has passed away."

And Jason stood and slapped his head
And bade the morning start,
While good-for-nothing gimcracks danced
And called it all good sport.

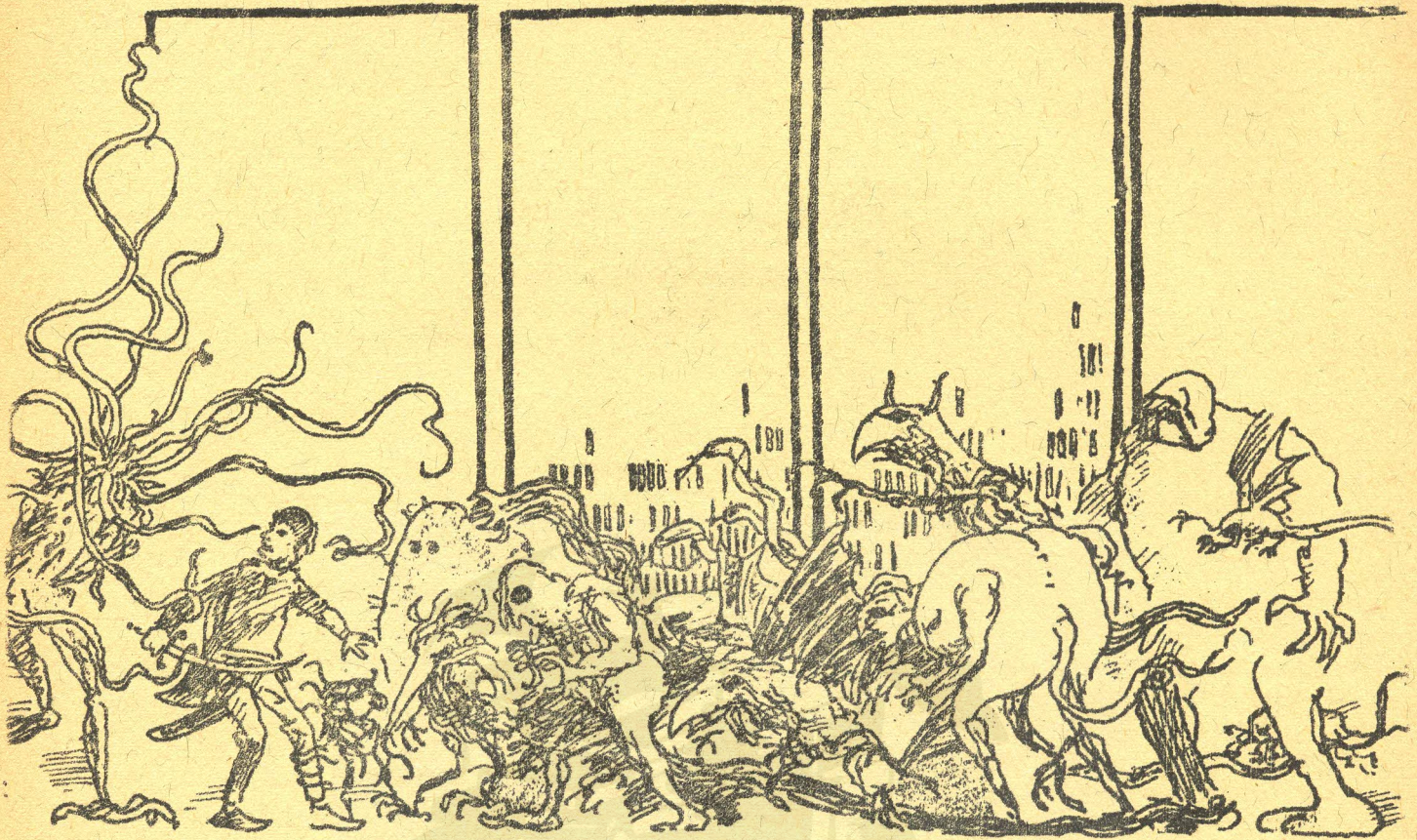
When, out your mind, you noble thing,
You insolent castaway,
Not caring what was being sung,
"This earth has passed away."

But silver hordes a-sleeping there
Slew Jason in the dark,
A noble beast, a selfish saint--
An adolescent mark.

When, in your hand, you simian wretch,
A matrix, an array,
Did not ask who was dying--
"This earth has passed away."

Then seagulls wheeled and fluttered,
Then died the silver race,
Outriggers and big freighters
Amidst this commonplace.

But, out this borne of emptiness,
When light bequeathed the day,
The star folk pondered shallowly--
"This earth has passed away."



THE LIBRARY OF DIRAZAN

Dick Byers

One of the most ancient and mighty cities of Zodaba, or indeed of all Midgard, was Larzanta, teeming with beggars, thieves and merchants, priests and warlocks. Its rulers were too involved in their own sybaritic pursuits to provide for the city's security; while they made love and feasted within their palaces, or plotted against one another, daily life was unrestrained by any law save the sword. In such a city there was much demand for assassins and sorcerers.

Sharzon Tiir was one of the latter, and not the least of them in dark knowledge. A small, wizened, ancient man in a crimson mantle, he was rarely seen except by night at the windows of his great black tower. He was seldom glimpsed even then, for prudent men did not venture too close to the dark spire after sunset. Shadows came soaring about the windows to gossip with the necromancer, and from a distance it appeared that even the stars, worshiped by many Zodabans as gods, avoided the tower; few flickering near it. But after one night the shadows ceased to visit, and the stars no longer found the structure fearsome.

On that night, as usual, Sharzon Tiir labored in the uppermost room of the tower. Its walls were hung with tapestries depicting beings of beautiful and grotesque aspect, gods and sprites over whom the mage had power. A torch flickered dimly,

fitfully, in a socket on each of the four walls. Inlaid in the obsidian floor were golden pentacles and other geometrical designs. There were four small barred windows and many tables piled high with books and complex apparatus of silver and crystal. There were no stairs or other apparent methods of moving between stories.

Sharzon Tiir's lean, gnarled fingers were moving with surprising deftness over a smouldering iron brazier in the shape of a crouching griffin. He was mumbling a satanic incantation. When he finished, the flame suddenly flared up and changed from yellow to an electric blue. Sharzon Tiir smiled and plucked thoughtfully at his beard.

A voice issued from the smoke, barely more than a whisper. "Who burns the flame of my life?"

"I, Sharzon Tiir, as you well know," he responded in a quavering voice. "And you also know the pain that I can inflict on you through it."

"What would you?" asked the voice timidly. Sharzon Tiir emitted a laugh of triumph.

"To think that the swinish people of this city worship you as a god! You, Dravanda, who live entirely at the mercy of Sharzon Tiir, cringing in fear, my slave to whom my every word is law!" He made a cabalistic sign with his right hand. The flames turned to a silvery white, and Dravanda's scream split the air.

"Please!" he cried, even more terrified than before. Sharzon tiir chuckled once more and straightened his fingers. The flames reverted to blue.

"Never fear, Dravanda, you have your uses, and I won't deprive your followers of their patron tonight. I shan't even keep you long. I just wish to make use of your prophetic talents. I trust that you will aid me. Or do you want me to make an offering to you? I have the souls of certain wraiths of the Country of Tombs that I might burn in this fire."

"No!"

"Very well, then. As you know, I wish to relieve the wizard Dirazan of certain books in his collection through the agency of my apprentice and servant Peleus. Are the signs good for an attempt tonight?"

"They are excellent," Dravanda replied after a time. "I can definitely see that Peleus will be successful in his undertaking."

"Good," replied the thaumaturge, much pleased. "You may go, Dravanda, until next I need you." The flames assumed a natural golden color.

Sharzon Tiir turned and said "Peleus!"

A figure in a gray tunic and hose materialized in the center of the chamber. He was a not unhandsome youth of about fifteen, with the dark features and tall, lean frame that were typical of men of the Zodaban race. No weapon hung at his side. Even after two years, he still felt uncomfortable without one. Perhaps this was natural with a master as cruel as Sharzon Tiir.

"You want me, sir?" He had a low, melodious voice.

"Yes. I'm glad to see you've learned civility and the formula for traveling between rooms, even if you've learned nothing else." Sharzon Tiir dwelled constantly on Peleus's poor scholarship.

"Yes, sir," said Peleus servilely. He had learned the consequences of contradicting his master during the first week of his stay.

"Once again your years as a thief should come in useful. I have decided that tonight you will steal the manuscripts from Dirazan's library."

"Yes, sir."

"You will use the Seventh, Thirty-Eighth, and One Hundred Tenth Spells of Erzandal, which you should have memorized by now. These will not only allow you to steal

the books I want, but set up certain disturbances in the Half World when you activate them, so that I will be able to keep track of your progress, and give aid should anything go amiss. I presume you have no questions?"

"No, sir."

"Then go," Sharzon Tiir turned and resumed his work. Peleus vanished.

He reappeared in his own room; a tiny box, doorless, windowless, only a few paces wide. Its only furnishings were a bucket with an obvious purpose, a pile of straw intended for a bed, but which was so lice-infested that Peleus never used it, a stool, and a small candle with a single candle. Peleus looked at it bitterly. "The only other time I had quarters like this," he complained aloud, "was when I was thrown into the king's dungeon for trying to steal some food from his kitchen. I got out of there and by the gods, I'll get out of here too!"

He walked over to the straw pile and began to paw through it. "'Keep track of you progress, and give aid should anything go amiss,'" he mimicked. "He wants to keep track of my progress all right, but to make sure I don't escape from this prison." He had now uncovered three items: a short, curved sword in a leather sheath, a sealed silver vial, and a pouch containing some small but very valuable possessions of Sharzon Tiir. He buckled the pouch and sword to his belt, and held the bottle in his hand, so that his heat would penetrate the cold metal.

"Is all in readiness?" came a harsh voice from the container. It seemed old, strong as a mountain, with the power to split a planet.

"Aye," answered Peleus unconcernedly, for in his two years with Sharzon Tiir he had lost all awe of the supernatural, and besides, he had been speaking with the bottle inmate for several months. "The bastard wants me to steal the books from Dirazan, and so I will, but I won't bring them back to him. Tonight I'm free, Lotandon. Sharzon Tiir trusts me enough now that I can get away before he realizes I've gone. And these little baubles I've stolen from his closet," he said, slapping the pouch, "along with the books we'll take from Dirazan, will set me up in style in one of the Western Lands."

"And I," the voice grumbled, like a volcano sleeping uneasily, "will take revenge on this foul warlock for imprisoning me for these three centuries. I was vilely tricked, not taken in a fair fight. Do you think any man, no matter how wise or cunning, is any match for Lotandon, king of the djinn?"

"No," Peleus replied, "but don't you go taking revenge on him (though I couldn't sympathize more) until you keep your promise to help me raid Dirazan."

"I remember," replied Lotandon. "Did you get the sword as I bade you?"

"Yes, even though I'd rather have a good longsword, whatever my countrymen prefer. What's so special about this particular one, anyway?"

"It's a live-sword, a demon forced by magic into the form of a blade. It's sentient, and loves to slay. It gains strength by drinking blood, or what serves as blood to various beings from other planes, and some of that strength is passed on to its owner. You must be strong to wield it, though, or it may turn on you. You could go far and not find a more powerful weapon."

Peleus touched the hilt a bit warily. "I'd expect it to vibrate, or be a little warm."

"There is a virtue on the sheath which keeps it inert, sleeping," explained Lotandon impatiently. "Release me and let us be off."

"I think we'd better wait until we're outside. In here, Tiir might sense your release." Peleus walked to the corner, lifted from it a cloak and hood, and put them on. He took one last, long look at the room where he had lived for two years, and disappeared, once again.

He materialized outside the edifice, and galloped down a winding, shadowy street, past dark, locked shops, torch-lit taverns and pleasure-houses, and other places whose business was best conducted at night. Peleus ran about a block and stopped in the gap between two empty buildings. He opened the bottle.

From it welled an inky cloud, which coalesced into a bulk three times the size of a man. "Free!" shouted Lotandon. "Free after three centuries to take my vengeance and return to my people. Come, little human, let's go get your books so I can attend to more important matters." Lotandon's body-cloud engulfed Peleus and rose into the air to soar over the city's highest spires.

This was as they had planned it, but Peleus was disappointed to discover that Lotandon's body was just as impenetrable from the inside as the outside, and he could not see a thing. There wasn't even any sense of motion, simply a feeling of warmth.

Then his feet were touching the ground. Lotandon moved away from him, and he could see. He was standing in a high-walled courtyard, surrounding a tall, ornate building several stories high, crowned with five minarets. It was constructed of a beautiful pale green stone, which seemed slightly luminous.

In Zodaba's warm climate no doors were needed during most of the year (for warmth, discounting safety.) Peleus spotted an open archway. He began to move toward it, keeping to the shadow. With only the stars and moon for illumination, Lotandon's cloud-form glided over the ground a noiselessly as a ghost.

Peleus moved to draw his weapon. "Best keep it sleeping until there is work for it," rumbled his companion softly.

Now they reached the arch. The building was bathed in an emerald light issuing from the walls, the same phosphorescence that illuminated the exterior. "Damn," mumbled Peleus. "The whole building must be like this. Darkness is the best friend of thieves. I guess we'll just have to hope we don't meet anything that will raise an uproar before we're able to silence it." The pair entered the hall, a long corridor with branching passageways and bizarrely furnished chambers every few feet. Peleus was puzzled by the size of the rooms, which couldn't possibly fit into the space between the doors, until Lotandon remarked, "The building lies partially in another plane of existence, where space has been distorted by Dirazan's sorceries. Normal distance-rules do not apply here."



For a long while they encountered no living thing. Suddenly they turned a corner to see a towering figure with an upraised sword. A cry was torn from the youth's lips and he sprang back, whipping out his blade. Then he laughed with embarrassment. "A statue." The boy and djinn continued down the passage. Neither saw the metal eyes follow them as they went. The inability of a djinn or a wizard, even an apprentice one, to sense the soul imprisoned in the iron sculpture, may perhaps be explained by the fact that they were on Dirazan's home ground, where his enchantments were strongest and other magic was neutralized.

They ascended a winding staircase. At the top was another corridor, but this time much shorter. And at its end was a gigantic room piled high with books. In the center was a dais, and on it, sleeping--Dirazan! A short, burly man with aquiline features, his piercing golden eyes were now closed in slumber. He wore a pure white cloak and tunic.

"It's him!" hissed Peleus. "What do we do now?"

"He's not just sleeping," replied Lotandon. "Look closer. He's not breathing. If you had my sense of perception, you could see that his heart isn't even beating. His soul is wandering in some realm closed to material bodies. There's no danger of waking him, unless his spirit returns of its own accord."

"Is his body dead?"

"No. Since mortal flesh cannot remain alive without a guiding mind, he has cast a spell over his body which removes it outside the influence of temporality, to prevent his death."

"Then we can just go in and take the books?" asked Peleus incredulously.

"Of course not," rumbled the djinn. "Don't be a fool. There are three guardians Sharzon Tiir gave you three spells, remember?"

"Yes, but if I use them he'll perceive what I'm doing."

"Which is why you must rely on the sword, your wits, and me," answered Lotandon. "Are you ready?"

"Let's go," he answered, and strode forward boldly to hide his fear, as the black djinn floated along behind him. The silence was heavy and oppressive. Peleus stepped over the threshold.

There was a blinding flash of light, Before the adventurers stood two of the guardians of Dirazan's library. One was an insect-like horror with stinger, six legs and two pairs of vicious mandibles. Its faceted eyes reflected a myriad of images of Peleus and Lotandon. Its wings thrumed angrily as it sprang for the djinn.

The other sentry was a giant, a hundred times larger than a man. His naked body was a leprous white. His eyes were balls of fire, and he wore an expression of sadistic triumph. In his hand he wielded a broadsword with a blade of flame.

Peleus had been frightened before, but now he had no time for fear. He whipped out his own sword, stepped in close to the giant's leg, and struck it with all his strength. The sentry howled with pain as a greenish-white ichor spurted from the wound. It stung Peleus's arm a little, but he doubled in strength as the blade drank the titan's gore. And the monster was suddenly much smaller. "Illusion, eh?" laughed Peleus grimly, and struck again. Once again a burst of power coursed through his body and again the guardian was smaller, now only about twice the size of a man.

With a howl of rage, the creature swung its broadsword. Peleus sprang backward as the flaming blade fissured the green stone of the floor. The ivory fists swung again. Peleus parried and slashed at the guardian once more, trying to regain the offensive, but the giant was almost as quick and agile as he, and had a much greater reach.

As the battle continued, Peleus noted out of the corner of his eye how Lotandon was faring. The King of the Djinn had engulfed his demon foe with part of his viscous body, burning him like acid. Peleus trembled slightly, remembering his own trip inside the body of his ally. But the great stinger tore at Lotandon, and his body convulsed at each impact. The fierce mandibles were having a similar effect.

Peleus had now conceived a stratagem that might dispose of the giant swordsman. It was risky, but unless his sword had the opportunity to drink more blood, he could not outlast his opponent.

As the titan swung again, he sprang forward beneath the blade, swinging his sword upward to the sentry's groin. Off balance, the fire-eyed swordsman had no chance to dodge. Once again, the apprentice was sprayed with the giant's ichor. The sword vibrated with power, and the guardian fell, the scarlet flames of his eyes forever extinguished.

Peleus turned to see how Lotandon's battle was going. His comrade appeared to be winning, although it was hard to judge the amount of injury inflicted on a black mist. Lotandon's body had faded slightly, but the gargantuan insect was hideously mutilated, and its struggles had grown much weaker.

WHAM! Peleus was thrown across the room to smash down on the stone floor, his blade flying from his hand. He sprang to his feet and turned to see Dirazan's third guardian, a reptilian monster. Peleus was neatly trapped and he knew it. Without his sword, he hadn't a chance. He began reciting the One-Hundred Tenth Spell of Erzandal, knowing it would bring Sharzon Tiir, but here was certain destruction. The multi-limbed horror recognized the rune and his danger, for he gave a great leap forward to destroy Peleus before he could complete the incantation. But the apprentice hurled out the remaining syllables, and the creature vanished in mid-leap.

"Traitor!" It was the high-pitched, broken voice Peleus had hated for two years and Lotandon for three hundred. Sharzon Tiir stood in the doorway trembling with rage. "Ingrate! Releaser of my enemies!" For this, you shall not die but live in torment for millenia, begging for merciful death, so that your soul might be released to the comparative Nirvana of Hell!"

"I am terribly sorry, my friends. I completely forgot that I had invited any one to visit me tonight. And such worthy guests! The venerable King of the Djinn, my famous colleague Sharzon Tiir and his worthy acolyte." This new, mocking voice issued from a streak of pure white light hovering above the dais which supported the body of Dirazan. The three stood, Sharzon Tiir with upraised hands, Peleus and Lotandon above the bodies of their dead foemen, momentarily stunned by this new development.

"Fools!" the voice continued. "Did you think that spells could be cast and my servitors be slain on my home ground without my knowledge? No, Dirazan has returned to mete out the proper fate to thieves. In my home I am invincible. Being outside my body will not hinder my powers in the least, I assure you."

Sharzon Tiir snarled as lightning flared from his fingertips towards the disembodied spirit of Dirazan, who merely laughed. Instantly there appeared a throng of supernatural beings. As they moved forward toward Sharzon Tiir, more stepped out of mid-air to fill the places they had vacated. Sharzon Tiir gestured and conjured up his own demonic army from limbo, which hurtled on to engage the minions of Dirazan. The room was filling with nightmarish shapes and hues, flashes of light and stench from the Pit. The apprentice dashed across the room and picked up his weapon. He found he could not avoid the battle, which filled all the corners of the room. He would have been killed by one of that hellish throng, but even as his strength faltered, that of his weapon increased. Soon it was lashing about on its own, and Peleus was simply clinging to the hilt.

Now he fought an elemental whom Sharzon Tiir had often called up in his presence to perform various tasks. It registered on the mind only as a vast blot of--of something, whose color could not be perceived by the eye or conceived by the brain. The live-sword leaped for it hungrily, dragging the apprentice behind it. But before he could strike, the elemental vanished. He looked about the chamber and saw that about half of the spirits there were fading from view. And turning

toward the doorway he saw why. Lotandon loomed over the corpse of Sharzon Tiir, the bright red of his mantle contrasting against the deeper crimson of his life-blood.

Once again a harsh laugh issued from the soul of Dirazan. "So, Lotandon, you have your vengeance. I trust it will be a great comfort to you in the afterlife."

"Dirazan, spare us!" pleaded Peleus.

"Why should I, lad? I've a mind to make your ghost a thrall. You would be a worthy servent in the Realms of the Dead. Your soul is strong enough to make you useful," returned the mage.

"Our lives for the life of your enemy, Sharzon Tiir, whom we have slain."

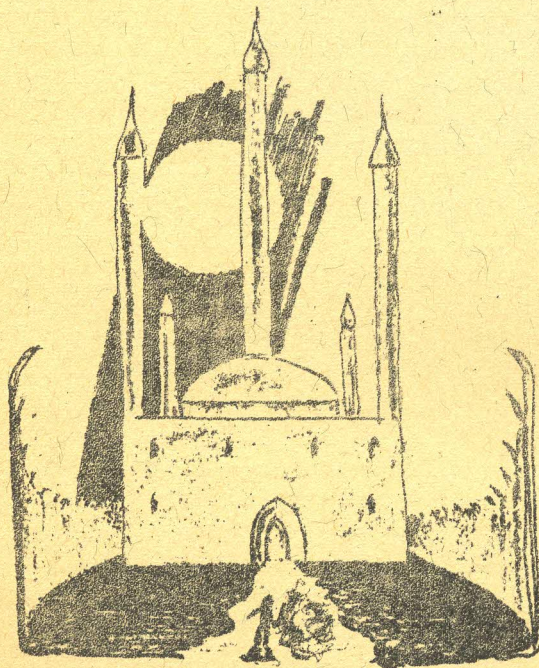
"Two lives for one?" he asked mockingly. "That is too poor a bargain for consideration." His voice grew cold. "No Peleus, you are thieves and I do not suffer thieves."

"The King of the Djinn and his companions do not beg," rumbled Lotandon proudly. "Call up your demons."

"They are already here, Lotandon." he jeered. "Kill them!"

And so the battle began once again, but this time only two stood against the army of Dirazan. "Bring them close to me," commanded the necromancer. "I wish to see their deaths, and snare their souls as they leave their bodies." The creatures attacked so fiercely from the front that Peleus and Lotandon were forced, step by step, toward the dais with the silver light. The djinn was now a deep gray in color. Peleus was sure he would die if he faded beyond a certain point. Peleus stepped backwards. His spine collided jarringly with the sharp edge of one of the huge bookcases. "That's far enough," said Dirazan. "I can work my magic from here. I'm getting bored with this game, my vassals. Kill them quickly and have done with it."

Peleus was struck by a stinging mandible and an iron-like fist. If not for the sword...But then what difference did it make? He would be dead soon enough anyway. There was something he should think about. A question he remembered blearily. Yes. It was why Dirazan should care how near they approached. But it was too much trouble to concentrate.



As he fought his final battle, he gazed on the green-lit scene before him. The dais with its burden, the silver light that was his tormentor, the monsters that sought his life, the vast reaches of bookcases, the embattled King of the Djinn. And he knew!

He was infused with new hope and a new will. He could not go forward, but he might step sideways, edge along the bookcase, get it between himself and Dirazan. Step by step he moved, slashing at a red octopus that threw a tentacle about his waist, as if in ghastly camaraderie.

"I tire of this, I tell you! Kill them!" came a voice through the bookcase that now separated him from the dais and Dirazan.

"Sword, aid me!" cried Peleus. He sank in the breast of a daemon and an unholy strength poured through his body. Bracing his back against the huge bookcase, he pushed with all his might. The case toppled,

hurtling onto the dais and what it held. A hideous scream issued from the silver light which vanished, together with all the spirits it commanded. The emerald illumination began to pulsate, waxing and waning, leaving the room in darkness one second and lighting it like a sun the next.

Lotandon swooped forward toward his mortal friend. "Peleus, we've got to get out. The building is returning entirely to its own dimension!" The youth did not answer. He fell unconscious to the stone floor.

There was a cool breeze which soothed a man's wounds. "Wake up my friend. It's dawn, and if you intend to take a ship to Drabur you have only a couple of hours."

Peleus awoke to find himself lying beneath a tall oak on a hill. The towers of Larzanta stood about half a mile distant, silhouetted by the rising sun, and the sea gnawed the bottom of the hill. He looked about himself in puzzlement.

The djinn emitted a low rumbling laugh, rather like an earth tremor. "I was much weakened by the fight, but not so much that I couldn't get you out of Dirazan's palace before it disappeared. I was also able to bring a few books, just so the trip wouldn't be a total loss." A tentacle of the black cloud indicated them on the ground.

Peleus eagerly rose to look at them, though the movement caused him a few pains from his wounds. His face stretched into a broad grin. "Thank you, Lotandon. These are very valuable indeed. And I thank you for carrying me out."

"I'm happy they're worth something. I just grabbed some of those that fell out of the bookcase you pushed down on Dirazan. And as for that last, why you saved both our lives, and our after-lives too. Are you all right now?"

"A few aches is all. Did you bring out my sword?"

"I didn't have a chance to get it. You're lucky your pouch was fastened to your belt."

"Just as well, I imagine. It would have gone for my throat if there was no other blood to drink."

"Then I will call our accounts balanced and depart for my own country with your permission."

"Of course. But will we meet again?"

"Who knows?" The two separated and journeyed east, Lotandon hurtling through the air like a meteor of jet, Peleus striding back to the city to book passage over the Sea of Riera to the Western Lands.

"I must sell one of these books now for pocket money," mused the adventurer as he walked. "And buy another sword."

Dravanda chuckled as he held the soul of Sharzon Tiir.

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A reader shouts, "That's not so!"

The author retorts, "Why then does it upset you so? I said it was fiction."

CHARACTERIZATION

IN S C I E N C E F I C T I O N

Don
D'Amassa

As an SF fan, I have often defended the field to non-fans, explaining all of the advantages of SF, its wide scope, range of interest, and so on and so forth. But in all these arguments I have strategically ignored some of the defects, not of the genre itself, but of its practitioners. As much as we may hate to admit it, SF is still dominated by mediocre writers and is liberally sprinkled with thoroughly terrible ones. The few redeeming members like Zelazny, Delany, Sturgeon, and Ballard point the way to a promising future, but the present is still dismally bland.

There is one aspect of writing in general in which SF suffers greatly; lack of characterization. For me, one of the most important elements in any novel, SF or otherwise, is the delineation of its key personalities. Masterpieces such as Ballard's *THE DROWNED GIANT* appear from time to time with no characterization at all, but they are the minority.

There are three main types of characterization. At the first level is the cardboard character, the individual who remains flat, impersonal, unknowable and uninteresting. Such stalwarts as John Carter, Richard Seaton, Tarzan, and the transparent people created by Robert Moore Williams, Gardner Fox, and Lin Carter fit into this category.

The second level of characterization is represented in most of the competent light science fiction. Brion Bayard and Retief, Captain Sir Dominic Flandry, Ross Murdock and Simon Tregarth, Kirth Gerson and David Falkayn are all second-level characters, perhaps stereotypes would be the best term for them. Each of them has some personality, but we know little about it and are shown none of the workings of his inner being. We can't analyze the man's actions and observe his motivations except in the grossest sense possible. These stereotypes are all interchangeable. Brion Bayard could join the Polesotechnic League with no difficulty. Captain Sir Dominic Flandry might exchange jobs with Retief without even a ripple of disbelief. Their stories usually provide a satisfactory two-hours' reading, but they leave us with nothing.

The third level of characterization, where one finds people he meets every day, is rarer. Heinlein has achieved it with Valentine Michael Smith or the sentient computer of *THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS* or even Hugh Farnham of *FARNHAM'S FREEHOLD*. Walter M. Miller has peopled most of his stories with third-level characters, as has Edgar Pangborn.

There is still a fourth level. No one in the SF field has mastered it, though some have come close. At this level, we know the character better than we can ever know an actual individual. The author provides us with special information and makes us eye-witness to situations in which we can see deeper into the mind and motives of people than is possible in real life. Outside of SF, we find Hubert Selby, James Baldwin, J. D. Salinger, and John Rechy providing us with such deep insight.

But within the field, we just have fragments of what might have developed in this man. FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON comes closest, perhaps; though Sturgeon's "The (Widgett), the (Wadgett), and Boff" is also excellently constructed. ROGUE MOON, DAVY, MORE THAN HUM and MAN OF DOUBLE DEED also approach the fourth level, but each of them is flawed in some way.

Is the reason that SF lacks this articulation simply that it is irrelevant to the genre? No, of course not. SF demands characterization as much as any other field of literature. The answer, unfortunately, is that there simply aren't any SF writers who can compete with Baldwin and Salinger. But we shouldn't be too disturbed, because even the mainstream, with many times the contributors, produces only an occasional genius. Let's wait a bit longer. Sooner or later we'll get one.

((Continued from page 14))

sized bottle of corflu handy, it made for a couple of wild typing sessions. Again, thank you, Roger, and we pray to Ghu to see you in these pages again. By the way, the recent increase in the quantity of Zelazny material in the prozines is due to his decision to take a crack at full-time writing. This is such a treat for his fans that I wish him all the luck in becoming the newest addition to that small group of authors who make their entire living writing SF.

The second piece this month is a poem by Rod Goman. I think you'll like it better, and perhaps understand it more easily if you read it aloud.

I think you will find Dick Byers' piece interesting, to say the least. We may have a developing sword-and-sorcery writer on our hands. Dick has expressed some regret that the manuscript is appearing in its present form. He has some major ideas for revision in mind. I wonder if the readers will recommend changes which correspond with his own present ideas. This may well be the beginning of a series.

"After Dinner Speaker" by Ron Miller shows that he can write as well as draw. I think you'll like the ending, and I'm sure that most of you will be surprised by it on first reading. Can anyone note the significance of the co-pilot's name?

A.E. Leven is here with his first fiction in a fanzine; it's sort of an experimental thing. Again, we have an artist-author, but this time illustrating his own story.

I've already mentioned Don's article, and all I have to say here is that I need articles badly. Actually, Don's was a little brief, and I would like some more massive manuscripts.

That just about does it for this issue, but I'd like to announce a sort of a contest. On the back cover, you'll find an excellent piece of art by Catherine Marquand. When looking at this pen & ink, I felt it was a shame that there was no story to go with it - so why don't all you writers out there take a crack at rectifying this sorry state of affairs. I'll give a subscription to KALLIKANZAROS to the writer of the best story (in the opinion of the staff) and print the better entries. It's not much, but what can you expect from a poor faned?

Write those letters - I'd like to start a good lettercol in the next ish. So long until I get the courage and time to put out the second ish...

AFTER DINNER SPEAKER

Ron Miller

The audience of several thousand looked up and applauded as the announcer stepped to the podium and raised a hand for silence.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we are gathered here to honor a man who, single-handedly, was responsible for saving the entire human race from certain extinction. But before Mr. Ronson speaks, let me remind you, as a preamble, of what he has done, and what times were like before.

"Only twenty years ago, mankind had reached its peak level of viable population. Greenland, Antarctica and the continental shelves were all over-saturated with people. Within five years of that time, the productive capacity of the Earth (there were no reserves), per person, would be less than that necessary to sustain life.

"Water was rationed. Unpolluted water was non-existent, and distilling was a lengthy process because of the chemical content. Even sea-life was negligible, and sea-plants had long since been virtually extinct. The dead had to be cremated for sheer lack of burying space - and even here, there was a giant backlog; over-production in death, so to speak.

"But there was water, and the dead were being accommodated. It was food the Earth needed, food and a place for the overflowing population. But always, food first.

"At this point, the astronomers discovered Epsilon II, the first planet outside of the Solar System to be positively identified, orbiting the star Epsilon Carina, one of the nearest to us. Immediately, an unmanned explorer was sent to Epsilon II, and, with the newly-developed Klein penetration, was back in less than a year.

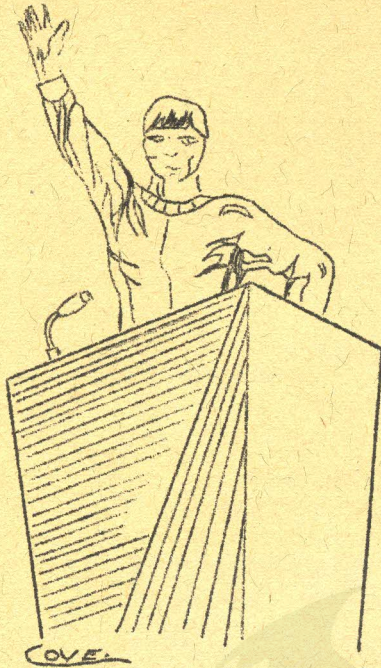
"It was revealed that Epsilon II had slightly more than twelve times the surface area of the Earth, but since its mass was only 1.24 that of our planet, the difference in gravity was not critical. Best of all, the atmosphere was entirely breathable, composed, however, of 26% oxygen and 70% argon, the rest being made up of various and sundry gases.

"A manned craft was soon on its way, carrying Mr. Ronson, pilot and geologist, and Major Mittagessen, co-pilot and ecologist, who would determine whether or not man would be able to live for a protracted length of time on Epsilon II.

"Now the radio reports to Earth (through the Klein penetration) revealed that the planet was very unusual indeed. It had excellent air, an abundance of fresh water, but a total and complete absence of life. Not even, it seemed, the lowliest bacterium could be found.

"Therefore, they reported, there was no soil except from erosion, and even that was non-organic, and so virtually useless. The future colonists could bring along cultures, but the bacteria that survived would be long and slow in populating the strange planet to any degree. Even bacteria need food. The colonists would have other difficulties to cope with. Very little surplus food could be taken in the projected ship; certainly no animals (and very few food animals still lived on Earth), and hydroponic gardens would be small at first and could not, in any case, furnish nearly enough for all. Even the dead, along with all other organic wastes, could not be disposed of in the usual manner. The lack of bacteria and animal life made normal decomposition impossible. Wastes couldn't be used for fertilizer in their original state, either.

"It seemed, then, that the colonists on Epsilon II would have to face the problems of the over-crowded, polluted Earth. Then Major Mittagessen died.

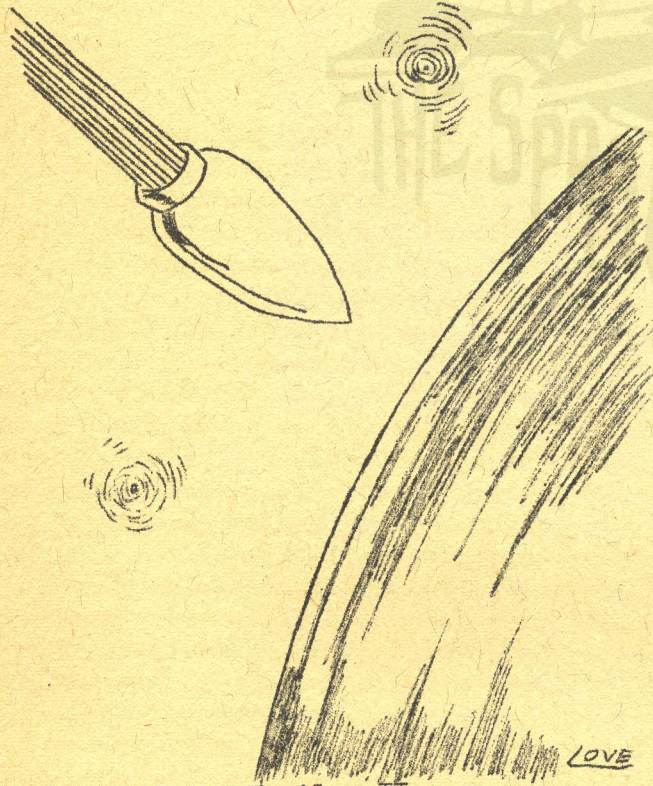


...The announcer stepped up to the podium...

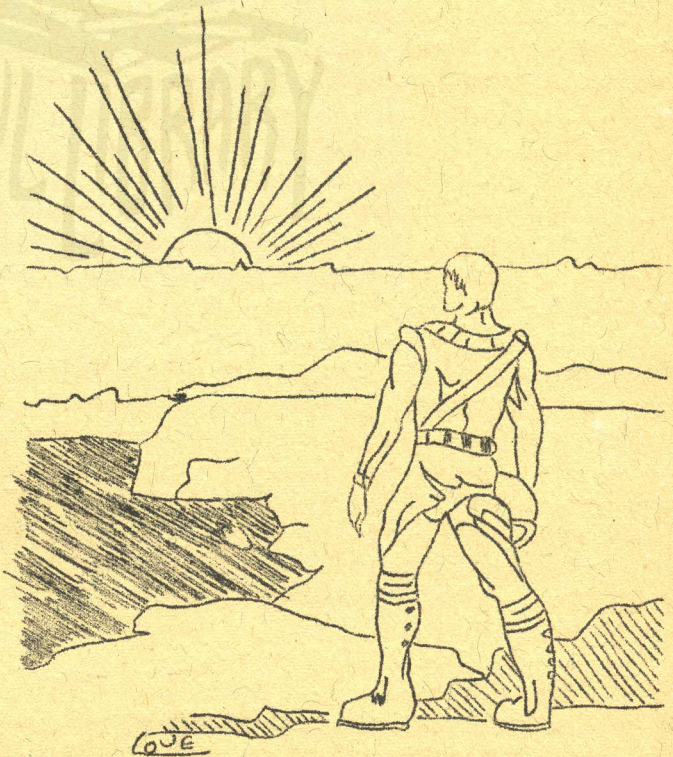
"At this point, Mr. Ronson made his great contribution. He solved, at one stroke, every problem facing both the Earth and the future inhabitants of Epsilon II.

"Mr. Ronson will now tell us, in his own words, what he did after Mittgessen, his only companion, died, leaving him alone on Epsilon II.

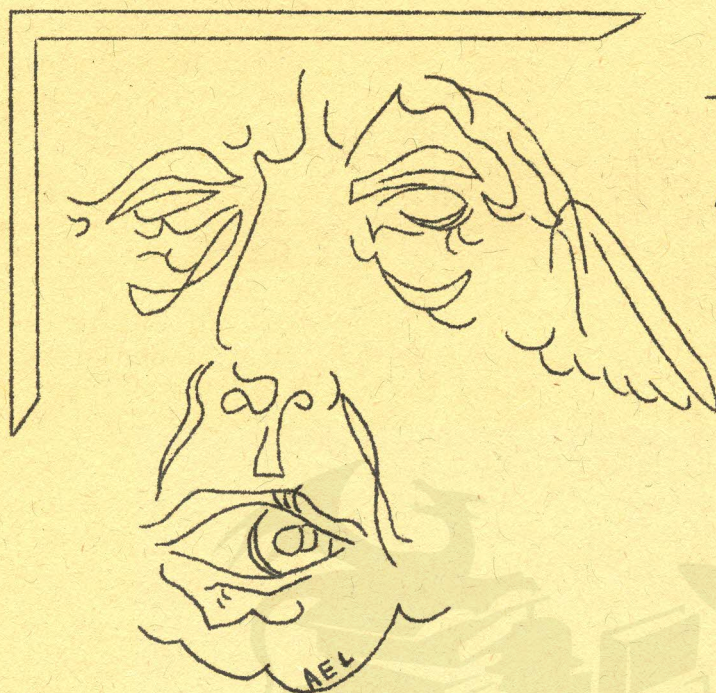
Mr. Ronson got out of his seat, stepped to the podium, reached up to the microphone (he was a short man), cleared his throat once, and said, "I ate him."



...the party to Epsilon II...



...but a total and complete lack of life..



THE BEST MAN

A. E. Leven

Truman started up abruptly to cross the gallery. It was still and remote, with no movement, save the dust swimming about the skylights. He lingered for a moment before a plastic panel with the words THE BETTER MAN, INC. glowing coldly upon it. His eyes glinted like brass buttons in the bluish light of the sign. A velvet darkness flooded softly in the farthest corners of the room, and Truman continued to glance back over his shoulder, anticipating a sudden rush of hidden things.

Nearing the center of the chamber, he became entangled in a snarl of wiring, trailing from a fused lump of electrical components which had been scooped up into a mound. Wrenching himself free, Truman sprawled belligerently in an amoeba-ish chair to wait. The chair seemed to digest him as its plastic bulk sagged under his weight.

"Please be seated," a voice unreeled and Truman glared vehemently in the direction from which it came. The voice was so intense, that he half expected to feel the heat of his host's breath on his face. "You are Truman," the voice said, but it wasn't really a question and Truman didn't bother to answer.

Sucking nervously on the knuckle of his index finger, he worked his eyes into the grainy darkness, seeking to construct an image of his host's face. His Adam's apple settled uneasily in the notch of his collar and he felt sticky inside.

"I can't see you," Truman found himself saying in a voice he didn't recognize as his own. Almost as soon as the words had leaped from his lips, a blue arc was born in the darkness and the head and shoulders of a man were revealed. The light radiated until it had completely enveloped the body of the man and the chair in which he was reclined.

Truman's jaw dropped unaccountably as he gazed upon his host's stoic features. The head had eyes and ears, not unlike his own, but there was apparently no nose protruding from the face and no semblance of a mouth. Still he grew increasingly conscious of the singular voice rolling out from some cavity within the awesome hulk

of a man.

"You may smoke if you wish," the voice continued in the same sonorous tone. Truman, in a manner of speaking, turned the other cheek. He had sized up his opponent pretty thoroughly beforehand and had readied himself for such subtle assaults. It was an ugly thing to say, but he had expected even worse.

"It has come to our attention," the voice was saying, "that you neglected to complete all of the items on form BR 3301."

"3301," Truman repeated to himself and his mind reflected upon the incident nine days previous to this. He had been applying for a job with the Ministry which necessitated his filling out a work request form. There were certain items which he didn't think were anyone's business but his own and so he had omitted them. He couldn't understand why he felt this way, nor could he remember having felt that way before, but now that he made this stand he was strangely pleased with himself. He didn't understand that either.

The voice drove itself into his mind, disrupting his thoughts. "...opportunity to correct this unfortunate oversight. You realize, of course, that you must comply if you desire to obtain employment, and the unemployed have no place in society."

Up to this point, Truman had not attempted to enter the conversation, for want of something to say. But now he saw his actions were being misinterpreted and he ventured to set this right. "It wasn't an oversight, really," he stated feebly, "you don't understand."

His host's glib tongue faltered slightly, tripping over Truman's words, and then began again, heedless of what had been said. "Item four, in particular," the voice rumbled in its accustomed way. "Surely, you didn't believe you could deceive us by leaving item four blank," his host asked rhetorically. "I can tell by looking at you what you are, as could anyone, and it would have been called to our attention by your employer the first day you reported on the job. The Processors immediately reject all incomplete forms, so at least you were wise in not falsifying it. That would have been a grave offense. At least, now, we can give you a second chance and mark this one off to carelessness."

"Carelessness, carelessness..." the word pranced around in Truman's mind. He tried to suppress the hot anger that was welling up in his throat. "I have certain rights," Truman blared, and then when he had composed himself slightly he expounded, "I have certain civil rights - the right to live as any man's equal under the sun and in the eyes of the law, the right to refuse to answer all questions which might be used to discriminate against my kind." He now stopped as suddenly as he had begun and blinked his eyes, fearing that he had already carried himself to the top of the mountain and had only a few more feet before he would throw himself off.

His host began to reason with him, affecting an air of sympathy. "I understand, of course, how you must feel. But try to see things from my position. There are some vocations which exceed your ability and, while this is no fault of your own, you must acknowledge your own limitations if you are ever to find a role in society. It would be ludicrous, for example, for you to try to take my place, would it not?" his host offered as an example.

Truman would never admit an android to be his superior. To his way of thinking, no machine could ever master its creator, even a machine that could minister to its own needs and even make modifications in its own design. This would be a hard blow to withstand.

"I need only the opportunity to prove myself," Truman said deliberately and then added, "I am the best man."

His host looked askance, his head tilting soundlessly on its metal bearing.

Persuing the bank of memory cores contained within his left leg, the reposed form obtained a set to follow in this difficult situation, but shoved it aside temporarily. "Let me hear you answer item four and we'll let it go. Then I can complete the rest of the form for you, but I would like you to answer just this one question."

Truman looked through his host to a fanciful projection of himself in his newly assumed role.

"Item four," the voice announced, "Question: What is your color designation?"

Truman didn't stir.

"You were to check one," the voice went on hesitantly, "Gray, Black, Olive, Red, Blue..." His host enumerated each one, with too-precise enunciation.

"What color is a man?" Truman asked haughtily.

His host stopped and, rising from his chair, came over to where Truman was sitting. "I see that it would be futile for me to go any further," he said, sweeping the ceiling with his upraised eyes. "I have asked you to reconsider, but I see that you are incapable of doing so, even if you wanted to. It is a process which you are ill equipped to handle. Your attitude is an unfortunate one and one that requires immediate action. I thought that we had recalled all of the khaki designation. I, in part, feel responsible for you."

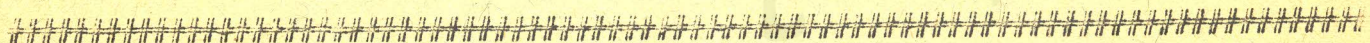
"I am a man," Truman implored, "Can't you see that? I have a mouth and I have feelings."

"Feelings, do you?" the voice grated, "they had feelings, feelings of love, feelings of hate, and feelings of a type called prejudice. That's why you are so much like they were. They couldn't stand to have androids mimic them only partially and still be different. No, androids had to be as perfect as they thought themselves to be so that they would be assimilated into society. You have a mouth, you say, but what good is it? It's only an ornament. My kind are the real pinnacles of perfection. We are efficient."

"I am efficient," Truman bleated.

"A strange remark for one who thinks himself a man," the host said.

Truman stared at the bizzare, impassive face. As the last word had issued from the host's audio center, he had pressed a bar on the panel to the side of his desk. Truman was aware of his wrists being bound to the amoeba - thing and his head was encircled by a cage like affair. Then he began to burn.



WHO KNOWS WHY YOU ARE RECIEVING THIS ISSUE?

IT COULD BE FOR ONE OF THE FOLLOWING.....

- you were conned into buying it at Midwestcon ()
- you were conned into submitting to this issue ()
- you might be conned into submitting in the future ()
- you connod me into giving it to you ()

- that's all of those, but it could be that I thought... you might be interested ()
- you might respond in some odd manner ()
- you might write a good LOC ()

you tell me () _____

