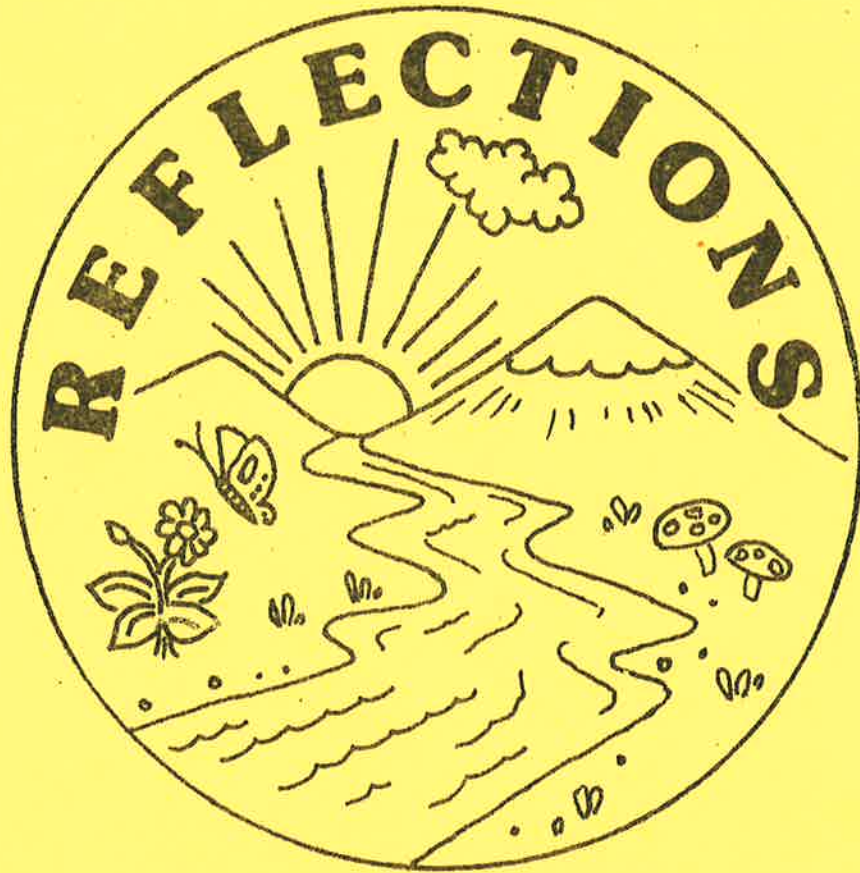


REFLECTIONS

77-78



Thomas Jefferson Junior High School
1650 West 22nd Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97405

REFLECTIONS

Ninth Edition

1977-1978

Reflections is the Thomas Jefferson Junior High School literary magazine consisting of essays, poems, short stories, and illustrations written and drawn by the students.

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Dedicated to
Miss Atwood
of Atlund Press
in appreciation
for
her invaluable assistance and advice.

We, the staff, also
wish to thank
Nancy Eimstad and Jeff Hanson
for their assistance.

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WORLD WAR II



AIRBORNE

Sergeant Steven "Butch" Anderson jumped from the airplane. On the count of ten, he pulled the ripcord and let his parachute go. When the chute caught the air, the sudden jolt on his shoulders felt as if it had ripped out his shoulder blades.

Anderson was leading his men, a squad of the 101st Airborne Division, on a pre-dawn raid to Normandy. His primary target was the removal of anti-aircraft emplacements behind the beach. Other divisions with similar sabotage missions were being landed behind the beach.

The ride was beginning to stabilize. The propwash from the airplanes was gone and the wind was calm.

Butch raced through his plan, or maybe his dream, of what was going to happen.

As soon as we land, he thought, we'll gather the men together and begin our assault. The AA emplacements are well defended from the front by machine guns, but they're not defended from the rear. Each group of two men will take a bunker.

Anderson's mind ran on. He and his partner would stealthily attack a pillbox. Butch would then attack the gun emplacement. As he entered he would silently kill the operator, using the martial arts. He then would whip around and kill the guard.

His mind raced on. After disposing of the entire complement of soldiers single-handed, he would take the plastic explosives from his belt and destroy the AA guns with a ravaging explosion.

Within hours the main body of the Allied forces would be landing on the beach. At the first possible moment, Butch would break through to his friends, report his feat, and become a hero. Imagine, knocking out a German AA emplacement single-handed. Visions of a Congressional Medal of Honor and field promotion to lieutenant danced in his head.

Suddenly, the sky lit up around him. Butch looked down and saw the bright searchlight protruding from the underbrush near an AA gun.

"Here I come, Hitler," he yelled as he lobbed a grenade into the light.

Then the machine guns opened up.

The parachute dropped silently to the ground. As it touched, it covered the bloody, crumpled body and the crumpled dream of one Sergeant Steven "Butch" Anderson who was killed by machine gun fire while parachuting into Normandy on D-day, June 6, 1944. His dream died with him.



That Nutty Norwegian

Claus was determined to never give in. He had been here two months and the Nazis had tortured him in every way imaginable. Right now, he was in solitary confinement. In the dark, damp, and musty cell that smelled of the acrid odors of blood, sweat, and vomit, he tried to recall the last time he had eaten. Four or five days ago at least, but he had no way of knowing how long it had actually been. A muffled sound shattered his thoughts as a stone shattered a window. It was the kind of sound that could only be a rat. A rat!!! The huge, brown animal didn't stand a chance as Claus pounced on it. He gurgled sounds of delight as he skinned the dead animal with his secretly concealed knife. He chewed the soft, juicy meat and wondered what the Nazis would do to him today.

Colonel Probst was wracking his brain on what to do with the prisoner they called, 'Crazy Claus,' "Why not let me have a try at him," probed Lieutenant-Colonel Geister.

"No, I have one more device to try on him, but I don't condemn your doubts. His will is incredibly indomitable," sighed Probst. "Call the guards and lets get it over with," he yelled over his shoulder as he strode out the door.

The sounds of footsteps revealed to Claus that the guards were coming. The bright light stung his eyes as the guards shoved him into the brilliant sunlight of an autumn day. "Be careful or you'll kill the mold growing on me," he jeered sarcastically as one of the guards harshly planted a hob-nail boot in his back.

"How many times have we done this before?" sighed Probst.

"I don't know. I lost track some time ago," spat Claus as if the words were the most bitter thing he had ever tasted.

"Do you want to give the information to me or do I have to put you into the box?" inquired Probst. "It has already broken the souls of a dozen men," he added.

"You know my answer, you S.O.B.!"

"All right then, in you go," commanded Probst.

In the box which was shaped like a casket, Claus thought about his home in Norway. He thought about his childhood in the lofty mountains of Eastern Norway. He thought about his wife and children at their neat little home in Narvik. Eternity seemed to stand still, and in time, Claus fell asleep. When he woke up, his mind whirled. Where was he? He began to panic. Just as he was about to succumb, a very unhappy Colonel Probst opened the lid. "What are we going to do with you, Claus? Every torture I have has failed."

"You can send me home," mumbled Claus. Claus was escorted out of the room by the guards.

"Geister, I have failed," stated Probst. "Therefore, he is yours to play with."

"Thank you, sir, you'll not regret it. Heil Hitler!" said Geister as he went out the door, eager to begin a task he would not be able to complete.

Claus looked at his pale, gray skin that revealed more bones than he knew he had. He entered the dilapidated barracks that would have fallen at a sneeze.

"Hey, he's back," quipped Flaherty, a jovial sergeant from the British Eighth Army and a veteran of the camp.

"Just in time for the celebration," added Montler, a disgruntled Canadian captured at Dieppe.

The shouts and cheers of thirty-eight underfed men pierced the silence of an October night. The faces of everyone, including Claus, were staring at the small, hastily set-up course in which two cockroaches were racing to decide who would get the lion's shares of the special rations they had just received. Just as it looked as if the smaller of the two would win, the door burst open and a heavy, hob-nail boot stomped the small insects into oblivion.

"Sveinhunds," screamed the guard as he kicked Flaherty in the back. "You will come with me, Claus," he stated flatly. As Claus sat down on the floor of his solitary cell a few minutes later, he wondered how long it would be before he saw day light again.

He had been there two days without food or water. He got water by licking the frost off the walls, but the rats had all been killed off. He was very hungry and discouraged and presently, he thought of his favorite tavern in Narvik as he absent-mindedly dug at the crumbling blocks of his cell. All of a sudden a block came loose. With great effort, he pushed it through. He had escaped!

He slithered through the small opening and crawled to temporary safety in a dirty, smelly pile of trash. He heard footsteps. He couldn't tell who it was, but he wasn't taking any chances. He jumped up, ran for a couple of yards, and dived into the dust beneath the French barracks. He decided he would have to wait until nightfall and fell asleep dreaming of freedom.

The sudden blare of a siren catapulted him back into the real world. Someone had escaped, he thought to himself. He really hoped that whoever had escaped would make it until he realized that he was the one the Nazis were after.

This thought proved to be wrong as Claus saw four other prisoners, among them Flaherty and Montler, standing against the dark side of the wall of the building across from him. As the four of them made their run to the wire, he knew there was no way they would make it. A guard was right in their path. Before he knew what he was doing, Claus was running straight at that guard. He kicked the guard, knocked him out, grabbed his rifle, and ran on. He stopped and shot at the light that was desperately searching him out. It blinked twice and went dead. He looked over at the other men. Good, they were going over the wire. He darted and weaved toward the wire as the confused guards shouted, yelled, and shot at anything they thought they saw. He jumped over the ditch and started to climb up the wire. His hands became bloody as the gunfire reached a roaring crescendo. As he neared the top, a searchlight, probing in the dark, found him. He heard a sound that was louder than thunder.

Flaherty's voice sounded much louder than it actually was. "Damn, they got him, the damned Krauts got him." He sounded as if he would cry. "He had freedom right in his very grasp, and he risked it all for our miserable lives. That nutty Norwegian." They trotted off, much saddened by Claus' death, not daring to look back at the sight that had sickened them. There in the moonlight, Claus' head, shot from his body, hung on the wire, blood dripping into the night.

The Decision Never Made

Sweat beaded on James Parker's forehead as his captain yelled out a command to bomb a small Japanese city. He thought of how innocent he had been the night before, sleeping soundly not knowing the next day that he would have the destinies of hundreds of people in his own shakey hands.

His childhood flashed through his mind. His brother was always disobedient, but he was the good one who made his mother proud. Why him? Why James Anthony Parker? Couldn't it have been someone else? No. James had gone through all the necessary training; he was the best man for the job. He remembered his training and how his sergeant had told the men of his squadron, "You must never get emotionally involved!" But, it was too late for James; it was too late.

He would have to make a decision on something he never dreamed to do. James had enlisted in the Air Force four years ago. Then he never imagined there could be a war, especially a second world war. But now there was, and James had a responsibility to himself, to his country, and to humanity. Could he bring himself to do such a thing? There was no way of knowing until the time came.

James was awakened from his thoughts by his Captain's piercing voice through the speaker. He thought James had a fuel line blowout. James prayed as he looked over his right shoulder, but his fate was set. It was as his superior had said; both right engines were in flames.

James Anthony Parker never had to make that critical decision.

OLIVER

August 20, 1940. Oliver watched the train pull out of the station. Hundreds of people waved goodbye to the children on the train. They were being sent to the country because of the bombing of London. Oliver stayed behind. He had refused to go for he had to take care of his mother now that his father had been transferred. He was only ten, but he would not leave his mother without a "man in the house" (at least, that is what he told his mother).

Now he had to hurry to the school; he didn't want to miss the expedition. (This was when all the boys at his school went out in a group to look for things to add to their collections.) Oliver's was the best so far because he had a metal panel showing the number of an R.A.F. plane that was in perfect condition.

By three o'clock in the afternoon Oliver was totally bored with looking for war souvenirs under rubble piles that he knew contained only bricks, sand, and trash. He was about to leave when he heard a dog whimpering. It only took a few minutes to locate the crate under which the dog was trapped. When he freed him, the dog licked Oliver's hands and almost knocked him over with affection. Oliver named him Andrew.

When Oliver brought Andrew home, his mother sighed and said, "Another mouth to feed," but she let him keep Andrew.

Oliver decided to go downtown and see if he could find some wood to make Andrew a house.

As he and Andrew walked home after finding the wood, the air raid sirens went off. Oliver quickly hid his wood in some bushes, and he and Andrew ran for the shelter. When they came in, an officer told him, "No dogs allowed in a public bomb shelter" and drove Andrew out the door. Oliver kicked the officer in the shins and ran after Andrew out the door.

The sirens had gotten louder and he could hear the drone of the Nazi bombers in the distance, but this didn't matter at all; he had to find Andrew. He was scared by the sirens and ran like mad. After what seemed forever, Oliver managed to corner Andrew by the library fence and a pile of rubble. Suddenly, a small bomb hit the other side of the library. A large slab of plaster came flying through the air. A split second later Andrew and Oliver lay side by side.

Oliver was one of 12,581 men, women, and children killed in the battle of Britain. It began on August 8, 1940, and ended on October 31, 1940. He represents all the unknown children killed in the battle.

Oliver Whiteman
April 14, 1940 - August 24, 1940

The Tank That Missed D-Day

Two days before D-Day, a tank was heading for the docks to be picked up for the invasion. On the way to the docks, the tank ran into an ambush. The tank's machine gunner opened fire on some onrushing Nazis; at the same time, a gun emplacement started firing at the tank. The tank moved around and fired at the gun emplacement. After a short little battle, the tank destroyed the gun emplacement and killed or wounded all of the soldiers.

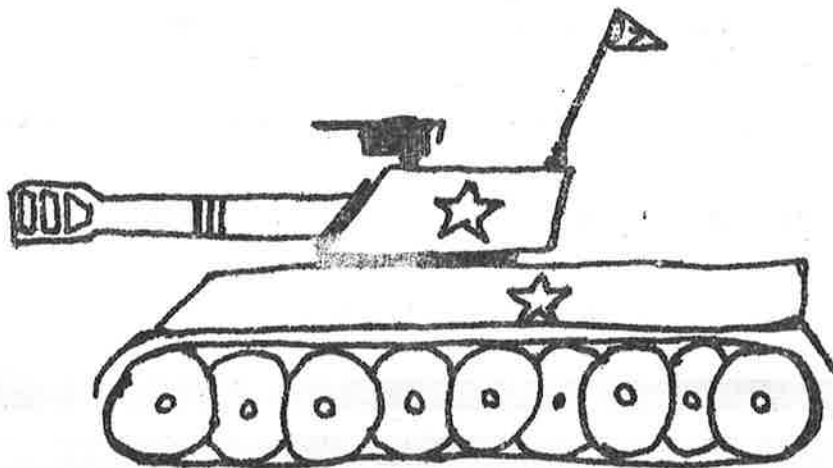
The short battle had slowed them down enough so they missed their ride to the D-Day invasion. Seeing an old barge, they loaded the tank on it and tried to catch up with the invasion convoy.

One night after they left port, they were shot at by a submarine. The torpedo missed. The sub fired another one and it was heading straight for the barge. Almost like a miracle, a wave lifted the bow up in the air and the torpedo passed harmlessly under the barge.

Passing a little town, they saw two German Panzers up on a hill firing at the town. Guarding the town were a few GIs, but they were pinned down. It would have been suicide if they tried an attack on the Panzers, so they decided to land and help them. After they landed, the tank headed its way up the hill, firing all the way. All of a sudden, they found themselves caught in a cross fire. Just before the two Panzers fired, they rolled down a small embankment so they both got hit by their own fire.

After the villagers helped them turn the tank right side up, the tank left and went back to the barge. They were way too late to catch up with the convoy, so they headed back to port.

Later on, when their superiors heard about what happened, the tank's entire crew were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.



Survival for Sergeant Kelly

It was a beautiful March day as the 3rd Platoon of Company D was walking along a road in the German farmland. The men were in a relaxed mood because of a rumor that the war was near an end. The men were telling jokes and laughing. After a couple of hours they came across an abandoned farm, so they sat down to eat their lunch. They had just started eating when they came under heavy gunfire. Captain John H. Newman was the first one shot. He was hit right in the chest which killed him instantly. Other men were falling like rocks.

At the end of the attack only one man was alive but wounded. His name was Richard F. Kelly or, as his men called him, Sgt. Kelly. Richard had managed to crawl over into a hay stack inside a barn where he would be safe for the time being.

As it turned out, he was safe for two weeks. He did not have trouble finding meat because there were chickens and ducks he could roast. He also had fruits and vegetables that were growing in a small garden out back behind the barn. He had to stay in the hay stack all day and cook his food at night. He also had to go out in the garden late at night to get his fruits and vegetables.

One night when Sgt. Kelly was going out to get some food from the garden, an old man found him and helped him. The strange thing was, the old man never spoke one word.

The bullet Sgt. Kelly had taken during the battle was lodged in his shoulder. It had become infected and was quite painful. The old man hit him on the head with a rock so he could remove the bullet without hurting him. After he got the bullet out, Sgt. Kelly asked the old man what his name was, but the old man did not answer. He asked him again, but the man was a deaf-mute so Richard never found out his name.

After that they waved goodbye and Richard walked off into the morning sun.

He was later found by the British army and treated for infection in his wound.

He later told a British General his story.



The Planes

I heard planes overhead; I hated the planes. Before the planes had come, everything had been quiet and calm. Now everything was rubble and dust. I used to be able to walk down the street, happy and calm. Now I was scared all the time. My ears were constantly tuned to listen, waiting for the sound of attacking German planes.

Now they had come again, and we would have another ten minutes of terrifying noise and confusion with bombs exploding and fires burning everywhere.

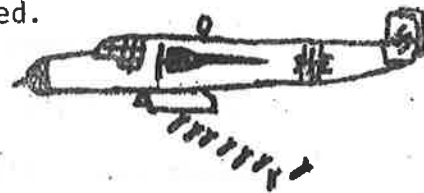
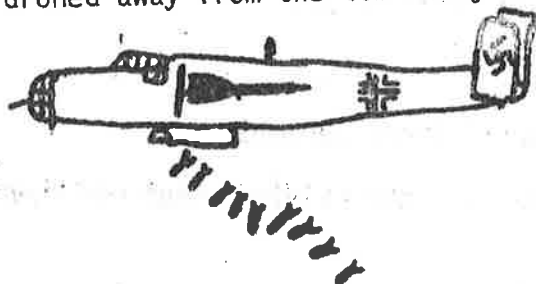
It seemed to me that it was always the average people who got hurt in the wars - the people that didn't want the war, the innocent bystanders that just wanted to live their lives peacefully, happily, and simply. But they didn't have a choice. They hadn't started or wanted the war, but they got it and it was bloody and unmerciful.

I started up the path to the cave where everyone went when there were bombing planes coming. The planes were getting closer. I stepped into the darkness of the cave and waited for my eyes to adjust.

It was less crowded in the cave than usual. Most of the men were out fighting the Germans. The planes were overhead now. The bombs came down, exploding as they hit the ground. Some of the children in the cave began to cry while their mothers tried to comfort them.

I sat down to wait until it was over. I wrapped my arms around my legs, trying to keep my body from trembling. The ground shook as a bomb exploded near the cave. My heart pounded in fright. The children in the cave cried louder.

Another bomb hit right overhead. I looked up and saw that the ceiling was cracking. I screamed, telling everyone to get out. But they just sat and looked at me. They were too scared and tired of the war to care. It seemed that it took an eternity for the ceiling to fall. I crawled outside, then turned to look. As I screamed, I watched the ceiling of the cave fall on my friends and neighbors. Stunned, I sat and looked at what had been the cave as the last of the bombs exploded and the planes droned away from the tomb they had just created.



MISSION OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

On the evening of June 28, 1942, Major Hatrack, Commander of the Royal Army in England, pushed himself back from his desk, suppressing a yawn. Then he smiled. The smile widened into a grin. As the grin expanded to cause a twinkle in his eyes, Major Hatrick (affectionately called Joe by his friends) laugh out loud. "By God, that's it!" he shouted.

His idea was to send his very best friend, Jerry Jones, to infiltrate the port of a small town in Germany called Kranstrasse. He was then to rescue an American spy that was being held there.

Major Hatrick called Jerry.

"Jerry, we need you to do an important mission for us," Hatrack immediately stated. "Come at once to my office."

"Right. I'll be there in twenty minutes," Jerry replied.

Jerry arrived in twenty minutes.

A short time later, the two friends were discussing the mission.

Later, that same night, Jerry left for the town of Kranstrasse. He arrived the next night.

The next morning Jerry awoke to find the American spy. He overheard two men talking.

"Well, John, after this war is over and the spy that is held in this boathouse is dead, we can get a lot of money for her body," said a man.

"Yeah, I know," said John.

Jerry hurried over to the boathouse, but he had to be careful not to look suspicious. There, as he stopped in front of the boathouse, was a guard. He took the back way to the door.

"Hey, Guard, there's a fire in here!" Jerry yelled from inside.

The guard ran inside. He got hit on the head and was out cold. Jerry rescued the spy. That night as they were getting in the boat to go home, the guard awoke and sounded the alarm.

"Get in the boat and go!" Jerry told the spy.

"What about you?" she asked.

"Never mind. I'll be all right," Jerry screamed.

Jerry was not all right though, for the soldiers shot him down as he shoved the spy homeward.

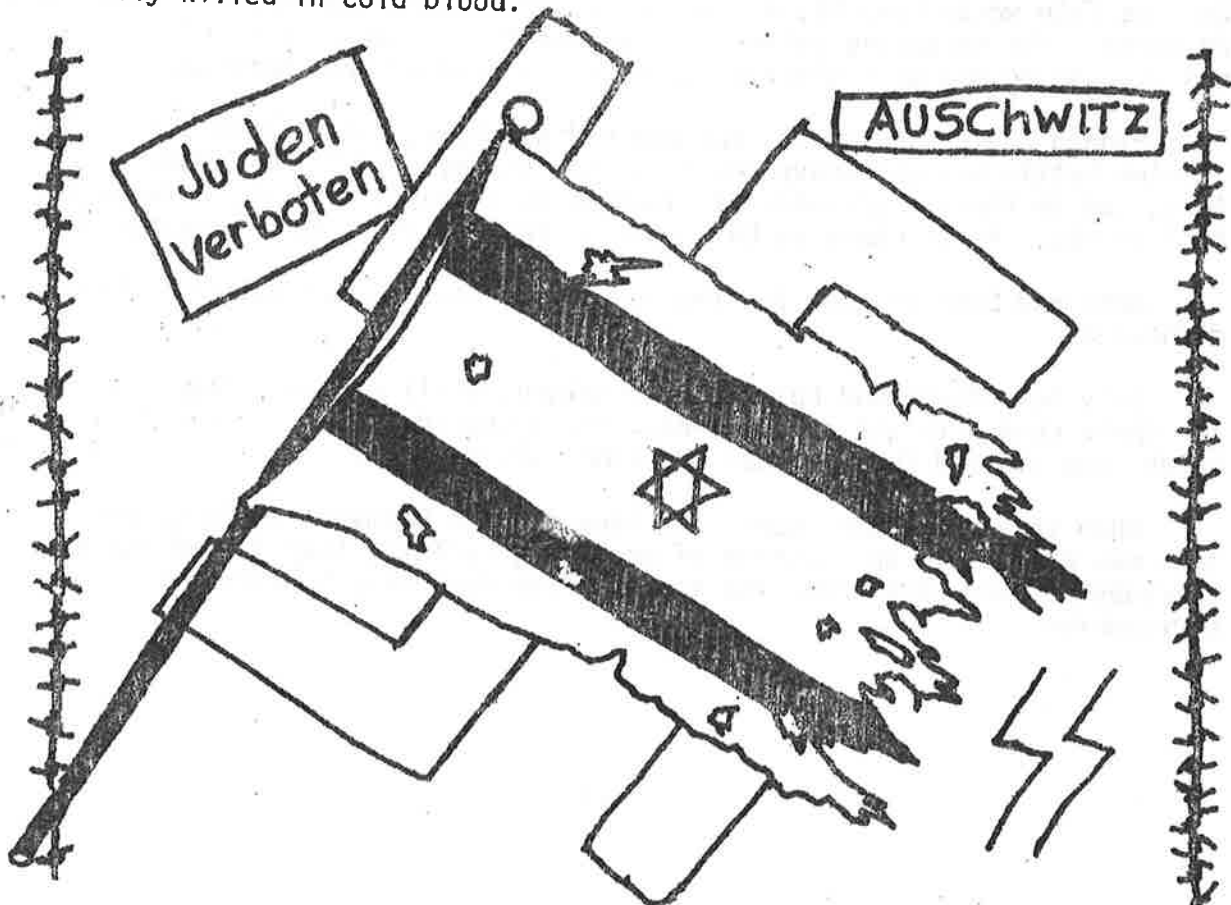
In Hiding

John Myer, a "good Jew," was hiding. He was in his German friend's wine cellar. Every day Myer was in fear that the Germans would search the house.

September 9, 1940, seemed like a normal day when Myer got up. The birds were singing; the sky was blue. He had been in the cellar for three months now, and although he hated being in there all the time, he was getting used to the idea. For the most part, he was just thankful for his safety. When John heard the knock on the door, he just naturally thought it was his breakfast because it was just about that time. But as he quickly opened the door, horror struck him. Two German soldiers were standing in the hall with machine guns strapped to their chests.

That "split second" that he opened the door and saw those "Krauts" standing there seemed like hours. So many things went rushing through his head. He thought of surrendering and probably dying in a concentration camp. He also thought of taking a one-in-a-million chance of making an all-out charge, trying to break through the middle of the Germans and spring out the door. The next movements he made seemed natural. He made a swift charge and broke right through the middle of the two soldiers, but he underestimated the quickness of the Germans. It seemed as if he were in a dream when he heard the rattling sound of machine guns. But in horrible reality, he was shot down.

John Myer died in that wine cellar. Like many other Jews, he was ruthlessly killed in cold blood.



MISSION OF SQUAD FIVE

In the summer of 1944, near the little town of St. Etienne, a heroic but little-known battle took place.

A small, specially-formed scout troupe, divided into squads, was sent to take a German strongpoint.

Squads 12 and 13 created a diversion while Squad 5 made a break through the previously destroyed oak door that had protected the entrance to the mighty stone fortress for over 50 years.

Once inside, the eight brave men, led by Sgt. Mauer, dived under two fuel trucks that had to be parked away from living quarters in case of a grenade thrown over the wall.

Sgt. Mauer, a rough, orderly man, stealthily charged a lone guard, clasped his hands about the man's throat, and squeezed until the man's knees buckled. He made a short gurgling sound as if trying to cry out from the world of the dead, then - silence.

The sergeant dragged him into the shadowy office he had been guarding and signaled the rest of his men under the trucks to come, one at a time.

Corporal Baley came running quickly and quietly without a blunder. But, as fate would have it, a soldier on the wall turned to reload and saw him. He fired. The screaming bullet missed, but the presence of the Americans was discovered and soon after a cry of alarm, the Germans were upon them.

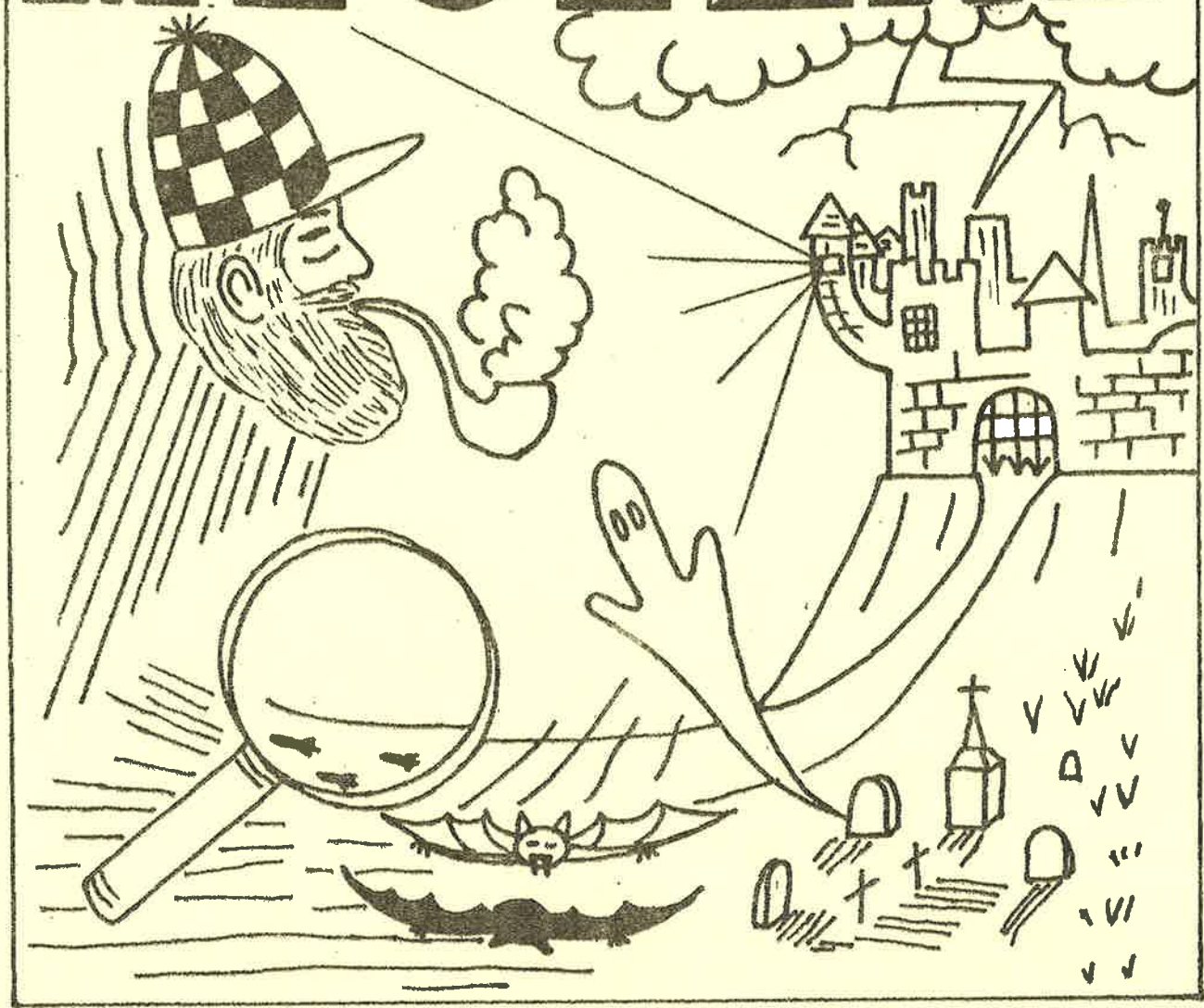
Pinned under the trucks, the men had no choice but to open fire. The ensuing battle brought heavy losses to the unprotected Germans who, in turn, had to throw a grenade. It landed, by a stroke of luck, between the fuel trucks. As if standing by a cannon, the explosion was earshattering.

There had been no time for fear or pain. Squad 5 had instantly been disbanded.

Only Sgt. Mauer and Cpl. Baley remained, still firing. They waited for their chance to get even. Then, like a suicide squad, they shook hands and stormed the fortress, machine-guns blazing.

When they had gotten more than even for the Germans' actions, their task was ended. In an exchange of screaming bullets, they joined their comrades who had been under the trucks. The fortress, however, was surrendered.

HORROR AND MYSTERY



CHARISMA, CHARISMA

"Okay, Mary Jane, don't open the door to anyone."

Mary Jane could hear her mother's voice downstairs. Mrs. Erikson was going to the bank which was just around the corner. As soon as her mother drove around the corner, Mary Jane raced upstairs to explore her mother's dressing table.

On the dressing table, Mary Jane spied a big bottle of perfume, right in the middle. Mary Jane opened the bottle and took a sniff. Suddenly, the whole room was filled with the sweet smelling fragrance of - of what? Quickly Mary Jane looked on the bottle for the name.

"Charisma. Charisma!" she said to herself.

Then Mary Jane heard the doorbell ring. She went downstairs and looked through the peep-hole. It was her mother. She opened the door and let her in.

Mrs. Erikson was bustling through the door and telling Mary Jane what a nice day it was, when Mary Jane cut through with, "I have to go to the bathroom." Mary Jane ran upstairs and shut the bathroom door. "What luck it was for me that I remembered about mother's perfume," she said with a relieved sigh.

Ever so quietly, Mary Jane crept out of the bathroom door and quietly tiptoed into her mother's bedroom. She twisted the cap back on the bottle, put it back in place, went into the bathroom, flushed the toilet, and ran back down the stairs.

"How does fried chicken sound tonight?" her mother asked.

"Oh, fine," answered Mary Jane.

When the three of them, her father, her mother and herself, were seated at the table, the telephone rang. Mary Jane jumped up from the table and made a dash for the telephone.

"Hello," she answered.

"Mary Jane?" came a coarse, raspy voice. "This is a friend. I want you to meet me in one hour on the block in front of the old supermarket."

Mary Jane glanced at her watch. Seven o'clock. She'd help mom do the dishes and quietly slip out at 8:00 p.m.

"Well, Okay," said Mary Jane. "But wait! Before you go, who are you?"

Too late! She heard the sound of the dial tone buzzing in her ear.

"Who was that?" asked her mother.

"Oh, that was Karen, my new school friend," Mary Jane answered.

After dinner, Mary Jane looked at the clock. Eight o'clock. She must be going!

Quietly, she slipped out of the house. When she got to the corner, there stood a tall-wicked-looking woman dressed in black. She looks just like a witch, thought Mary Jane. I don't know her!

The woman eyes Mary Jane in a way in which Mary Jane didn't like.

"You Mary Jane?" the woman asked.

"Yes," replied Mary Jane.

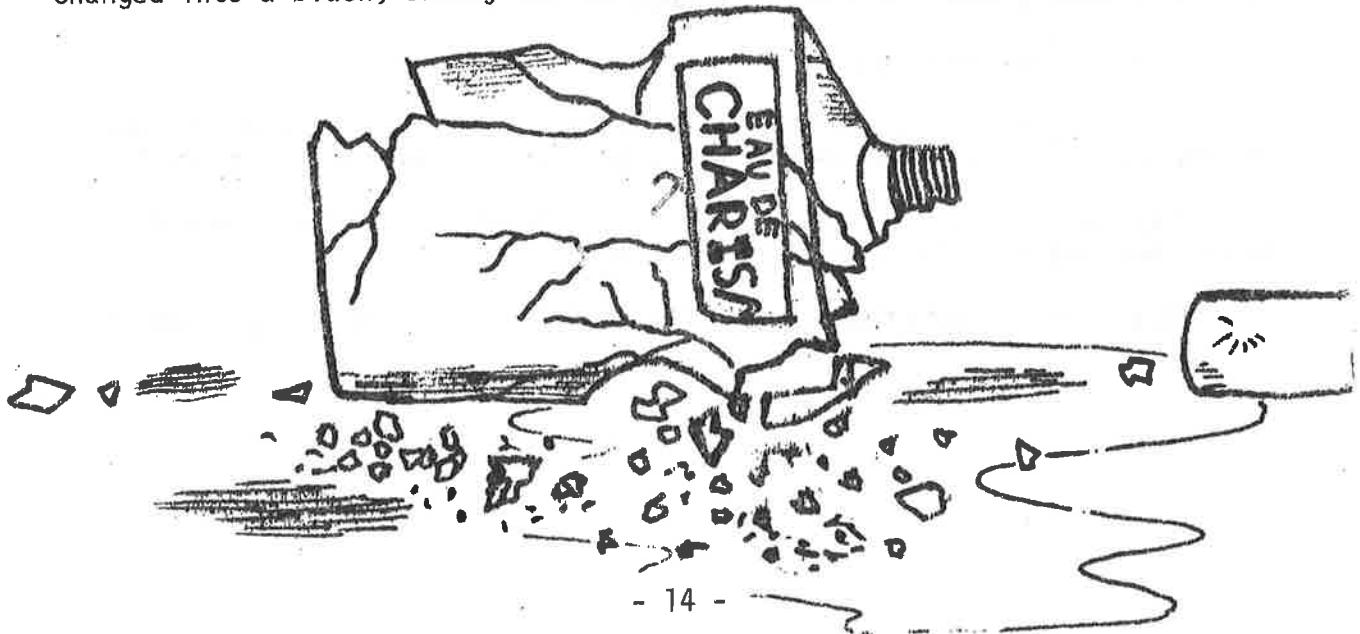
"You opened your mother's bottle of Charisma today. I can tell. I've been looking all over for it. It so happens that your mother is the only one who has it. I want it. Now, you go back home, get it, and bring it back here."

Mary Jane stood there puzzled at which she should do. Finally, she said, "I'll be right back!"

Mary Jane ran back home, got the bottle, and ran back.

"Gimme it!" said the woman as she made a grab at it. She missed as Mary Jane tried to jerk it back. The bottle dropped and shattered all over the sidewalk. Mary Jane could smell the sweet smell of the perfume once again, but this time it had a sickening odor to it.

Mary Jane looked at the woman who fell on the perfume in a heap. In a few seconds, right before Mary Jane's astonished eyes, the woman changed into a black, skinny cat which darted out into the alley.



ON THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT

It was a dreary day in October. I was sitting in algebra class caught up in my thoughts, not about algebra. I was thinking about my plans for tonight. It was Friday night and I was having Jenny over. But tonight was to be no ordinary night. I was planning a seance.

There was a blank space in our family history from the year 1690 to 1700 and I wanted desperately to find out about that empty space. I don't know exactly why, but I just had to find out about that time.

Faintly, I heard my name being called - Lindy, Lindy. Finally it came through, loud and clear. Mrs. Kelton was calling on me to answer a problem. I embarrassed myself by not knowing the answer. The bell rang a few minutes later.

After class, I met Jenny in the hall to make sure she was still coming. She said she would be over after dinner.

After dinner that night I went to my room to make sure I had everything for the seance. I had gotten together a candle, incense, matches, and a black cloth. I had everything. Now it was just a matter of waiting.

At 7:00 o'clock Jenny arrived. We found things to do until the magical hour of midnight.

At quarter until midnight we set up things in my room. We cleared a spot on my floor and put down the black cloth. On the cloth we put the candles and incense and lit them. Then we sat down.

I told Jenny to hold tight to my hands and think of my family name. Then I called out to my long-dead ancestors. I asked the Putnams that lived in the late 1600's to communicate with me and tell me why their lives were such a secret.

I concentrated on what I said for what seemed like a long time. Then I heard our clock in the hall strike midnight. On the sixth bong, I started to feel dizzy and cold. My head started spinning and I felt off balance. I had the sensation of falling and falling. I was going down into a thick, dark blackness. All of a sudden, I landed and was knocked unconscious.

When I came to, I was at the edge of a forest. I got up and looked around. I wasn't wearing the same clothes that I had had on when I started the seance. I was dressed in a plain, long, black dress. It was adorned with a white collar, cuffs, and apron. On my head I wore a stiff, white bonnet that tied under my chin. I was dressed exactly like a girl from the witch trials.

I heard a twig snap behind me. I whirled around. I stood facing a man. He was in his early thirties and was good-looking. He came toward me and took hold of my arm. He said something about me wandering off.

I was half dragged to a little house. It was surrounded by pine trees. Inside was a lady bending over a fire. She looked up when the man and I came in. She called me by the name of Faith and told me to come sit down and warm myself by the fire.

She and the man went off a little way from me to talk, but I could still hear them. I could tell by listening to them that they were husband and wife. They were talking about me. The lady, whose name was Rebecca, said that while the man had kept me busy in the woods, she had planted the poppets and herbs in my room. I was about to object when I thought, I better find out my situation. The man, whose name was Timothy, said, with a sly smile on his face, that they had no choice but to report me to the authorities. This time I did object. I asked them what authorities. They said the witch hunters. I asked what for. They said for heresy.

I asked them how they could do this to their own daughter. They looked at me with a strange look in their eyes. They said I wasn't their daughter. They told me I was their servant girl because my parents had died and they had taken me in. Rebecca asked if I had lost my memory. I explained that the shock of their accusation had made me forget.

I suddenly realized that people convicted of witchcraft were hung. I knew I had to get out of there and made a dash for the door, but Timothy taugth me. I struggled but he overpowered me. He pulled me down a hall and pushed me in the room at the end of it. He shut and locked the door. I was trapped.

I waited there for a long time waiting for something to happen. Then I heard heavy footsteps in the hall. When the door opened, there was a big man standing there. He was so big that Timothy and Rebecca, standing behind him, looked like midgets. Timothy told me this was Marshal Herrick. In Herrick's hands he held chains. Timothy had probably told him I would fight. He came toward me and locked the chains on my wrists. They were cold and a picture of death came into my mind. I was suddenly very afraid and there wasn't much I could do about it.

Herrick led me out to a wagon pulled by two gray horses. On the bed of the wagon there was a cage. Herrick forced me into the cage and locked the door. Then he got up front and whipped the horses and the wagon started moving.

The wagon came at length to another house. Herrick went inside. In a while he came out with a girl. She wasn't much older than myself. Herrick put her in the cage with me and we started again.

The girl sat down beside me and stared straight ahead. I asked her if she was accused of witchcraft. She said she was and she started to cry. I decided to leave her alone.

When the girl stopped crying, I tried asking her some questions. I learned that her name was Margaret. She said that she had turned against some

friends so they had secretly accused her of witchcraft. I asked her if we would be hung. She said probably. I told her I had been set up, so I wasn't guilty. She said the judge wouldn't listen to us. He would show us to a group of girls and they would decide if we were guilty. I couldn't believe how unfair that system was. Margaret said it was the only way of finding witches. I turned away from her and wondered if I would ever get back to my real life.

Soon we came to the town square. I saw a sign that told me I was in Salem Village.

Herrick stopped at a building with a sign over the door that read "town jail". He got us out of the cage and took us inside. He led us down some stairs. The smell that met me, halfway down, was of urine and dirty bodies. When we got to the bottom, I could barely breathe. We went down a dark, dank corridor to get to the jail cell. At the end of the hall there was a thick, wooden door. Herrick swung it open and pushed Margaret and me inside. He closed the door and looked through the window in it. He told us our trial would be set for tomorrow.

I looked around the cell. There were about fifteen other people in it besides myself. They were huddled in groups or lying on the floor. I found myself a spot and sat down. Margaret sat down beside me. I decided to ask some more questions.

I asked her what my name was. She looked at me as if I had gone mad. I said that the shock of being arrested had made me forget some things and I needed help to remember them. She must have been quite dumb because she believed me. She said my name was Faith Putnam. I asked how old I was. She said I was seventeen. That was all I needed to know right now and I was very tired. I told Margaret I was going to get some sleep now.

When I woke up in the morning, the door was opening. A pile of very stale bread and a bucket of water were being pushed in. People crowded around the food, grabbing for their share. The bread was too moldy for me, so I ignored my aching stomach and had some water. After I had had enough water, I went back to my spot and sat down.

I didn't have to wait long for my trial. Herrick and another man came for me. They brought four other people with me. Margaret was one of them.

They led us up into a courtroom. In the front of the room, at a long table, sat three judges. The spectator section was divided into two halves by an aisle. In one section there were about ten girls. All of them were under twenty years old. Those were the girls Margaret had told me about. The other section held a mixed group of people. Herrick put me and the other accused on a bench in front of the girls.

The judge called me up first. He asked me if I had seen the devil. I said no. Then he asked me if I sent out my soul to hurt those girls and

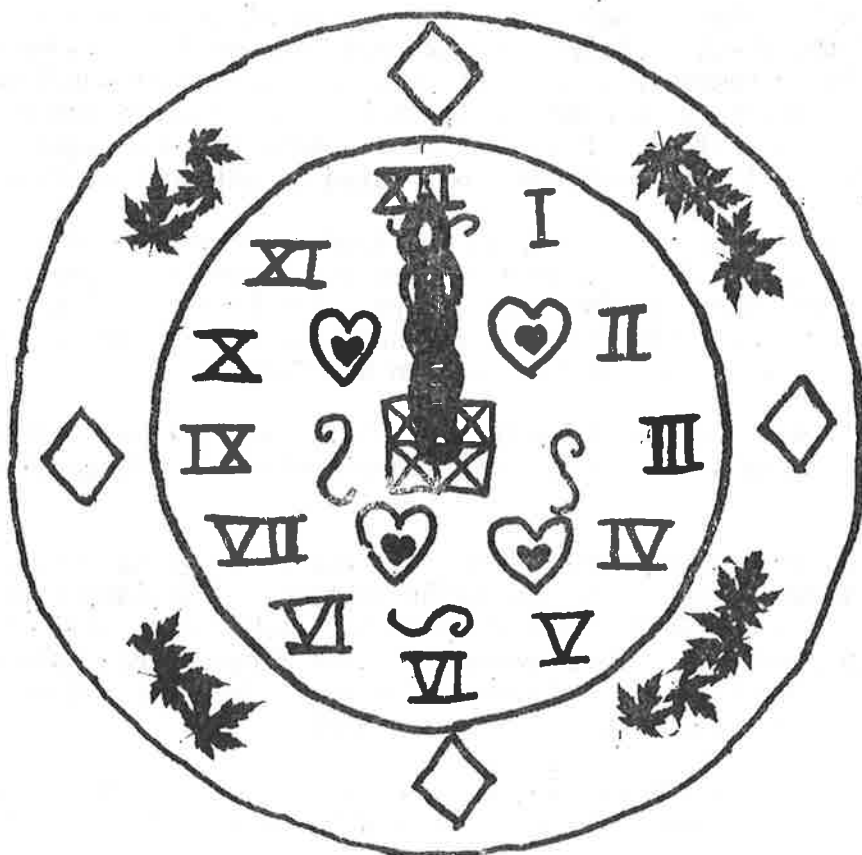
he pointed to the group of girls. I said absolutely not. Then the girls started screaming. The judge asked who hurt them. They pointed at me. I was too shocked to move. The girls turned pale and fell to the floor. I couldn't believe my eyes. Now I knew Faith wasn't really guilty. The judge sentenced me to hang in the morning. Herrick grabbed my arm and took me back to the cell.

That night I lay awake. I thought about what I would have done with my life because now I believed I was doomed.

Too early, daylight was creeping through the barred windows of the jail cell. The door opened and Herrick and a priest came in. They locked the four girls I had gone to trial with and me in chains.

We went out in the middle of the town square. There was a small crowd standing around a gallows. Herrick and the priest led us up the stairs to the top of the gallows. I was thinking that by some miracle I could get back to my real life. I felt the stiffness of rope on my neck. There was a man at the lever that, when pulled, would release the trap door beneath me. I closed my eyes and waited.

Now I opened my eyes, I was back in my own bedroom. Our clock in the hall was striking the seventh note of midnight. I was Lindy Putnam again and I knew my true heritage.



WHY ME?

I sat by the fire carding wool when a small voice interrupted my thoughts.

"Mama."

"What?" I realized after I said that, that my voice was sharp. I was tired and upset.

"Mama, why do they say you are a witch?" asked the little girl.

"I don't really know, child. I suppose they have something against me, but I'm not sure what. Jealousy, maybe."

"Will they take you away, Mama? Will they? They took Goody Hill away."

"Yes, I know, but I don't think it's serious. I doubt they will." Why tell her it is serious, I thought to myself. She will know soon enough.

"I don't want you to leave," she said, climbing up onto my lap.

"I know, but if I have to, your father and sister will take care of you."

Why me? I thought to myself. Why do they have to accuse me of witchcraft? There was a knock at the door. I got up slowly, hoping it wasn't the authorities with an arrest warrant. I opened the door.

"Oh, hello, Mr. Hill."

"I stopped by to tell you that your husband is in town. He will be here soon," said Mr. Hill.

"I sure am glad he is back. How is Mary?"

"As good as could be, seeing that she is in jail."

"I was real sorry to hear that. This town's gone crazy accusing Mary of witchcraft. Who do the judges think those girls are, saints?" I exclaimed.

"Yes, I know. I never thought I would see the day that a town would be run by a pack of children," Mr. Hill said with despair.

"Yes, it's quite strange," I said thoughtfully.

"Well, I best be on my way."

"I would be glad to help if you need anything."

"I can't think of anything. Good-bye and good luck," said Mr. Hill.

"The same to you," I said. I went back in the house and closed the door. I started to sit down when it opened again.

"I passed the authorities on the way here. They say they are coming to arrest you. What is this all about?" my husband exclaimed.

"Oh, John, I am so glad you are home. They say I am a witch."

"Sarah, you surely are joking. Oh, please say you are only joking!"

"I'm not, but I wish I were. Just the other day they arrested Goody Hill for witchcraft."

John sat down at the table and rested his head in his hands. "Oh, God, it's not possible. This can't be allowed to happen."

There was a knock at the door.

"Don't answer it," he said.

"They will just break the door down."

A voice came from outside.

"Open up in the name of the law!"

John slowly walked over and opened the door.

"I have an arrest warrant here for Sarah Cooper," exclaimed the magistrate.

"Just give us one day together. Just go home," said John.

"I can't," said the magistrate.

"Please, I don't care if the house is watched or anything. Just one more day."

"Well, all right. I guess so. I am not supposed to do this, but I know I can trust you."

"Date, you stay and guard the house," the magistrate said to his assistant.

"Yes, sir."

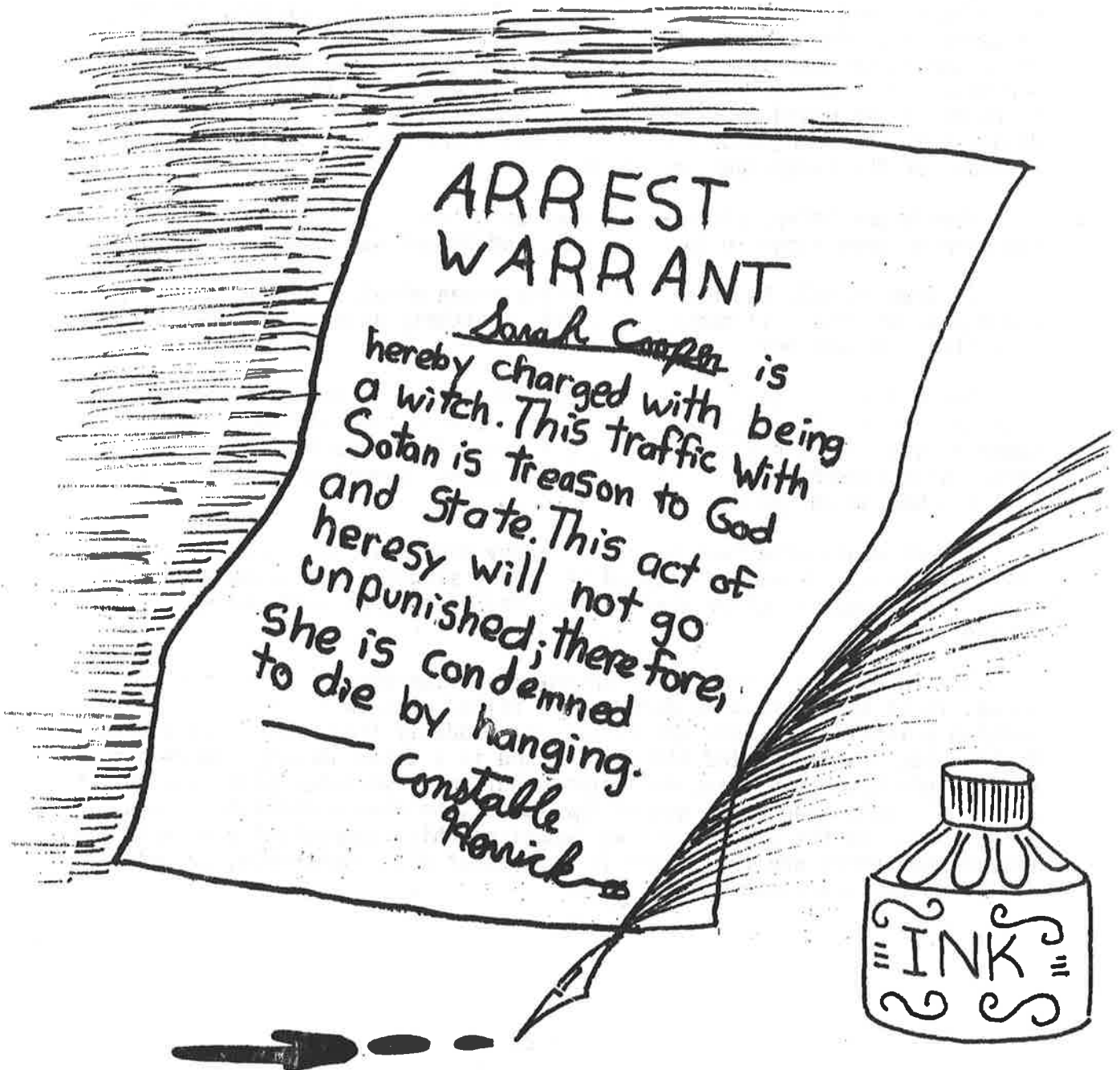
"They are gone, Sir," said the constable.

"Who is gone?" said the magistrate.

"I'm sorry, Sir. The Coopers. They invited Date inside, got him drunk, tied him up and then left."

"Well, send a posse after them and you had better catch them, for you will be the one punished if they get away. You should never have let Cooper talk you into one more day."

"Yes, Sir."



Through the eyes of Samuel

No one really mourned the death of Augustus Freewater on that unusually sultry July afternoon. In fact, if the truth were known, several persons were probably very glad to get rid of him. Among these were the tenants in his building who frequently were thrown out in the street for no apparent reason. Oh, yes, Augustus Freewater had a shady reputation and would have taken his mother's own false teeth if there was a fast buck in them.

Even though Augustus seemed to be a "good for nothing," in the neighboring state of Connecticut, there was one person who was in need of something that only Augustus could supply. Samuel Byrd had been developing a condition called Keratoconus. This condition occurs when the cornea becomes cone-shaped, and eventually the membrane of the cornea ruptures, allowing fluid to enter the cornea. Blindness results, and the only way to save the sight is to have a cornea transplant operation. The only major problem for Samuel Byrd was getting the corneas. They must be found within six hours or Samuel would be blind for life. Officials at Hartford Memorial Hospital heard of Augustus Freewater's death and decided to try to get his corneas for the transplant operation.

Five hours later, after several miles of red tape had been cut, the corneas were flown to the hospital, and Samuel was prepared for surgery.

It took exactly two hours and thirty-seven minutes to give Samuel Byrd a new pair of eyes. It seemed that old, crotchety Augustus was good for something. Or was he?

Several weeks later, the bandages were removed. Samuel's adopted eyes worked as well as his old ones before the disease struck. Since someone else's eyes had saved his sight, Samuel decided that those eyes should save someone else's sight after he died. Samuel went to the eye bank and became an eye donor.

Samuel would have been perfectly happy except for one thing: a terribly strange dream had plagued him every single night since the operation. It seemed no matter what he did, the dream just kept coming back and coming back.

This dream was certainly an adventure in the macabre. As it starts, Samuel is at the mouth of a dark tunnel filled with swirling, white mist. Walking a little ways into the tunnel, he suddenly finds he is not alone. By his side is a shriveled old man dressed in a death shroud. Where his eyes should have been there was nothing but empty sockets, still bloody. As Samuel looks toward the end of the tunnel, he sees a reddish-orange, firey glow. In the dream, just as Samuel and his "companion" come near the end of the tunnel and the figure is just about distinguishable, Samuel always wakes, screaming for his life.

Samuel thought, surely these dreams would dissipate, but there was no relief. In fact, it got worse. Samuel would find himself trying to work; then, when he least expected it, he would be seeing the dream as if he were right there. This preoccupation precipitated in the loss of his job.

In desperation, Samuel went to a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist put Samuel under hypnosis. When Samuel started talking (under hypnosis), he spoke not with his own voice! His voice was that of Augustus Freewater, talking of the evil he would cause Samuel to do.

When Samuel came out of hypnosis and was told this, he did not quite know what to do about it. The doctor gave him some tranquilizers and told him to go home and get some sleep. But how could he? Sleep brought the spector dream. Never the less, Samuel did as he was told.

Once home, Samuel took two tranquilizers and walked out to the couch when something caught his eye, his hunting gun always kept loaded. What a simple way to rid himself of the dream! Suddenly, he was tired. So very, very tired. He must sleep. Taking the gun with him, he lay down.

Again the dream came, but this time it was different. As Samuel and his acquaintance neared the end of the tunnel, he saw there were two openings. The one that was there previously, with the orange glow and the caped figure, plus a larger opening on the right. This opening had a brilliant white light emitting from it. The light seemed strangely pleasant to Samuel as he headed toward it, but the eyeless spector was pulling him in the direction of the other opening. What could Samuel do? He must kill the spector! With what? The gun in his hand, of course! He held the barrel to his "companion's" head and pulled the trigger.

Jason Lungquist had Keratoeonus. If two corneas did not replace his old ones in six hours, he would be blind for life. Officials at Hartford Memorial Hospital heard of Samuel's death, and within two hours the corneas were at the hospital. It took only two hours and thirty-seven minutes to give Jason a new pair of eyes.

Several weeks later the bandages were removed and Jason went home. That night he had a strange dream. He was in a dark tunnel filled with swirling, white mist. At the end of the tunnel was a reddish-orange glow with a cloaked figure silhouetted in the glow. He proceeded toward it when he realized he was not alone. There were two figures with him. One, a shriveled old man with no eyes in his sockets, accompanied by a younger man, also, with no eyes.



In the Night

I was putting some more wood on the fire when I heard Mike say, "Keep that fire going, John. These woods have a bad reputation."

"It was your idea to come up here," I replied.

"Well, you could have stopped me," he said.

"I didn't want to hurt your feelings. Well, that's the last piece of wood. I'm coming in."

I crawled into the tent, took off my boots, and zipped up the door. The shadows on the tent door danced and vibrated with the flames' light.

"This place gives me the creeps."

"Shut up and go to sleep," Mike snapped.

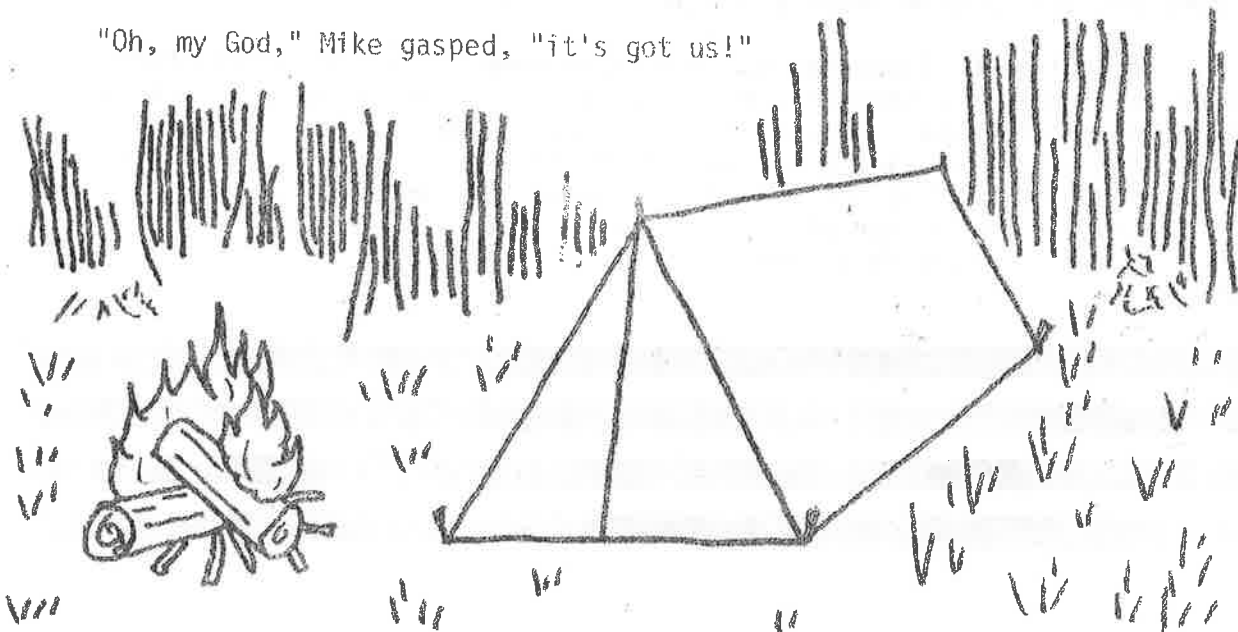
I found that I could not fall asleep, knowing about all the strange disappearances that had occurred in this region.

As the flames died I heard the snap of a twig behind me.

"Mike, is that you?"

There was no reply. I looked and saw that Mike was asleep. Then, something started pulling the tent stakes. I started yelling and hitting the poles to scare it away. Mike woke up, realized what was happening, and started doing the same. Then the thing picked up the tent corners and started carrying us off.

"Oh, my God," Mike gasped, "it's got us!"



Undying Trust

A wicked tempest was raging outside the window but Hilary wasn't concerned with that. It was something much more important that held her there - watching the lightning reflecting off the rolling waves. Heathcliff was out there somewhere. This was the reason she sat spellbound before the window.

The storm continued through the night, and Hilary kept up her vigil as long as she could stay awake. Around midnight she finally fell asleep. When she woke up at about two o'clock in the morning, she felt the presence of another person in the room. Her eyes, unaccustomed to the dark, could only see shadows and dim shapes. She got a match to light the lamp with, and a bright flame flickered forth.

As she peered around the room she noticed the floor in front of the door had a damp spot, where someone had recently stopped to shake off the water before entering the room. The large over-stuffed chair in front of the smouldering fire had been pulled closer and turned toward its dying glow.

Cautiously, she walked over to the chair and looked down. There, in a saturated plaid shirt and pants sat Heathcliff. His eyes were closed as with exhaustion. His skin had a white pallor to it, and his breath was shallow.

"Heathcliff, what has happened?" Hilary cried.

"Can't waste breath - no time." he gasped. "I came to say good-bye - they only let me come for a moment."

Suddenly, he looked into her eyes, with tears brimming over. "I love you, Hilary, and will come back for you some day."

As if nothing had ever happened, he was gone. Startled, Hilary looked around the room. The water had disappeared, or maybe it had never even been there.

In the early morning before the sun had risen, possibly around two o'clock in the morning, far out on the ocean a sailor was saying a prayer. His ship was being wracked by the waves and it was likely that the next big swell would finish the work the storm had started.

"Please let me say good-bye." the man cried. "If I must go, don't make her wait in suspense."

* * * * *

A few months later, Hilary was sitting in her front room reading a book when a knock came at the door.

"I am terribly sorry to be the bearer of such bad news, but it is better that you know, Miss Hilary," said the burly man standing there on the doorstep.

"Substantial evidence has been found to prove that the Athena was destroyed in the big storm of a few months ago. The crew is presumed to be lost at sea. No sign of Heathcliff or any . . . remains have been found. I'm afraid there isn't much hope of him being alive. I'm sorry."

"Oh, that's all right," she said lightly. "He'll come back, and then we can be married as we had planned. He told me on the night of the storm that he would return; didn't you know?"

"Well, as long as you have so much faith in his return, I'm sure he will come," the man said with a pitying look. Poor woman he thought as, he walked away, she still thinks he will come back for her.

That very night another storm arose up out of the ocean. This one raged as a beast might upon letting its quarry slip away. The rattling of the shutters wakened Hilary and sent her rushing outside to close them. The rain whipped at her face and blinded her with its stinging drops. Finally, she secured them and turned to go in the house. But what was this standing in her path? Could it be just an apparition conjured up by the storm? Or was it . . .

"Heathcliff!" she cried. "They thought I was crazy, but I knew you would come back as you had promised."

"Are you willing to go with me, Hilary?" asked Heathcliff. "I must let you make your own free choice, since it will be a difficult journey for one like you. You see, I'm no longer what I was, or am what I seem to be. I am now what the ignorant would call a ghost. Soul should be the word, or spirit perhaps, but not ghost; it is associated with too many horrible things."

"You mean you don't live?" quired Hilary, looking confused.

"I live, but not in the sense you think. My person died in the Athena, but if I were dead I wouldn't be here. My body has only housed me, that is, my soul. When a candle is extinguished, its purpose had been fulfilled. The smoke from the dying flame floats away and disappears. So it is with the body and soul. When the body's purpose has been fulfilled, the soul floats up from its dying embers and disappears."

"Heathcliff, I will go wherever you take me. I would choose any kind of death to be with you, rather than the richest life possible without you. As long as you are by my side I fear nothing, not even death," Hilary said with conviction.

"I had hoped that your choice would be for me, but I could hardly think it possible, considering what life has to offer. Death won't be painful

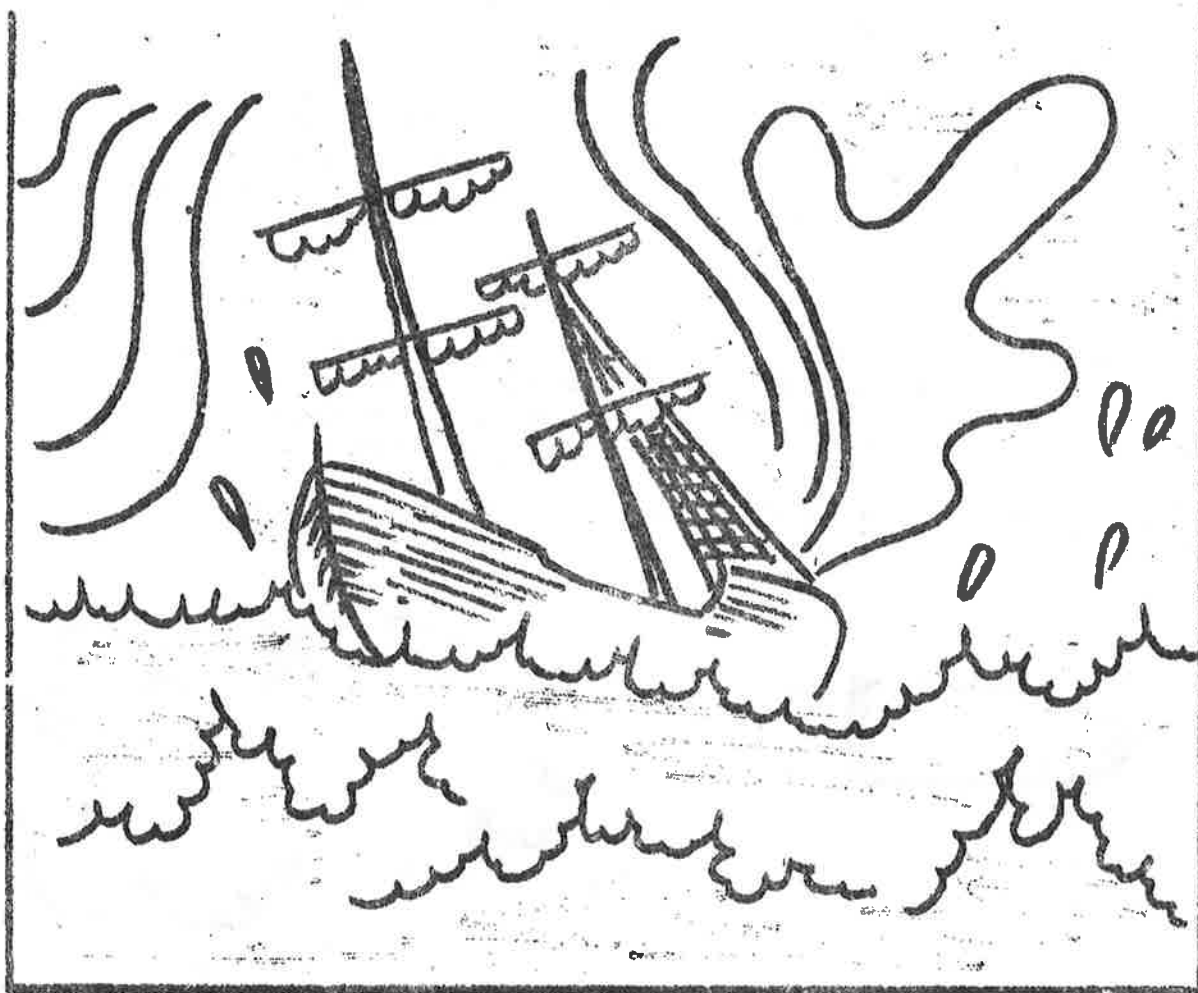
though. If you can stand it, all I need to do is kiss you. A kiss from another's soul is too much for a body to contain, so the body must have a vent. This is to Death, and a new Life to follow."

So saying, he kissed her. She clung to him so tightly that a shred of his sleeve came off in her hand.

The rain slowly pattered to a stop and a slight breeze whisked by the wisps of 'smoke' that hung before the door of Hilary's house. These combined into one and disappeared upon the rising of the sun.

A neighbor found Hilary on the way to church that Sunday morning. She was lying on her porch with a smile on her face and a piece of red plaid wool in her hand.

There was much speculation on the subject that day. Some said that her already weakened mind fell through and she was driven out by the sound of the storm to look for Heathcliff. Others superstitiously thought that he did come back. For didn't Heathcliff have a shirt made of just such a red plaid? Didn't he also wear it on that fateful day months ago? But really, who is to say?



The Perfect Shot

A gun was pointed at the man. He was backed up against a tree. A woman held the gun about a foot from his chest. She looked furious. Her clothing was torn, dirty, and ragged. The man was tall, fine boned, with a scared look on his face. His clothes were those of a gentleman.

He knew she would kill him. She had said she would when he had run away from her about a month ago. Now she had caught him again and he knew he wouldn't get away this time. She was on her guard and she was also a perfect shot.

She was pulling the trigger. He closed his eyes. If I could just move, the bullet wouldn't hit me, he thought to himself. He moved as if in a dream, almost like seeing himself. He congratulated himself. He had escaped and was running towards his magnificent house on the hill. She shot at him again as he ran, but he dodged.

He was barefooted; the grass crunched under his feet. The last ring of the dinner bell still echoed in the air. He had to hurry or he would be late and they were having company, his grandmother. His grandmother was one of his favorite people.

He ran faster. The sun was warm on his back. The flowers were in full bloom and their scent filled the air. He thought it smelled beautiful. He could hear the birds chirping. He was happy. It was a beautiful day. He jumped over a small garden plot. The ground was warm and moist. It felt good on his feet. A bee buzzed by as he ran under a tall oak tree. The shade was cool; it felt good.

He ran up to the big door. It was cool inside and it smelled of wood and polish. He slammed the door behind him. It shut with a loud echoing, hollow sound. His grandmother was about to hug him when a deep searing pain went deep in his chest. Everything was darkness.

Twenty-four year old Ted Muster was dead. He lay on the ground in a pool of blood.



Le-mont-Saint-Michelle

Here I was, Kate McCarty, 19 years old, traveling through France by myself. It was quite exciting, especially since I didn't know very much French.

Sometimes it seemed like a dream that I was even in France. I had always wanted to travel in France and now, here I was. It was quite interesting, especially the people with their different customs and food.

One thing I had noticed that was quite different from the good ole U.S.A. was the way the kids dressed, all dark depressing colors. Sometimes I felt out of place in my blue jeans and bright shirts. But, at the moment I didn't for I was wandering through the basement of an old abbey.

It was raining outside, a perfectly beautiful day for exploring the huge cellars or catacombs of Le-Mont-Saint-Michelle.

The abbey was an island at high tide and had been used in the eighteenth century as a prison.

I followed the tour guide for an hour or so but got bored with the guide and the crowds. When no one was looking, I sneaked off into a dark gloomy passage, almost falling down some stairs I hadn't seen. It was then that I decided to get out my pen flashlight and creep softly down the stairs just for fun.

Peeking around the corner, I saw a huge room. I walked slowly across it, looking with awe at the high ceilings that seemed to go up forever. Getting just a little bit scared at being alone in such a big place, I thought I had better retrace my footsteps.

I started to walk back the way I had come, my flashlight shining a small finger of light out in front of me. I heard a noise like voices coming from behind me. I turned around and walked softly towards them.

I came to a door in the wall and stepped through, brushing a cobweb out of my way. The passage turned right as I followed the voices. Sometimes, I could barely hear them; other times, they were quite loud. I was completely confused and was wondering how I was going to get out when, turning a corner, I saw a shut door with light leaking out around the edges.

I walked noiselessly over to the door and put my ear up to it. A woman's voice whispered in French almost too softly to be heard, "I didn't want anyone hurt. You shouldn't have killed him, Luigi."

Luigi and murder - my mind went back instantly to the story I had read in the morning paper about a robbery that had happened last night. Somebody was killed and the suspect was named Luigi Fetucirine! I almost gave myself

up when I started to gasp, but I caught myself in time. I wondered what I was going to do now. I was lost in this maze with a murderer sitting in the next room.

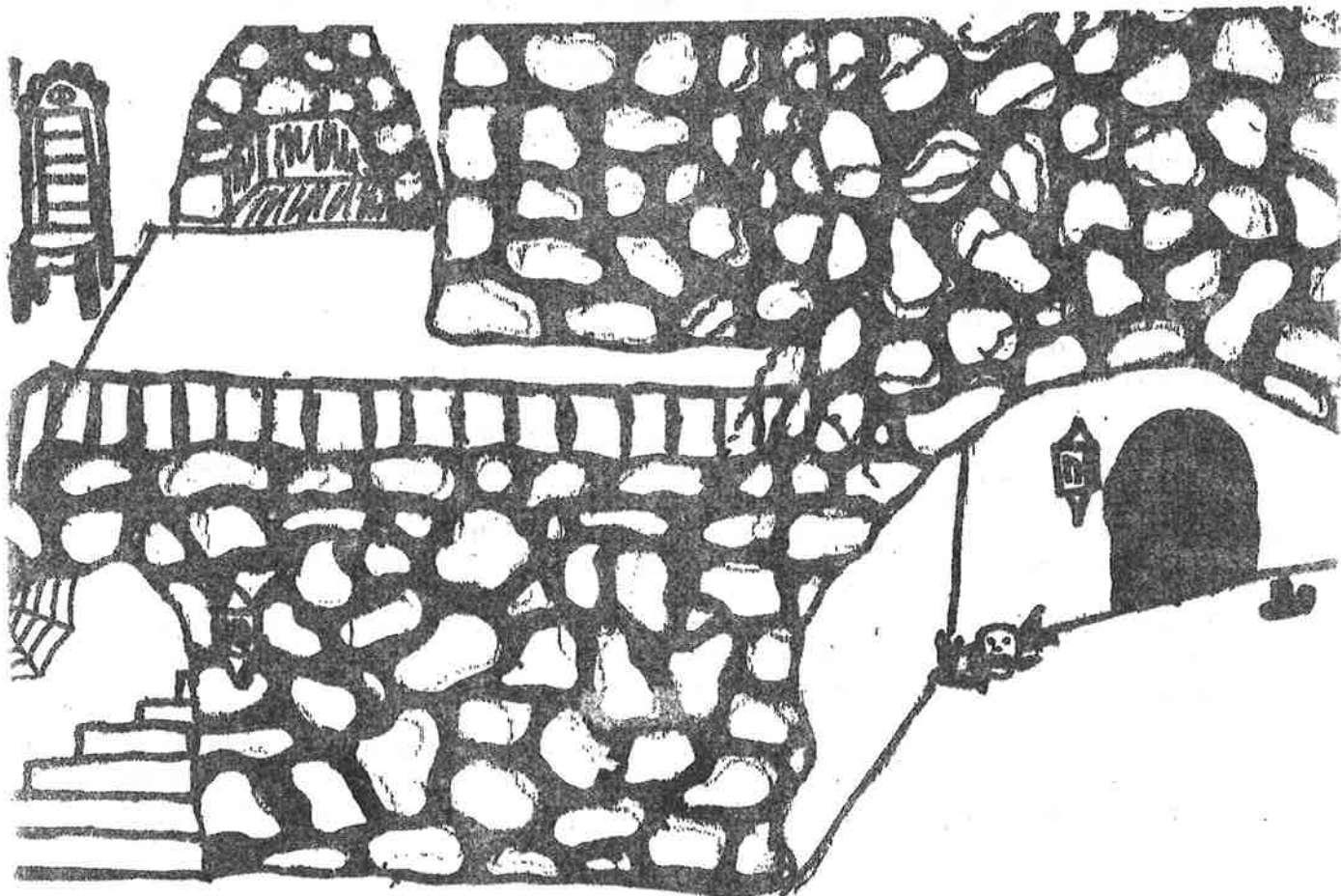
A chair scraped. Someone started to walk towards the door. I turned, running blindly back the way I had come or so I thought, but could not find the way out. I tripped, screamed, and hit my head on the floor.

The next thing I knew I was lying on a bed. Someone was bending over me.

"She's coming to," a deep masculine voice said in French, different from the other man's that had been in the room.

I started trying to tell the people around me about what I had overheard.

"It's okay, Madam," the man said breaking into English. "We caught him, thanks to your scream."



The Figure

It took her a while to figure it out, but she finally realized that the reason she didn't like her mother's fiance was because it had been sprung on her so suddenly. She could recall, now, all those questions she'd asked about the pictures of him that she had found lying around and how her mother had always shrugged it off, saying he was "nobody". The phone messages, all those nights when her mother had been working late, supposedly . . . one minute she believed all the excuses and the next, she couldn't.

Talicia Kelly was thirteen years old and had lived alone with her mother since age seven. Her father had been killed in a car accident those six years back, and although Talicia could hardly remember what he looked like without a picture in front of her, she felt unflinchingly loyal towards him. Brian was just an intruder who Talicia didn't want hanging around any more than necessary.

But, unfortunately for him, Brian wouldn't cooperate.

It was now the middle of August. For Talicia, her sister, and her mother, the three summer months were always spent at their small cabin along with the Pacific coastline. It was Talicia's favorite spot and she had always felt as if it belonged to her. She shared the bedroom with her sister and, while most often she couldn't stand the brat, it often came in handy to have company. The difference in ages was only a year and a half.

Brian was coming for dinner that evening. Their mother had told them it would give them a chance to "get to know him," but neither of the girls seem thrilled. Talicia promised herself that she would be as difficult as possible during the meal. Then she could escape to the rocks and sand outside until he left.

Her mother's voice interrupted her thoughts. "Talicia, try to be polite."

Talicia adjusted her gaze from the window to her mother's face. "Kids don't have to be polite to the guy their mom's going to marry," she said in a bored tone. "Don't hold your breath." She turned her head to look out the window again. Brian's sports car was just pulling into the driveway.

Actually, dinner went quickly. The only one who didn't have seconds or something was Talicia's sister, Trina, but everyone ate fast. Talicia answered only direct questions and didn't make any effort to be friendly, while Trina talked on and on about the weather, television shows, the books she'd read lately, and anything that came to mind. Talicia finished first and went down to the beach. Half an hour later, she heard the door to the cabin open, and Brian and her mother stepped outside.

Slowly and discreetly, as if someone were watching her, Talicia reached down off the rock she was sitting on and picked up a stone the size of a tennis ball. Quickly her fingers moved the stone across the rock, forming lines. She didn't look at what she drew. Her eyes stayed glued on Brian as he walked to his car, opened the door, and climbed inside. She heard gravel from beneath the tires as he backed out of the driveway and drove off.

Talicia stood up slowly. It was beginning to get dark, but the lines on the rock stood out. It was a picture of a man inside a car. The name 'Brian' was stenciled above the man. Angrily, decisively, Talicia pounded on the picture with the stone in her hand, making heavy lines across it. Then she threw the stone and started quickly towards the cabin.

* * * * *

Trina had been sent to bed an hour ago, and it was now ten-thirty. Talicia watched her favorite program end on the television set and rose dutifully.

Her mother's voice came from the kitchen. "Talicia ---"

"I'm going," Talicia interrupted. She started for the bedroom, as the phone rang. She could faintly hear her mother's voice and could barely make out the words. The concern was in her mother's voice. "How bad is it?" Then for a time there was no sound.

She heard her mother saying, "Okay, thank you," and heard the phone being placed back down again. She walked out to the kitchen. "Who was that?"

"The hospital," her mother answered. "They said Brian was in an accident on his way home."

"Bad?" Talicia's tone was interested, but not especially concerned.

Her mother shook her head. "No, not bad. He'll be going home tomorrow. Now go to bed."

The next morning was clear and reasonably warm. Talicia spent the majority of it working on a 'project,' as she told her mother. It was a hand-size doll, made of just about anything she could find lying around. Sticks formed the arms and legs; a piece of driftwood, the body. She hooked them into place with rubber bands, covered it with pieces of cloth that vaguely resembled clothing, and scratched a face onto the head. The expression was the spitting image of Brian. A grim smile formed on Talicia's face, and the faint ocean breeze blew her hair back as she sat contentedly on the rocks.

She heard her mother's voice calling down to her from the cabin. "Talicia, I'm going to take Brian home from the hospital."

Talicia kept her expression blank, "So?"

"So I thought we'd pick up some breakfast on the way back. Come on up."

Now Talicia glared. "With HIM, too?"

There was laughter in her mother's tone. "Of course. He'll be living with us pretty soon anyway, Talicia. Try and get to know him."

Talicia clenched her fists. "No, he won't. And I'm not coming!"

Talicia's mother shrugged. "Okay." She turned and started for their car.

Talicia felt jealousy rise inside her. A few weeks ago, her mother would have been more considerate of what she felt. But not now. No, now Brian was the only one on her mother's mind.

She grabbed the doll she'd been making, tore it in half, and stepped angrily on the pieces as she started up the rocks to the cabin.

Late that same afternoon, Talicia found out that Brian had fallen on some rocks while fishing a little earlier and would be taking it easy at home for a day or so while the effects of the slight concussion wore off. Talicia began putting two and two together.

It was close to midnight that evening. Talicia was in her room, but she wasn't asleep. Trina was in her bed, eyes closed, and the room was dimly lit by one lamp on the desk where Talicia was drawing.

It was a sketch in pencil - a man with Brian's face. He was standing on some stairs in his house. Talicia filled in details and then carefully added a long, dark arrow from the man's chest down to the bottom of the stairs. Before a smile could come to her lips, she realized what she was doing. She was hurting her mother, not Brian. If she made anything else happen to Brian, her mother would be worried to the point of no return. Talicia couldn't do it. Or maybe she could, but she would not.

She threw the picture in the trash can, turned off the light, and got into her bed.

* * * * *

It was the next morning. Talicia had been up for about an hour, watching T.V. As far as she knew, her mother and sister were still in bed asleep.

The phone rang. Once. Twice. Talicia sighed as she caught it up on the third ring.

"Hello?"

"Is Mrs. Kelly there?" The voice was a woman's.

"She's asleep," Talicia told the lady. "May I take a message?"

"It's very important," the voice went on. "I need to speak to her."

Talicia signed again. "Okay, just a minute." She put the phone down on the table and walked down the hall into her mother's room. "Mom, there's a lady on the phone for you."

Her mother's eyes blinked open. "What?"

Talicia shrugged. "Phone. For you."

Her mother blinked hard, and picked up the extension beside her bed. "Yes?"

Talicia watched as her mother listened. "This is Mrs. Kelly," her mother confirmed. She paused, listening to what the lady was saying. Then her eyes widened. "Oh, my God." Her voice was a whisper.

Talicia's eyes wore an inquiring expression. "What's wrong?" she asked. Her mother ignored her.

"Yes, I will. Thank you." Her voice was still a whisper.

As her mother hung up with a dazed look on her face, Talicia asked again, "What's wrong? What happened?"

Her mother didn't answer her question. "Get your coat. And go wake up your sister." She climbed out of bed.

Talicia glared at her. "Not till you tell me what's going on," she said defiantly.

Her mother's voice was weak. "Brian's house burned down about an hour ago," she answered, tears in her eyes. "They . . . they think he's dead. They found a man lying at the bottom of the stairs, unconscious. They think it's him, but he wasn't wearing any I.D. They want me to identify him."

Talicia's eyes widened, and she felt suddenly sick. "But it couldn't have happened," she said slowly. "I threw away the . . ." Her voice trailed off.

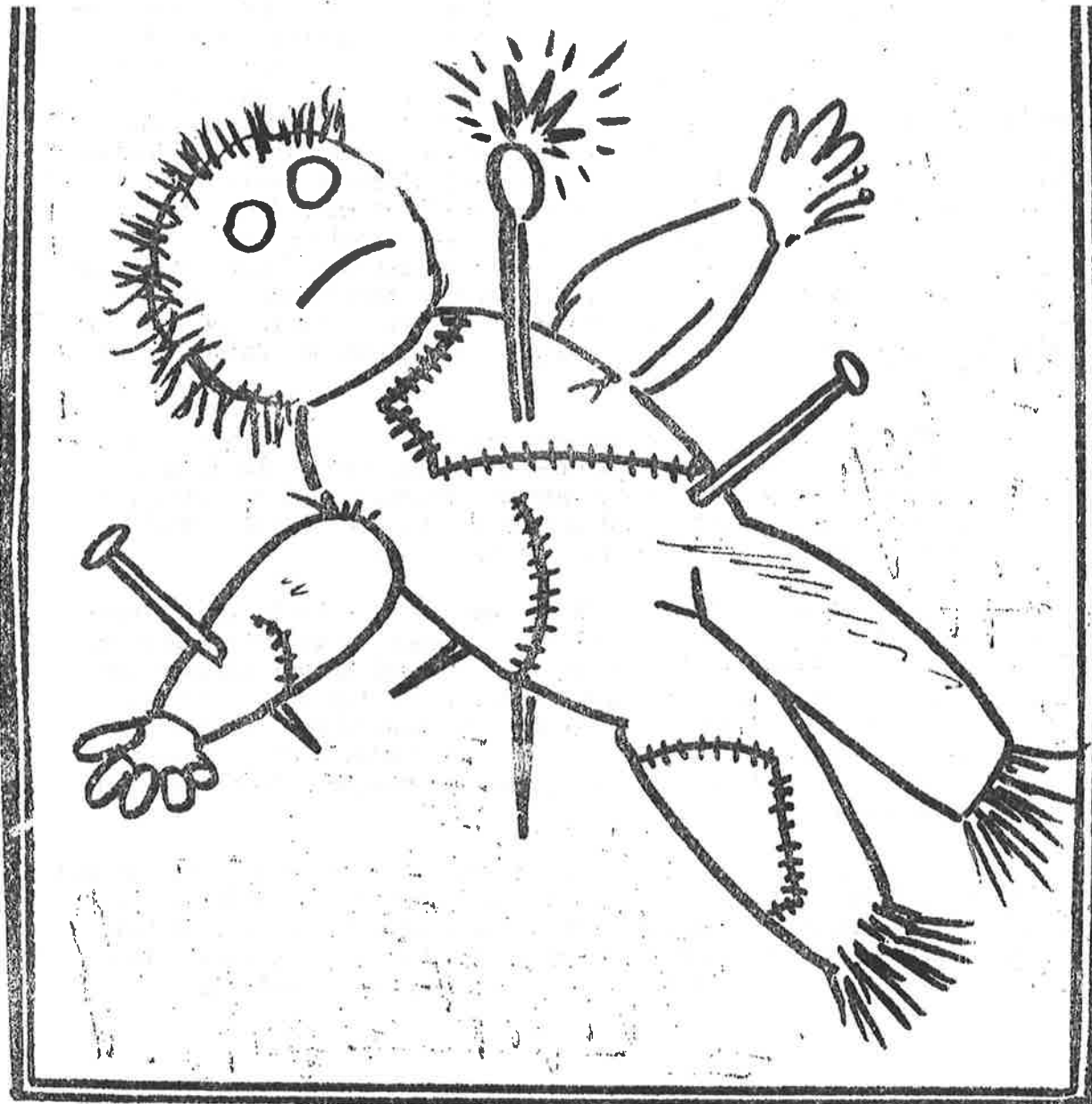
"Just go get your sister!" her mother told her.

Talicia walked out hurriedly, down the hall to the room she shared with Trina. She opened the door.

Trina was already up. There was a smoky smell in the room. Trina was sitting on her bed. There was the waste basket on the floor in front of her, and flames from the waste basket. As Talicia peered closer, a startled look crept over her face.

The figure was almost completely ashes. It was a small, hand-size doll made of sticks like the one Talicia had made. Only the face could be distinguished. It was Brian's face.

A small smile formed slowly on Trina's lips.



ANGELA'S DREAM

The room was very large, empty and dreary. From the darkest corners came scuttling sounds as the rats and other vermin that filled the walls searched for food. Broken windows let in the icy air that was constantly circulating outside, looking for such openings to enter through. Also, this was the only place that the feeble light from street lamps could enter because the few windows that weren't broken were very dirty.

This building, a warehouse by name, was the only place Angela had ever known in her short life. Her name had not been carefully chosen. It was just fate that she was the twenty-seventh child born in that particular workhouse, so they simply started the alphabet over again. Her mother, unmarried like most of the workers at the warehouse, had died three weeks after her first birthday. Her father had never shown up to help support them. When her mother died, Angela was left with the matron who managed the warehouse. You must not confuse 'matron' with 'patron' because that she was truly not. Like most adults of her intellect, she felt that children were to be worked hard and fed little because of their small size. As for clothes, the most ill fitting, poorly made ones were fine for the small wretches. But, oh, how ungrateful the rotten creatures were! That they could actually complain after, out of the compassion of her heart, she had taken them under her wing and cared for them in their time of need. Why, she thought, they should be thrown in the streets just to see how long they could last without her kindness. Angela, then, was not raised under the best conditions.

As days went by, Angela grew paler and thinner. The matron wasn't much help about it, demanding more from the girl than she could do and liberally applying a switch when things weren't accomplished as swiftly as she demanded. Of course, if the child wouldn't work, the rations would have to be cut down, too. So, the situation grew worse.

One night, as Angela lay huddled in a corner of the dirty room sleeping, she began to dream. Suddenly, she was no longer in the warehouse but at the door of a large house. She could see wonderful things through the window and knocked on the door. No one answered, but the door silently swung open. She timidly entered. The sights she beheld were beyond her comprehension. A table, eight feet long, was covered with every imaginable delight. She was overcome with fear, but her hunger soon dissipated and she ate ravenously.

When she could eat no more, she walked slowly to the next room. It was a most wonderful bedroom with a large canopy bed that looked deliciously soft. The open closet displayed numerous dresses of many colors. A hot bath had been drawn. Angela undressed and stepped into the steaming tub, being as careful as she could to get very clean. When she met whoever

lived in the house she would be clean and fresh instead of looking like a ragamuffin. She then took one of the dresses, a simple white one, and put it on. It fit perfectly. Hair ribbons were on the dresser in front of a large mirror. She combed her long brown hair and put them in. Small white slippers set at the foot of the bed. After putting them on, she went back into the dining room.

The table had been cleared, and the doors to the parlor were now open. Through these Angela walked. Before her in a high-backed chair sat a lady. Her eyes followed Angela until she was directly in front of her.

"Oh, Lady," Angela whispered, "I hope you will not be angry with me, but I really could not help myself. The door swung open and I came in. There was so much food on the table. I was just so hungry that I ate some of it. Down the hall there was a lovely room, and the hot water, so I thought I could clean up before I met whoever lived in this house. My ragged clothing was so coarse, and the dress looked so nice..."

"What do you apologize for, Angela?" the lady asked. "You were expected. I am glad to see it pleased you. The dress looks quite nice."

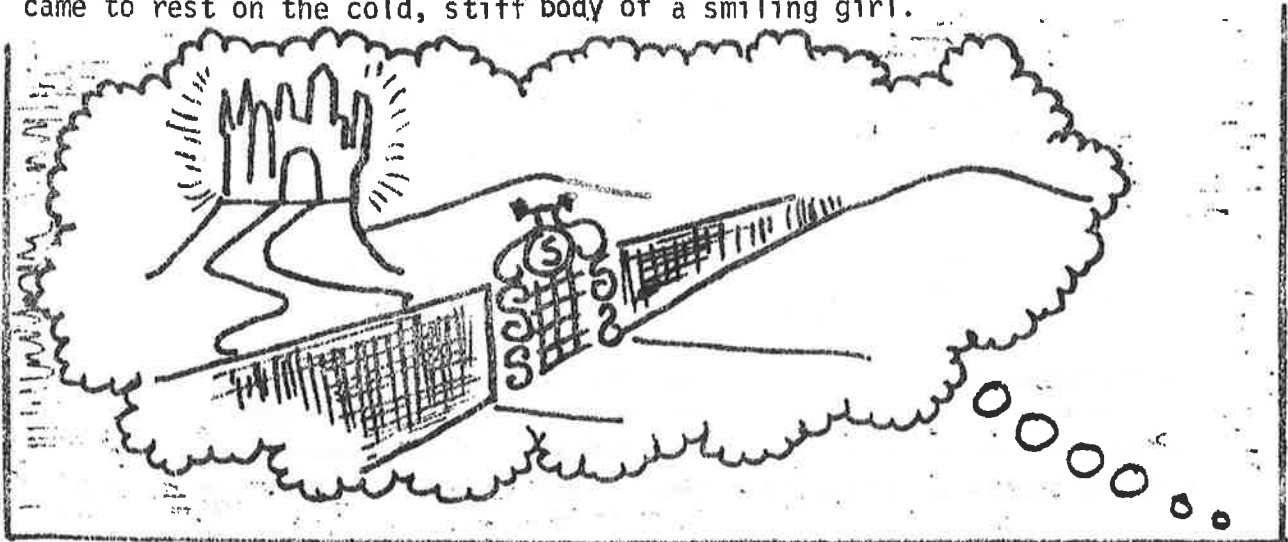
"How do you know my name?" Angela asked, looking quite startled.

"I know quite a lot about you, my dear. How would you like to stay with me? I get lonely and I need a companion."

"Oh, could I really?" she asked, brimming with joy. "If you really want me to, of course, I will."

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Angela. I would have been very sad if my own daughter refused to live with me."

The dawn came, a dingy yellow hue. There was one break in the clouds though. Through this, a single ray of sunlight penetrated. This ray found its way through the dirty London sky to a certain warehouse. The shaft of light pierced a broken window and made its way to a far corner. Here, it came to rest on the cold, stiff body of a smiling girl.



JUST WAIT

How well do you know yourself? Could you account for every minute of the last twenty-four hours? What did you do last night besides sleep?

You're not alone. Other people have your problem. Dr. Jekyll was one. Mr. Hyde was another one. I can name others.

Do you think you want to know? For instance, how well do you know the other teachers in the building? How well do you know your neighbors? What about your children?

Only children are susceptible to this "sickness". You might have picked it up when you were a child. Once you get it you can't get rid of it.

You started doing small things like strangling cats, then it became more involved. Before you were out of high school, you had probably killed two or three people.

You must face the facts. You are a dual person. There is nothing you can do about it.

As I said before, children are the ones who get "it". In fact, you can only get "it" when you are a kid.

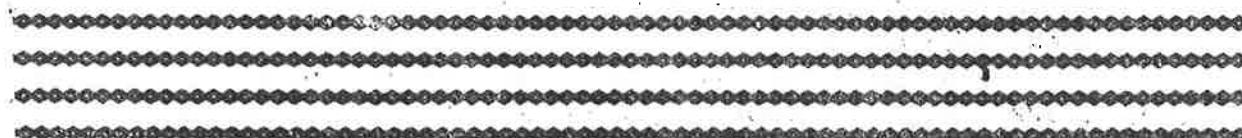
You can tell when a child has a split personality if you know what to look for. If a child's attitude and personality changes every few days, you can start to worry. When he becomes a loner because he doesn't want to pass "it" along to his friends, you'd better keep an eye on him. When he suddenly doesn't talk to a certain person you could almost say this person was going to die very soon. When a kid hates someone one day and thinks they're great the next, you'd better do something fast. Have you done any of these things lately? I hope not.

How long have you killed people without knowing it? How many have you killed? How much longer until you discover the horrible truth about yourself?

There are many children around you every day. How many of them are normal? How many of them are killers?

Do you still think you know yourself? I hope so.

Do you still think you know me? Do you still think you want to? Do you know my good side, or my evil one? Take your pick. I'll get you soon enough. Just wait, Mrs. Baker, just wait.



The Vengeance of the Ghost in the Graveyard

Mr. Gerald was an old hermit who rarely came outside of his antiquated mansion. Many people in the town thought of him as a "crazy man." On some occasions though, he would come out of hibernation, go straight to the sheriff, and tell him that he had seen things out in the old graveyard behind his house. Sheriff Cramer would nervously tell him it was all his imagination and that he should go back home and stay there. One night after Mr. Gerald had not been seen around his house for almost a week, the caretaker found him beheaded in the old graveyard with a bloody knife in him and a sharp grave-digging shovel laying beside him.

All over town there was talk about a dangerous killer loose, roaming the streets at night looking for victims. Of all the residents in the town, Sheriff Cramer was the most tense. He seemed to jump at the slightest mention of the killing.

The weeks went past and Mr. Gerald's house was claimed by a realty company. All of the contents in it went to his nearest relatives which were very few. As soon as all the legal papers were taken care of on the late Mr. Gerald's estate, an out-of-town architect was seen around town. He had heard that the house was for sale and was very interested in buying it for its architectural value. The realty company hurriedly drew up the papers and were happy to get rid of the monstrosity.

After the architect had moved in and was settled, he, too, started to see strange things in the old graveyard, but he told no one for fear that they might think him crazy like the old man. He lived with his uneasy feeling about the mysterious shadows in the graveyard for three days. During the three days, he slept only a few hours. Most of the time he was thinking about what he saw and what to do about it. He finally decided to go that night and see just what it was out there.

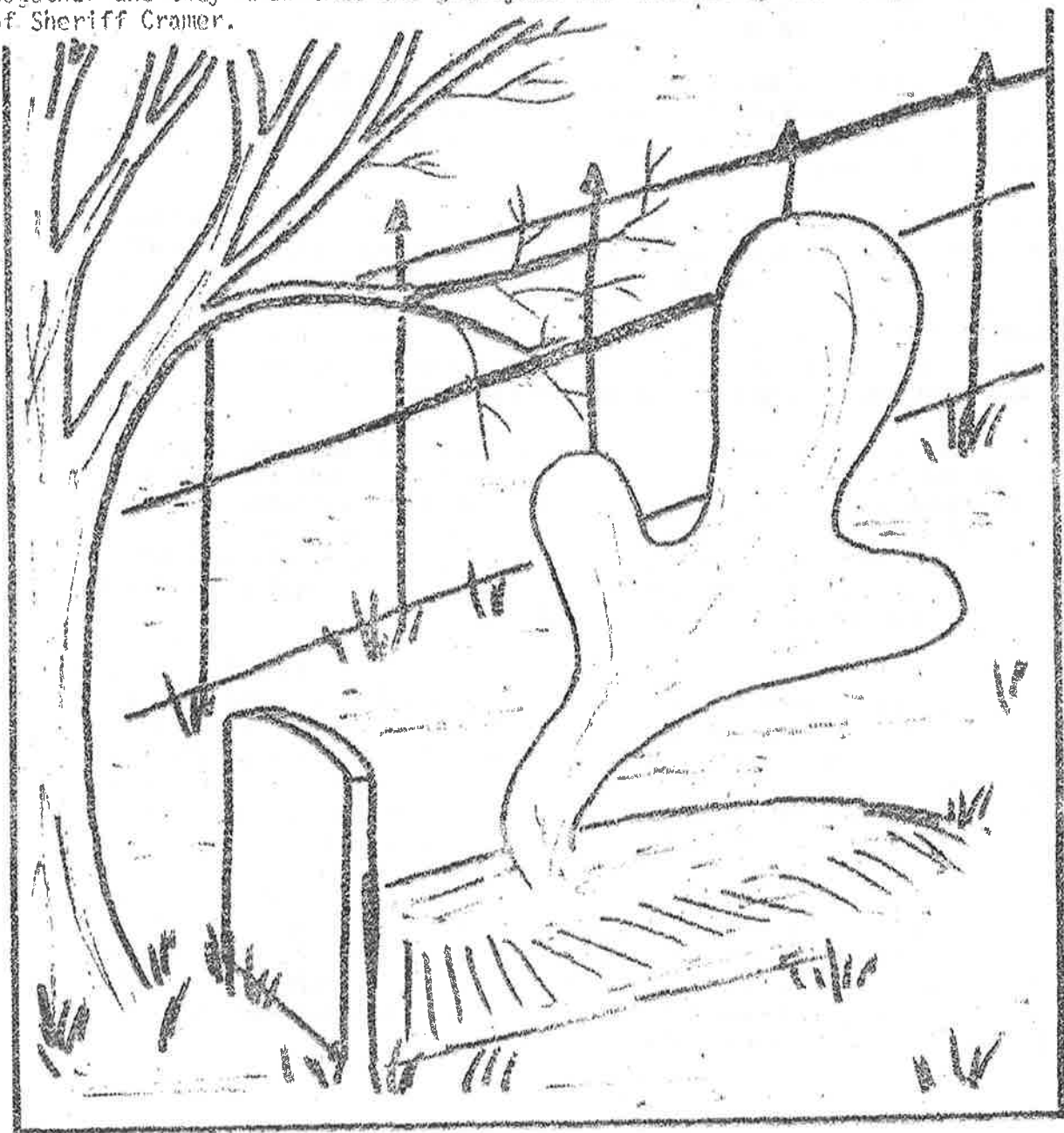
Shutting the big door quietly behind him, he walked silently across the wet, muddy ground onto the green, weedy graveyard lawn. The walk was only a few dozen feet and would have only taken him a matter of seconds, but he paused every few feet to listen. He walked slowly across the lawn, dodging the gravestones. Suddenly, he heard a loud, piercing scream and a black mist seemed to close in on him, making it harder and harder to breathe. He gasped once or twice and went down, holding his throat.

The next morning a partner of the architect came by to discuss some plans for a new building he had designed. He searched around and not finding anyone, he went to the backyard where he spotted the footsteps in the mud leading to the graveyard. Searching among the tombstones for the tell-tale footsteps, he found a freshly dug grave. Immediately, he contacted Sheriff Cramer and told him of the fresh grave.

When the grave was dug up, it contained the body of the architect who, after the autopsy was made, was found to have died of strangulation.

The town council decided after long consultation that the graveyard should be shut off from further access. The graveyard was believed to be haunted.

Many years later two college students, while looking through records of the town in its early stages, discovered the diary of Sheriff Cramer. It told how the sheriff once had a wife who went insane. He shot her and buried her one night in the graveyard. The students put two and two together and they knew that the graveyard was haunted by the vengeful wife of Sheriff Cramer.



THE TUNNEL OF TIME

It was a bright sunny day, but to Alicia, it was a day of gloom. Even the brisk, salty air that blew her hair all around her face didn't make her feel any better. She was sailing across the large Atlantic Ocean, away from all she knew and into an entirely different world.

Since her parents had died a few weeks ago, her world had been a turmoil. The biggest blow came when, having no other near relatives, she was to be sent to live with her aunt in Nottingham. Really, she thought, it sounds like some town out of a story book.

In her early years she had heard stories about her aunt, how she had become a little "strange" when the man she loved married a girl from a family that had been her family's enemies for many years. Alicia had heard other stories, too, about how the ancient family home where she lived was haunted. The source of it seemed to be a certain bedroom in a high turret, her father had told her. But that had been long ago, and she decided that she must meet this aunt of hers with a calm countenance. Hopefully, her aunt would like her and there wouldn't be any problem.

The next three weeks passed slowly on the ship, but finally she arrived at Ipswich; the worst leg of the journey was over. But was it? At the port she gathered up her luggage and stood on the dock, waiting for someone to pick her up. After half an hour of waiting and worrying, a large buggy came rambling up the cobblestone street and stopped in front of her.

"Are you the kid who's gonna go live with old lady Manfred?" the driver queried.

"If you mean Miss Manfred of Nottingham, I am," she said.

"Well, hop in then," he said.

The drive was rather long, and fear mounted in Alicia's heart. What if she doesn't like me, she thought. What if I'm not needed around the house or she just doesn't want me? Oh, what if.....

"Well, here we are," yelled the driver. "Go ring the bell and I'll get your bags."

The mansion was like nothing she had ever seen. It was huge. As she walked up the stairs she noticed a young man's face in one of the windows on the top story. As she paused to stare at the face, he suddenly disappeared. Probably just shy, she thought.

Alicia's aunt welcomed her with more gusto than she had hoped for. She then led Alicia up seven flights of stairs into a high gable bedroom.

"I hope you don't mind the inconvenience of this room. It's just that I can't stand loud noises during the night. They make me nervous. I suppose that you have heard about this house being haunted."

"You mean it's true?" Alicia asked.

"Of course not," her aunt replied, "unless you honestly believe in that sort of thing."

"Oh," Alicia shivered slightly. "Not to change the subject, but who was the young man whose face I saw in the window in the room next to mine?"

"A young man you say?" she answered slowly. "I know of no young man in this house. Of course! It was the maid," she said, trying to reassure herself. "But, no, today was her day off. Alicia, you didn't see anyone!" her aunt concluded a bit sharply.

The next morning Miss Manfred suggested that Alicia might like to explore the house. Of course, the first place she went to was the bedroom next to hers. It was dark and large. In the center was a huge canopy bed. On the far wall was a large closet. She cautiously opened the door and looked inside. Behind a row of musty old dresses she found a door. Upon pulling it open, a gust of wind caught her and she was sucked inside.

First, it was very dark and tunnel-like with a small beam of light down at the end. As she walked through the tunnel, something like the dust of centuries settled on her shoulders and her clothing turned into a 14th century ball gown. Then the light at the end suddenly broadened into a large ballroom in an old house.

Stunned, she stood looking dazedly around her. She heard a noise to her right and turned to see the same young man she had seen at the window, staring at her.

"So, you do exist," she whispered.

"Of course, I do. What did you think I was?" he boomed merrily.

"Well, it's just what my aunt said about there not being any 'young man' in her house," she said more confidently.

"Well, she's right in that respect, the old hag. You're not in her house anymore. You're in mine!" he replied. "You see, this was once my house and your aunt's ancestor, Lord Manfred, moved in after he murdered me. So now I've come to avenge myself by permanently ridding this house of all its occupants so I can live in peace in my world."

"Well, what of me? What are you going to do with me?" she cried.

"Since you are the first mortal to cross this threshold and without mishap, you have a choice. Either stay and fight with me against your aunt, or go back and live with her. If you choose the latter, I must warn you that you face a grave danger from her. She has already planned to send you to the Ryan's Orphanage in Ipswich. So when you choose, beware!"

"You have proof of this plan?" she asked.

"Look in the mirror on the wall there. See your aunt? Now look closely at the heading of the paper she is signing. Is that not enough?"

"I will do as you say," she said simply. "By the way, my name is Alicia. What's yours?"

"Albin Nisteria, III." he said. "Now, we must go back up the tunnel and you must tell your aunt that Albin plots revenge unless she moves. Remember - Albin. She will know who you mean. Now leave."

Slowly, Alicia walked up the hall to her aunt's study. Without knocking she walked silently to the desk. There were papers on it with "Ryan's Orphanage" on them. So it was true.

"What are you doing, snooping in my private affairs?" her aunt shouted, yanking the girl away from the desk.

"I'm only here to relate a message: Albin plots revenge. Move from this house or face the consequences," she said coldly.

"I shall not, and no ghost or fourteen-year-old girl is going to intimidate me! Go back to your Albin! If you value your life, you won't return!" Miss Manfred screamed.

In the passage Alicia met Albin. She related her talk to him and he said, "Won't leave, will she? Well, I'll show her. Tonight we destroy the house."

Late that evening the call "Fire" rang through the streets. When firemen arrived, the house was practically consumed. Miss Manfred's body was dragged out of the flames, but no trace of the girl was ever found. It was supposed that she was consumed in the flames. But about the ruined mansion, stories have been told about strange sounds, such as laughter and voices heard as though from one end of a tunnel, but coming from the other.



A Second Chance

A slim, quite pretty, young woman is slowly walking down the park sidewalk. The rippling blue river is on her right and a playground full of happy children delighted with life at her left. The sun's rays gently rest upon her hair. Her golden strands sparkle as though they never felt the warmth of the great ball of light. Even though it is eighty-five degrees weather, Jessica shivers. She walks down a path which leads to the water. Sitting down on a rock, she watches the water ripple by, its cool sprays touching all in its way. Sadly following the steady pace of the river with her tortured blue eyes, she notices a wild rose that has gotten in the way of the blue master. Its cool sprays of water slowly pull the rose into the deep blue. Jessica quickly moves to the rose branch and rescues the precious flower. She gently strokes the beads of water off, as her sad eyes catch the beauty of the water-beaten flower.

The water droplets are replaced with tears of grief from the heart-broken girl.

"My life is just like yours. Strong forces that you're unable to resist knock you down and keep on going along their way as though nothing happened. At one time this enemy force provided you with life (water to live and clean air to breathe). Now it has just attempted to destroy you. You are lucky. You were saved. I'm not that lucky," Jessica tearfully whispers.

She lays back against a tree trunk and slowly drops into a reminiscent state.

* * * * *

Life was never easy for her. As she was advancing from childhood to puberty, she had family problems. Her father was a drug addict. Every penny her mother slaved to make, he'd take away to buy brain-eating drugs that he'd endlessly shoot into his veins.

Then, one day, as she and her mother fearfully watched her father's crazy, drugged state, they slowly moved toward the door. Her father, Walt, grabbed her mother, Bett. Both females started to scream. Bett fought off Walt. She ran out of the room. Jessica stood there. Walt took a savage look at her and charged toward her, taking advantage of her state of shock. Jessica came out of it, but it was too late. Walt's grubby hands savagely hanked her golden hair. She struggled uselessly. He threw her to the floor and viciously hit her until she was bloody and unconscious.

Jessica revived in the loving arms of her beloved mother. Laying in a heap on the floor with a huge hole in his head was her dad. Jessica buried her face into her mother's breast, praying to be saved. Bett comforted her child as best as she could.

Jessica stopped crying as a tap sounded on the door. Bett slowly opened the door. Two huge policemen entered. One went over to Walt's crumpled

body. The other handcuffed Bett and read her her rights. Then he glanced into Jessica's fearful eyes. "Call an ambulance for this poor kid," he called to the other officer.

* * * * *

From that moment on, her life went from miserable to worse. Her mother was found guilty of manslaughter. Jessica was put into numerous foster homes. If she wasn't raped, beaten, or ignored completely, it was something else. Nobody wanted her. She was just in the way.

Her early teen years were a little better for a while. She always had a boy around her, saying nice things to her. This misunderstood attention brought her nothing but unhappiness. If she didn't give the guys what they wanted, she woke up the next morning with a swollen, black and blue body. She just dragged herself from day to day, hoping God would help her find happiness.

On the day of her sixteenth birthday, she received a court order to live on her own. It was a ticket to a new life. Little did she realize that your past is always with you.

For awhile she was doing fine - going to work, coming home, getting eight hours' sleep, and starting the cycle all over again.

Then one day at work she met her Mr. Right. She went out with him a few times and fell more deeply in love with him every day. Then, one day her man, Bill, presented her with an engagement ring. He said he was going to give a party that night to announce the engagement. She went home, feeling the true meaning of joy. Everything was fine until the party was well underway and almost time for the engagement announcement. Bill was introducing Jessica to a group of his friends when a familiar voice said to Bill, "Hey, aren't ya gonna introduce me to your lovely lady?" Bill made the introductions and when Jessica saw the eyes and body of that familiar voice, she grew panicky. Her teenage years quickly flashed past her. Maybe this man wouldn't remember the nights he had spent with her. No, there was recognition in his eyes. Jessica knew her life was once again going to be ruined. Before she could say a word, this man pulled Bill aside and they headed for Bill's private study.

A few minutes later the man entered the room and headed for the door, casting a smile in Jessica's direction. Jessica ran to the study. Bill was in his chair with his head leaning back against the high back of the chair. He looked at her as she closed the door. When she turned around she saw the hurt in his eyes. She ran over to him. Before she could speak, he angrily demanded, "How could you have led me to believe that you were a decent girl? And to think I was going to marry you. A slut! I was going to marry a tramp! Get out of my life. I never want to see you again."

Jessica started to speak, but he got up and stormed out of the room. Jessica grabbed her coat and left, once again thrown out.

* * * * *

A month of soul-searching has passed since that day. Jessica can't take any more. Nothing is left for her in this life.

* * * * *

Jessica comes out of her reminiscent state. She pulls out a pad and pen and writes some words. She rips the note off the pad, folds it, and pins it to her shirt.

It has grown dark by now. She pulls out a revolver from her backpack. After placing the wild rose she rescued beside her heart, she raises the gun to her head. There is one loud blast and all is silent, all except the water that ripples on by.

The next morning Jessica's body is found, her pitiful face showing all the pain life had poured on her, handful by handful. The officer on hand carefully unpins the note from her shirt. He opens it and reads:

To Whom It May Concern,

All my life nobody has given me a chance to be myself. When I find a little happiness, it's taken away. What did I ever do to deserve this? I hope the baby which replaces me (I believe in reincarnation) can find love and respect in this cruel world. I hope that if its life gets off to a bad start, somebody can help straighten it out. I hope that it can wake up in the mornings and face the world with a smile. I hope that it can walk down the street with its head held up high, proud to be itself. I hope it never has to hide from the world like I did.

This rose against my heart has died with me. May we now rest in peace. May we be left alone to find happiness in another life....

A week later the funeral was held. The only people there were a priest and the policeman who found her. After the priest left, the cop placed upon the fresh mound of earth a bouquet of wild roses. As he knelt beside the grave of the unfortunate girl, he whispered, "May you find happiness, dear Jessica. May you live in a world where no harm will reach you. God be with you." He then broke down and cried. Why was life so unfair, he wondered. One girl is gone, but there are many girls like her out there. Will they all end up like her, so unloved and unwanted that nobody would notice their absence?

At that very moment, the officer, Mike Cunningham, decided he wouldn't let that happen. He went home and started contacting important people. He had been chosen to help the unfortunates and he wouldn't let them down. No, by God, he wouldn't.

Five years later he sits behind a desk in his new office. A rehabilitation center for the unloved is under his command. He has only a few people now, but there are more recommendations for his center. On the entrance door is a plaque. On it is the letter Jessica wrote before she died. He is going to help those others. God selected him and he is doing his job. Mike Cunningham has rehabilitated one girl and she is now working for him. Day by day, more young people are checking in to his center. These people are getting that chance, thanks to Jessica.

Rest in peace, Jessica. Your wishes were granted.



Thump

Thirteen year old Melinda was pretty and graceful. She had dance lessons every afternoon and played the piano quite well. She lived with her mother because her parents were divorced. I liked her; she was always kind to me. I am sixty years old and a cripple. I live across from her; therefore, she always comes to me with her problems.

The morning of that special day was usual except for one thing, a convict, a murderer with a wooden leg, had escaped from the penitentiary. The rest of the day was usual until four o'clock, the time that Melinda goes to her dance lessons. I was sitting by the window, watching for her since I didn't have anything else to do and I like to wave to her as she goes on her way. Anyway, I was sitting there when she came running across the street. She knocked on the door and I called, "Come in!"

"I don't have a ride to my dance lesson and I am afraid to go by myself because that convict is running loose," she said breathlessly.

"I doubt if he is even in this neighborhood. You probably don't have to worry," I said.

"I hope I don't meet him. Gosh, I'd better be getting along if I don't want to be late. Bye, see you later," she said.

"Bye, honey," I said.

I watched her go down the street and out of sight. I then went to the kitchen to get dinner.

It was 6:00 and getting dark. I sat by the window, waiting to see if Melinda got home safely. She was late and I wondered where she was. A little fear crept into my mind. I got worried so I opened the window, stuck my head out, and looked down the street. I saw Melinda coming up the street. I started to yell "Hi" at her when I noticed a dark object behind her.

Thump, thump. It got louder. My heart froze in horror because of what I saw. Melinda walked faster. Thump, thump. She ran up the doorstep and reached for the doorknob. She's safe, I thought! The door was locked. She tried to get her key out, but he was right behind her now. She glanced over her shoulder, saw him, and screamed one long, piercing scream.

He raised a long, heavy object over his head and brought it down on her head with a blow that could be heard clear across the street. She crumpled down on the doorstep into a dark shape with blood running all over.

I reached for the phone.

The Kidnapping

The night was cold and damp and not a sound was to be heard in the stillness. Carrie, a fourteen year old girl from San Francisco, was alone in her three-level house in the richest part of the city. The D.J. on her favorite radio station announced that the time was 11:53 p.m., just before the news program stated Bulldog McKinley escaped from prison three hours earlier.

Bulldog was wanted for armed robbery, assault with a deadly weapon, and murder. Carrie quickly changed the station before anymore news could frighten her. Cleo, her Siamese cat, lay next to her, asleep. Suddenly, Cleo jumped up and hissed loudly. Carrie tried to grab her pet, but Cleo hid under the couch before she could. Carrie slowly crept to the front door to lock it. She heard voices. "Climb up the trellis, Bruce. Clarence and me will go through the window at the side, and, Ape, you go to the back door."

Carrie panicked. She hid behind a chair but realized that wouldn't help. While tiptoeing to the phone, she heard footsteps above her. She knew if she didn't act fast, it would be too late.

It was too late. When she picked up the phone, it was dead; the cord had been cut.

"Okay! Turn around, Honey, and don't try nothin' cute."

Standing directly behind her was a huge man she later learned was Ape. He looked like an ape, too. He needed a shave, haircut, and a bath.

"Don't just stand there. Tie her up," Bulldog ordered from behind Ape. Carrie watched as the four men cleaned out her house of all valuables. She wished her parents would hurry up and get home, but it was only 12:45 a.m. They weren't usually home from one of the office parties until around 3:00 or 4:00 a.m.

After the robbery was completed, Bruce untied Carrie and held a knife to her throat. "Baby, make one sound and I'll kill ya on the spot."

Bulldog led everyone out to a black van. He tied Carrie's hands and feet and shoved a bandana in her mouth. After Bulldog and Clarence had a long discussion outside, Bulldog removed the bandana from Carrie's mouth and demanded that she tell him the location of her parents. Crying, Carrie said, "Why do you want them? Take me but leave my parents alone."

"Your old man got my brother arrested, Hon," Bulldog explained in a harsh voice. "And in the slammer he got killed by a warden. The warden's dead; now it's your dad's turn."

Carrie told them the party was at Michael's Electronics executive building that her dad owned on 53rd Street. Pulling up as close to the twenty-five story building as possible, Bruce and Clarence dragged Carrie in as Bulldog and Ape grabbed two machine guns. They climbed the dark

stairway to the tenth floor with Carrie leading the way.

Five guards stood at the entrance and recognized the escapee. Shots were fired and all five guards were killed. The glass doors shattered into nothing; and the people reacted almost instantly, screaming and crying. Bulldog stood on top of a table in the front of the elegant dining room, filled with over three hundred people. With a handgun, Bruce shot one bullet in the air and yelled, "Shut up!" at the top of his lungs. Almost everyone obeyed. The ones who didn't were quieted with a bullet in the stomach.

"O.K., point out your parents, Chick, and now!" Bulldog yelled, but Mr. and Mrs. Michaels stepped forward before their daughter could say a word. Bulldog, Clarence, and Bruce dragged Carrie and her parents outside while Ape shut off the electricity. He then met everyone else in the van.

"What's the meaning of this?" Carrie's father demanded.

"You're the guy who narked on my kid brother, Pops, and now you're gonna pay," Bulldog screamed at Mr. Michaels.

Just as the light of morning appeared, Clarence pulled into a thickly wooded area. About two miles down a narrow, rutted road was an old log cabin that the gangsters apparently used as a hideout.

Bulldog grabbed Mr. Michaels by the arm and led him to a big oak tree. Carrie and her mother were in tears; they begged the men to let their beloved husband and father go.

Ignoring their frightened cries, Bulldog stood the middle-aged man against the tree. One shot was fired and in a split second, Mr. Michaels fell to the ground. Blood covered his head, and Bulldog left him there. Laughing, he entered the van. "Take 'em to Sacramento and we'll dump 'em there. By the time they report this, we'll be long gone."

What Bulldog didn't know was that "long gone" meant dead. When they were about ten miles from Sacramento, Clarence fell asleep at the wheel. The van went out of control and headed straight for a gasoline truck on the opposite side of the highway.

The truck hit them head on and burst into flames instantly. Carrie, her mother, the four gangsters and the innocent truck driver all died on that bleak Sunday afternoon. Michael's Electronics was carried on by Carrie's uncle, but two years later, he was forced to close down because of financial difficulties.



THREE YEARS AND COUNTING

I am a murderer. I'm what the police call a psychotic killer. I love to kill. It's my hobby.

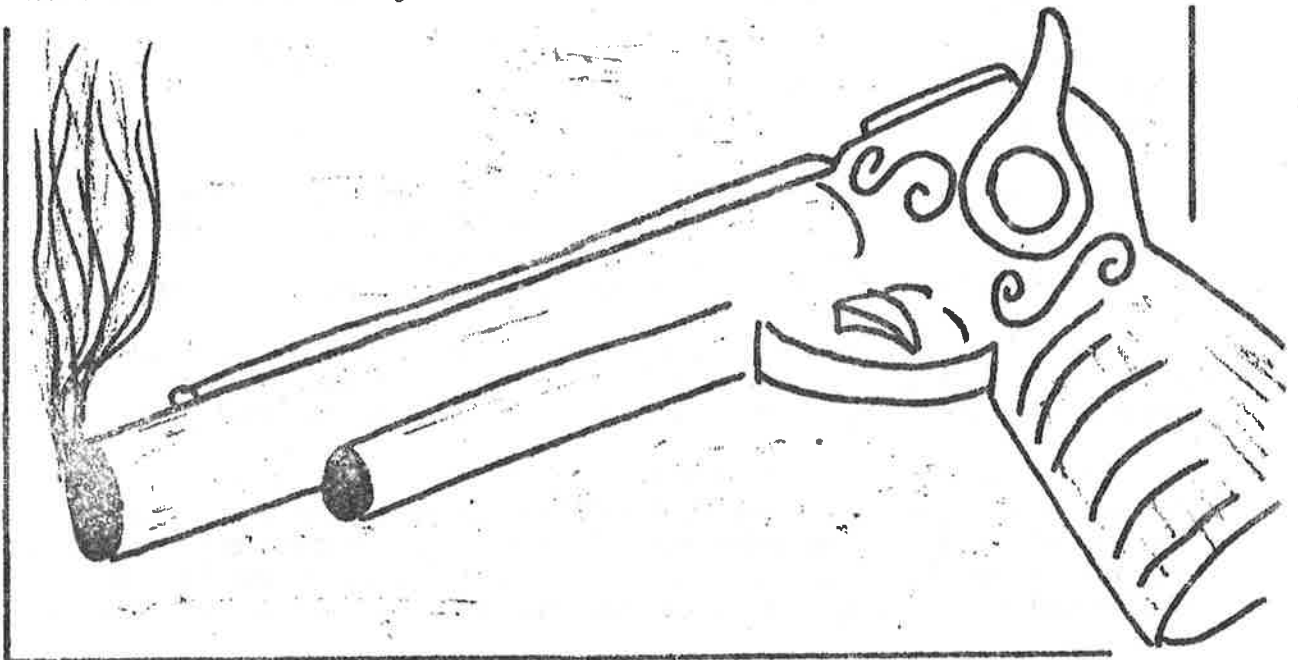
After I find someone I want to kill, I give them three years to save or kill themselves. I gather information slowly, using only what they tell me. Everybody lets things slip. Let them decide their fate. All this is important. At the end of the three years, I go to their home and kill them.

Let me tell you about my latest victim. In one year I've learned the following about her: She's from the South (she said she remembered blacks having separate drinking fountains when she was a kid). I estimate her age to be twenty-eight to thirty-two. She's married and, unfortunately, her last name is common. This means I must wait for her to make a slip. Sometime, somewhere, she will tell me her husband's name. She drives a small, tan compact, license number TTJ 434. I could always look at the registration, but that would be cheating. I want to give her a chance.

You may think this is a strange hobby. I'll admit that it is. The problem is, I can't stop killing people. It's become a habit.

I started killing when I was thirteen. My first victim was a teacher named Mrs. Kenneth. I shot her with my father's gun. After that, I felt I should give my victims a chance to live, so they get three years.

If I kill my latest victim, it will be my seventh murder. There is one thing I don't know: will I be able to stop so I won't be caught? There isn't a cure for my habit unless I take my own life as number seven.



A Great Day for a Skate

What a nice day for a skate on the river, thought Emily. The weather was indeed perfect for it. The frozen river and lightly falling snow painted a lovely picture through the frosted window pane.

Quietly, not wishing to disturb her parents, Emily slipped on her ice skates and went outside. The air was crisper than she had planned, and she only had a light sweater on. Oh, well, she thought, I won't be out all that long.

The river looked pure white with its glaze of ice. "Don't go into the middle where the ice is thin," her father had always told her. She was glad he had, for now that she was alone, the thought of it comforted her.

How warm it is getting, she thought to herself. It really must be getting near spring after all.

The snow was now falling heavier. On one house the mercury was in the bottom of the thermometer.

My, if it gets any warmer the ice will melt, she thought. It's always nice when spring comes. I really should turn around now. I must be several miles from home.

As she swung around, a gust of wind caught her and pulled her to the middle of the river. Not trying to resist, she splashed through the thin glaze of ice. Suddenly, there was a resounding crack. The cold water rushed over her head. She gasped for breath. The current pulled her under, again and again. Frantically, she floundered in the freezing water, looking for a way to escape.

Over there on my right is a large stump embedded in the bank. I must reach it, she thought. She slowly pulled herself onto the freezing cold ice. Then, there was another crack as it broke under her weight.

Once again, she crawled up on the ice from the river. How cold it was! The air, too, was very cold. From a nearby house came the fragrant odor of bacon frying. This smell was joined by a host of others as she slowly crawled along the ice toward the overhanging roots from the stump.

She reached up and grabbed the root. There was a sudden, sharp pain as a secondary root on it punctured her hand as she attempted to pull up her weight. She now stood on the ice, still clinging to the root for support.

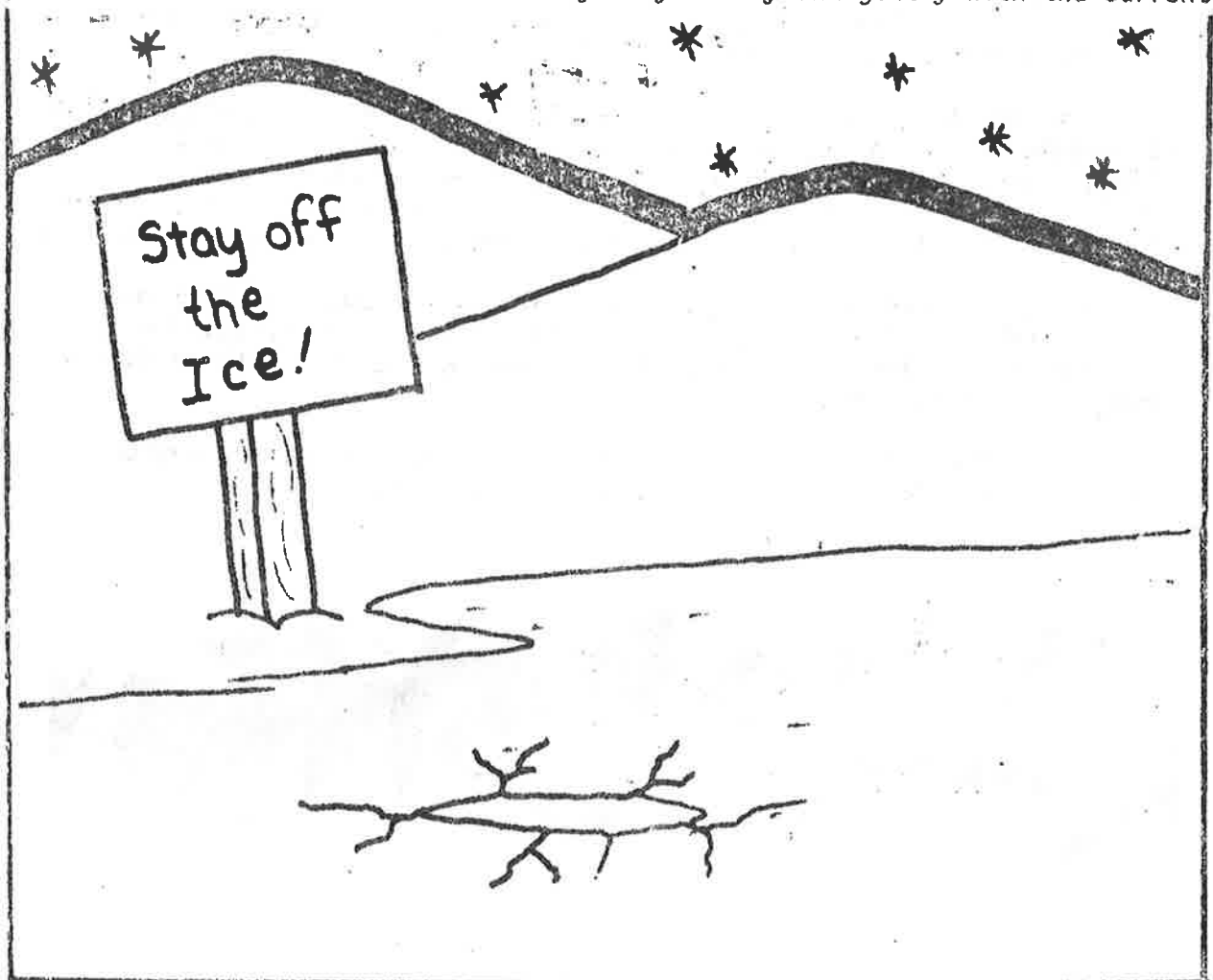
As she walked carefully off the frozen river, she saw a snow goose fly gracefully overhead. She took off her skates so she could walk better. The ground was very hard under her cold feet. She tripped over a small branch and fell to her hands and knees. She felt a dull ache in her left knee. As she looked at it, bright red blood spurted from a scrape on her knee cap.

I must get home quickly, she suddenly thought. As she ran, numerous little things caught her attention: a black spider running up a tall pine tree; birds flitting and chirping in the tree tops; the beautiful crystallized snow blanket covering the fields and pastures along the wide road on which she was now traveling.

Immediately ahead of her, at the end of the road, was her familiar front yard and doorstep. How nice it is, she thought, to be home after such an ordeal.

As she ran up the path, her parents came out of the door with arms outstretched toward her. She ran to embrace them and wearily fell into their arms. She was then guided to the warm hearth, wrapped in a heavy wool blanket, and handed a hot cup of tea. The latter warmed her hands as she held it. Feeling very warm and comfortable, she took a sip of tea. As the hot, burning beverage slipped down her throat, she drifted off into a soft slumber.

Slowly, the gentle river flows on. The only thing to mar the scene is a jagged, broken hole in the middle of the ice. Caught on the edge of the hole is a small object, wrapped in a bright red sweater. Long yellow hair lies on the red sweater, half in and half out of the water. A small rabbit pauses in his tracks to watch the body sway slowly and gently with the current.



THE LAST LAUGH

There were only a few minutes of life left for Dr. Lemod. A few minutes isn't a great deal of time, but it was just enough to demolish the world.

They had all laughed at him and his photon XJ-5. They had called his magnificent creation a big bucket of bolts. He knew his XJ-5 could blast the world to smithereens. They would pay. They would repent, but it would be too late and he would get the last laugh.

He had it all worked out. All he had to do was push a small red button on the far corner of his desk and it would set off a 60 second timer. Sixty seconds is a long time to wait to die. At the end of this 60 seconds, the bomb would detonate. He had waited his whole life for those few seconds.

He could hear them pounding on the door of the vault he used as his lab. He had a triumphant smile on his face as he reached for the button.

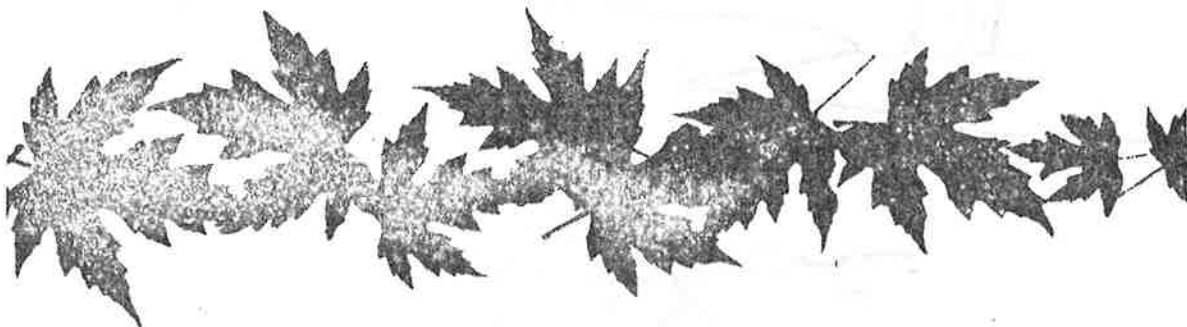
He never pushed the button. Before he could, he had a heart attack. His 60 seconds of glory were lost as he died with a devilish grin on his face.

By the time the police had gotten the vault open, the body was starting to cool off. They looked around a few minutes. When they found nothing of great interest to them, they left.

Five minutes later, an old scientist entered. A young police officer accompanied him. He looked for the plans to the photon XJ-5 while the officer looked on. After finding them, he studied them for awhile. For the first time, the policeman took notice of the body. He felt a little sick. He felt light-headed as he leaned heavily on one corner of the desk.

As they walked out, the scientist said, "You know, that XJ-5 would have worked." Neither of them noticed exactly where the officer had put his hand when he leaned on the desk. Neither of them had noticed when he pushed the red button.

Although no one was in the building, a strange, ghoulish laughter echoed through the halls as the seconds ticked away.



The Horror That Never Ends

In life there are some things that stay with you until death. These things may be good or they may be bad, but, for sure, they never leave you.

* * * * *

My name is Benjamin Baxter and I am a psychoanalyst. I meet many people in my work with many bizarre problems. Still, I have found none to match the strangeness of a certain patient which I will refer to as Mr. M. It was like a mental menace that lived with him night and day. As I think of it, it must be like living with an imp from hell.

It happened about four years ago when I was working for a mental institution in Nogales, Arizona. Mr. M. had been committed by his relatives for repeated screaming in the night and claiming that he saw people being murdered in his sleep.

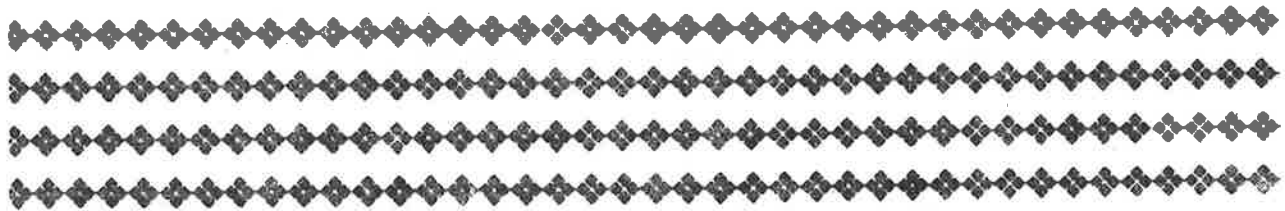
Mr. M. was put under my care about two weeks after I arrived. When I talked to him, he seemed to be a normal man, maybe a bit paranoid at times. In my first series of talk sessions with him, he told me about his childhood. I could find nothing significant about his childhood with the exception that when he was about nine or ten, he remembered that the minister from his church told him that he had something to do with death, but he didn't know what.

About six or seven sessions after that, he told me when the visions of people being killed began. He was 16 years old when it first occurred. It was three days after his birthday, and he had just gotten into bed. He remembered seeing a man and a woman walking down a dark street. He said that the street looked familiar but he could not place it. There was a car coming down the street very slowly and when it reached the couple, someone in the back seat pulled out a gun and shot six rounds. The couple fell to the ground. The last thing that he saw in that vision was the blood dripping off the curb. There were many visions after this one but none were repeated.

I was transferred from that institution after five months, but I found out as much as humanly possible about Mr. M. in that short time. Unfortunately, it was not enough to find out what was causing the visions. On my way to Pennsylvania (which is where I was being transferred), I had an idea about the cause of his problem. Mr. M. had told me when the visions had occurred, so I called the police station in his home town to ask if any murders had been committed within these times. Much to my surprise, on every one of the dates Mr. M. gave me, there had been a murder and they happened the same way Mr. M. had explained them to me.

It was evident that Mr. M. had a kind of ESP. Wherever a murder was committed near the area that he was in, his mind transferred a picture of the murder to him. A short time later, I learned that Mr. M. had escaped

the institution and had seemingly crossed the border. He was doomed to see every murder in the general area that he was in. That was something he would have to live with for the rest of his life.



THEN IT HAPPENED

I was walking through the legendary Screaming Forest on a cold, lonely, heart-stopping, freezing night. There was nothing but the thought of terror flowing through my mind.

In an effort to calm myself, I thought how nice it was - no people were around. All was quiet and still. The light of the moon glowed on the path in front of me. Feeling somewhat better, I continued on my way.

Then it happened. A dark cloud scudded across the moon, blackening the path in front of me. The wind howled through the trees. I panicked. I've got to get out of here, I thought. I've got to get out.

I quickened my pace. I was running. The more I ran, the louder the howling became. Now I was also hearing screaming and laughter coming from all around. I twisted and turned, yelling, "Stop, stop! Please stop!" There was no answer to my plea.

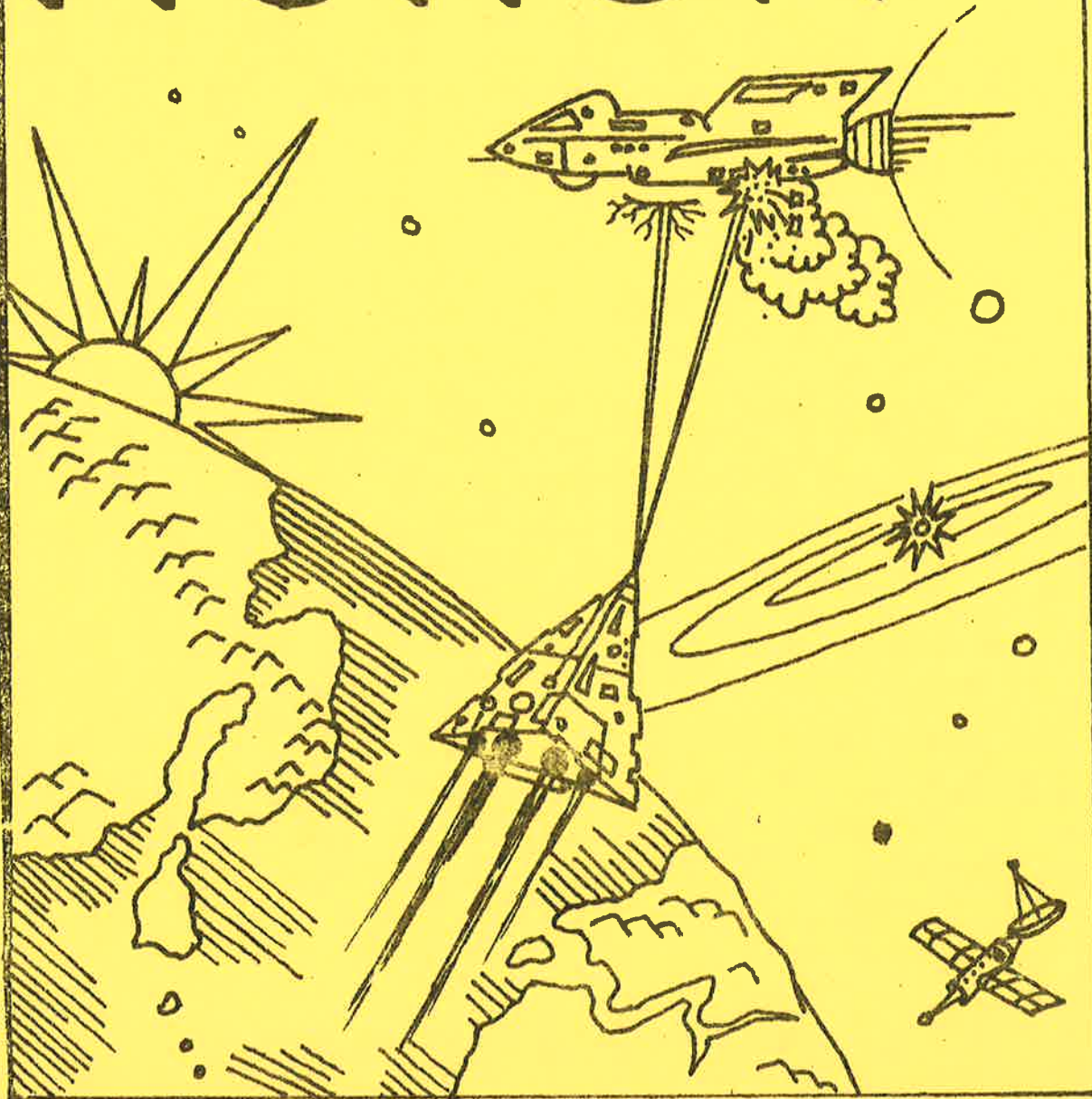
The screaming and laughter was louder, louder than ever. I covered my ears, hoping it would go away. I kept saying over and over again in my mind, it's a dream. I'm only dreaming.

I took my hands from my ears only to still hear those awful sounds. I continued to run - faster, faster, and faster yet. I seemed to get nowhere. Then I fell.

It was a never ending fall. I fell and fell, farther and farther down. I landed with a thump.

In a daze I pulled myself to my feet. I had fallen out of a bad dream. It was beautiful. The sun was shining brightly; the birds were singing. The flowers and trees smelled of freshly fallen rain. I looked down. There was my fishing gear near the edge of the stream - right where I had set it down. I grabbed it up, whooped joyously, and ran towards home. A nightmare had ended.

SCIENCE FICTION



PROJECT TIME FREEZE

In an age of natural and man-made disasters, in a time of inflation and a crashing stock market, in an age of droughts and nuclear wars, in a time of bad international relationships and conflicts with Communist nations, not all things are bad. Some things can be good.

September 15, 1984, was the first day in a chain of events that would lead up to one of the most fantastic voyages ever taken by mankind. On that autumn day, I, Col. Mahlon McCorby, was notified by the National Science Agency (NSA), that I, out of twenty men qualified, had been selected to work with a top secret project called "Time Freeze". Four other men and women were also selected for the project. The following is my story from my personal notes, notes from the four other members of project, and official records of the National Science Agency.

It all happened very fast. I had just returned home from a bombing mission in the Middle East the evening before. Then, on the morning of September 15, the five personnel selected for the program, including myself, were notified by the NSA that we had been chosen to work with a top secret project. The next thing we knew we were on Air Force jets and off to Washington, D.C. We arrived in Washington on the 16th and that night we were taken to the Pentagon for a top secret briefing. None of us knew each other and none of us knew what was going on; but since we were all officers of either the Army, Air Force, or Navy, we were obliged to do as we were ordered. As a colonel in the Air Force, I am used to attending unscheduled meetings. Rarely though, is it a top secret meeting and in Washington, D.C., at the Pentagon, of all places!

We all knew it had something to do with the NSA since they had notified us in the beginning. While preparing for the meeting at the Pentagon, I began thinking. It had been several years ago when I had volunteered to work with the NSA through my career with the Air Force, and now I guessed that they thought it was my turn to go to work.

At 8:00 p.m. the five of us were taken to the Pentagon in black limousines. After we arrived, we were taken to a top official briefing room. In the room sat the Joint Chiefs of Staff from the Army, Air Force, and Navy. Several other officials from NSAS, the NSA, and the Armed Forces stood and sat scattered around the room. At the head of the conference table sat the Commander and the Chief of the Armed Forces, the President himself.

The President looked tired and worn. He, too, had recently returned from the Middle East. The President had been at a Summit Conference, concerning the communistic infiltration of Israel and possible warfare.

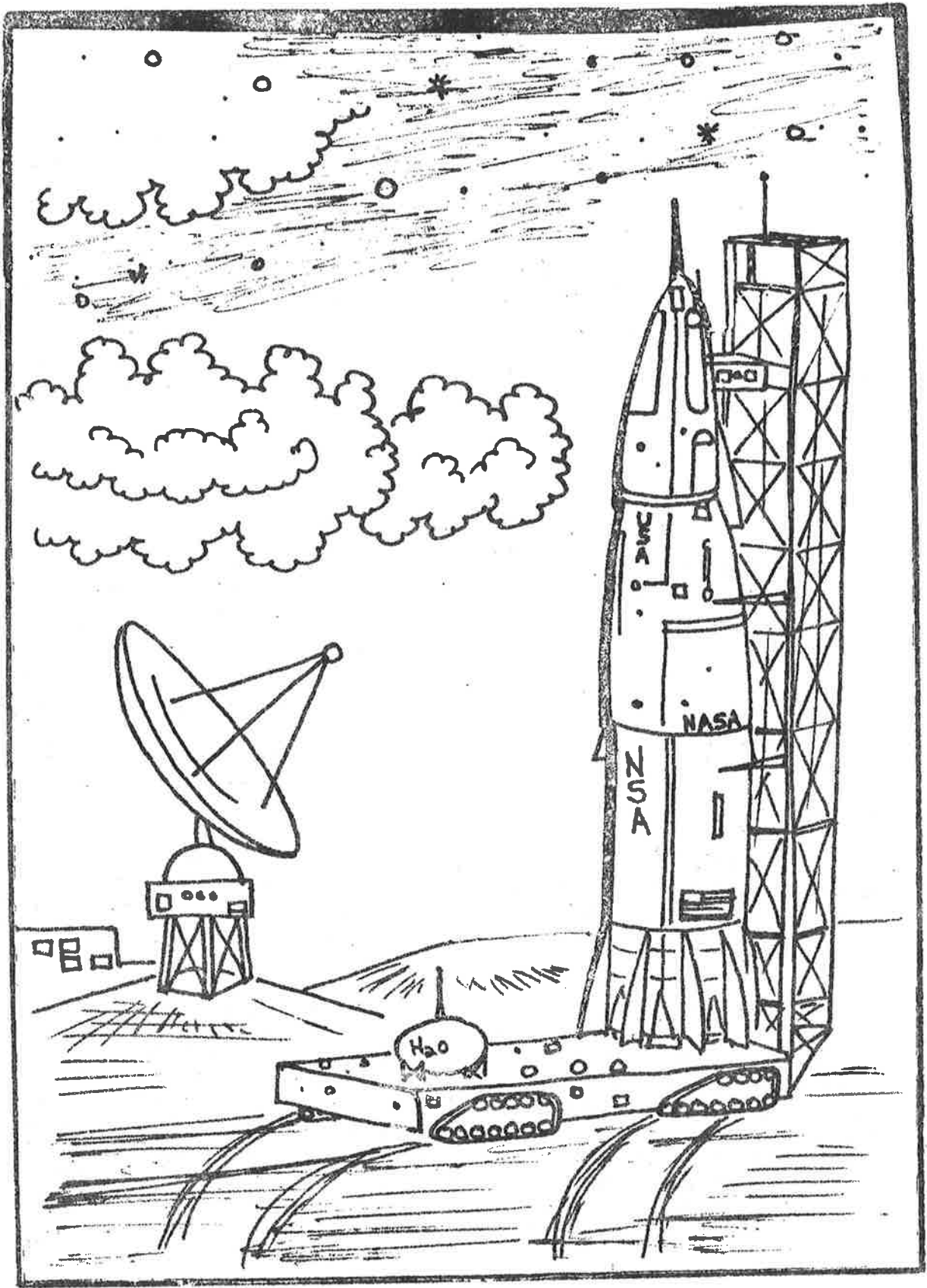
Several minutes later, we were seated across from each other at the President's end of the table. The room came to order and the briefing was quickly started. At the opposite end of the table from where we were sitting, a man, who introduced himself as the project director for TIME FREEZE, began explaining briefly what TIME FREEZE was really about.

This is basically what he said: "Time Freeze" is a project designed by the NSA to explore the future. The USS Time Freeze is a multi-billion dollar spacecraft with a build-in Hyber-animation unit. A Hyber-animation unit is a machine that puts a human body into a trance-like state at -50 degrees centigrade, at which time the person in Hyber-animation does not feel or have knowledge of time passing; for example, from the time a person goes into Hyber-animation until he comes out of it some years in the future, it will have seemed like only a one-minute process. Also, a person in Hyber-animation does not age! The computer controls all bodily functions and supplies whatever needs the body may have."

The project director finished his explanation and sat down nearby. This time a lady spoke to the group; she was the project's planning official. This is what she had to say, "In our search for knowledge, man has always wondered what the future would hold. We, at the National Science Agency, hope we have found a way to explore the future. We plan to send the USS Time Freeze into an orbit that is fully controlled by its onboard computers. Inside the ship, five people, called Hybernauts, will be under the Hyber-animation process. The ship computer will have a designated time of arrival in the future; for instance, 100 or 200 years. Thus, the ship will remain in orbit for its designated time; then, the computer will automatically bring the Hybernauts out of animation. The Hybernauts will explore the Earth from orbit and then, if possible, two or three of the Hybernauts will be able to take the excursion module and actually go down to the Earth of the future." She paused, "Now, the President would like to say something." She went to her chair and sat down.

The President stood and began to speak, "I have been informed that the mission of the Hybernauts is to explore the future and collect as much information about the future as possible, but the most important task they have is to seek out a time machine. The NSA has told me that, as scientists, they believe man will have perfected time travel in the future. Therefore, vast sections of the USS Time Freeze have been left empty in the hope that more advanced machinery and, hopefully, a time machine will be installed. If they don't find a time machine at their first stop through time, they will be able to reset the computer, enabling them to return to Hybernation and travel even farther into time. I have also been assured that the spacecraft itself is capable of withstanding normal space duration for 5,000 years or more. The ship can automatically repair itself and is able to cope with 15 to 25 major damages within the 5,000 year period." The President finished and took his seat.

At this point, we had all realized that we had been the five selected to be the Hybernauts. A tall, bearded man approached us; he addressed our group of five formally, "You five have been selected as the best team to work with the Time Freeze Project. If you agree to work for us at NSA, it will probably mean giving up everything in your present life style, including families and love ones, except by occasional communication with them through letters, phone calls, and so on. Each one of you has 48 hours to make a decision; you'll each have a special advisor assigned to work for you, so please notify him when you have decided. Remember, this is Top Secret until August of 1986. If it gets out, the government will have your necks. "You will now be escorted to the White House to have an evening with the



President." He finished talking and handed each of us a folder entitled 'TIME FREEZE PROJECT, TOP SECRET', and then left the room.

At 12:35 that night we had all returned to our hotels after a pleasant evening with the President. Security guards stood outside our doors and our every need was fulfilled by a special advisor that none of us really needed.

At 1:00 p.m. on September 17th, each of us pre-Hybernauts were sent home on Air Force jets along with our advisors. I arrived home in Denver and quickly told my special advisor where the best hotels were; he found a hotel which, to my relief, was on the other side of town. My home was quiet, since I am unmarried and have no pets. I began thumbing through my top secret folder. By 11:00 when I turned in, I had 'thumbed' through my folder at least a dozen times thinking, thinking.

I thought about the importance of the mission, what it would mean to me and the country. And yet, when the Soviet Union found out about that same importance, it would become a threat to them - then my life.

Yes was my answer when my advisor called me the next day. Yes, I had decided to give up my present life-style to live the life of a Hybernaut. After my advisor had come over and I had committed my name to a contract, I never saw him again. He had flown back to Washington and I was now an official member of Project Time Freeze.

My last days of normal active duty in the Air Force quickly passed. I was given a week off at the end, and I spent my time arranging for my personal possession to be shipped to Los Angeles where my parents live. I also sold my house, putting the money in my bank account which I left in my parents' names - just in case I never returned.

On October 10th I left Colorado on a commercial flight to Houston, Texas. On the 11th, I reported to the Johnson Space Center. The department of the NSA was a new building and I found myself there most of the day. I was furnished with an apartment in Houston and was told to report to work first thing Monday morning.

I arrived at work and saw the rest of the group of five. I was soon to find out that we had all accepted the offer to work with Project Time Freeze and that we would be working together on a crash training program. I had been a pilot for several years but I had never expected this; we worked five days a week, eight hours a day on office work and actual field training. We went through numerous tests, both mental and physical, and spent two hours a day just studying such topics as astrophysics, astronautics, engineering, medical sciences, electronics, computer maintenance, mechanics, chemistry, and much, much more. The next two years were the same, day after day, week after week.

When we had finished our training two years later, we were all official, expert Hybernauts. We were good friends by now and NSA had just released our new ranks and positions on the USS Time Freeze. The following is the official list released August 11, 1986:

OFFICERS AND RANKS OF USS TIME FREEZE CREW

CAPTAIN - JUDY RAMSEY

ASSISTANT COMMANDER - MAHLON MCCORBY

TECHNICAL OFFICER - CARL ELISWORTH

MEDICAL OFFICER - BARBARA MANCHESTER

ENGINEER OFFICER - JOHN MILLER

The next few days we said our good-bys to Houston, then we were off to Florida. We arrived in Florida on August 15 and got settled in at the barracks. We would be living here for the next three weeks.

On August 16, 1986, at 8:00 p.m. at the Kennedy Space Center, the five of us were scheduled to be at a briefing. I picked up Judy and we were on our way. Judy and I arrived just as the meeting was getting started. The same project director that we had met in Washington was preparing to speak; we took the two empty seats next to Carl Elisworth.

The director began his briefing to us, "Tonight, the President is going to make public our program to the American people and try to promote the public interest. He will also be talking about the Soviet problem in the Middle East and the possibility that the United States may have to support and supply Israel with military aid. There is even the possibility that the United States will have to go to war and that would most likely lead to a nuclear holocaust, especially if we get dangerously involved with the Russians."

The man almost got carried away talking about U.S. and Soviet relations, but then returned to the present subject matter. "Tomorrow, once all the information has been released to the public about Project Time Freeze, you five will be up to your necks with interviews and social engagements. You will be free to tour the nation and next month, all expenses paid, as long as it's business associated. Your security protection will also be increased. Your orders are to meet in Pasadena, California, on September 20th. You will be notified in California on the scheduled date of launch; then, you will go through last stages of preparation.

Before the man finished, he added one last thing, "Oh, yes. You can all be assured that if the Soviets continue to mess around in the Middle East that the U.N. is going to give them a good kick right where it hurts, like in their National Finance Program started by the U.N. last year. And, if it gets too serious, the President might have to abort Project Time Freeze."

The next month was exactly as planned with interviews from magazines and newspapers. We had appearances at clubs, parties, and social meetings. The month went by quickly. Soon, it was September 20th and we all found ourselves in Pasadena.

We reported to the Carter Space Center which was recently built in 1981. Here, we would remain until the launch of the USS Time Freeze. We were informed that the planned launching would take place on October 5th and that we would be taking several more tests during the last few weeks before the launching.

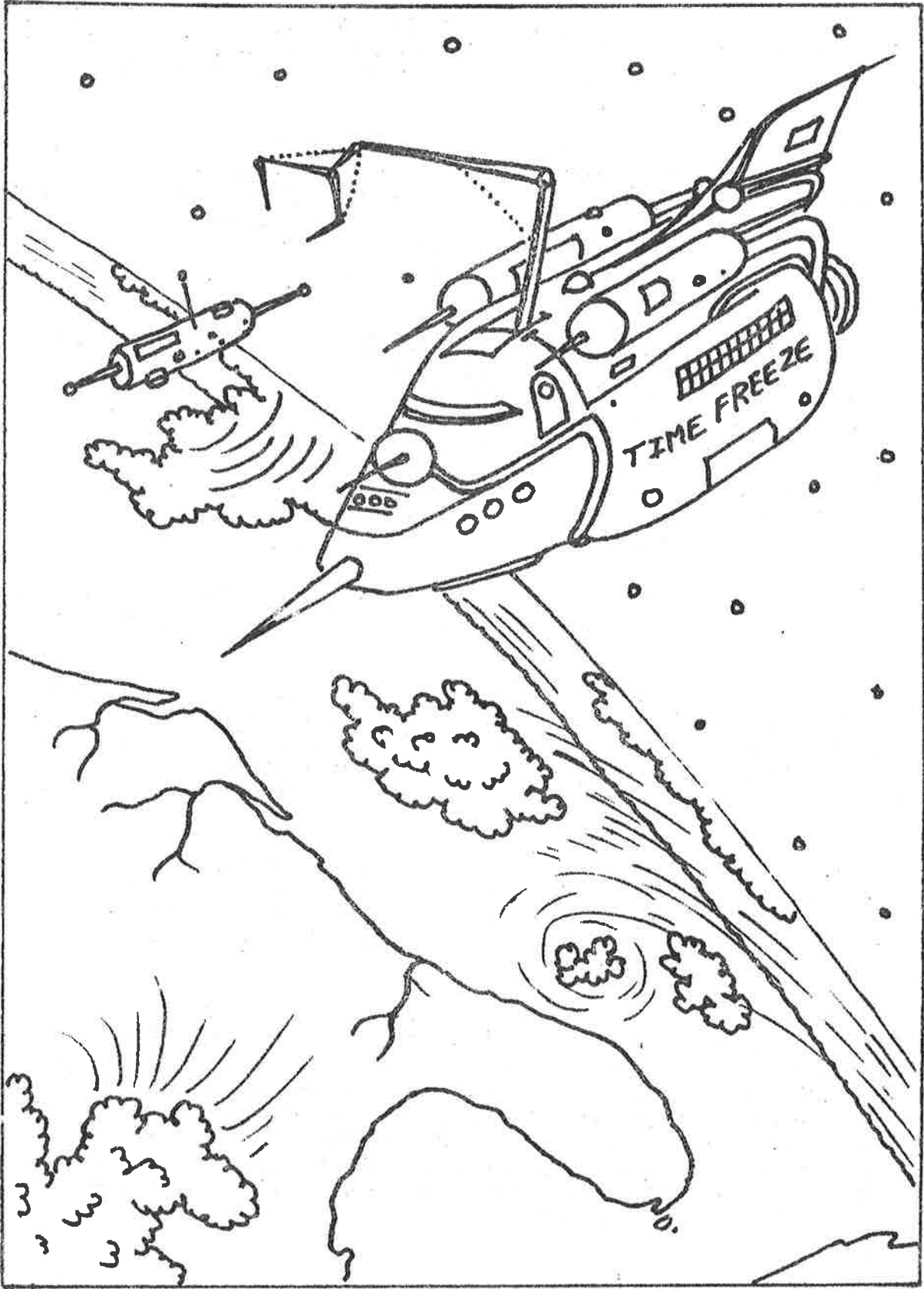
The tests we took were mostly physical. We were now living in a simulated area that resembled the interior of the USS Time Freeze; it was actual size, so at least it was roomy enough. On the second day we began eating the prepared packaged foods, similar to those the astronauts of the 70's ate except that they tasted much better. On the fourth and fifth days, we began taking gravity tests and simulated orbital condition tests. By the end of the month, we were in perfect condition and had passed all of our tests with high scores.

More and more, we were being kept from news and outside information. It was my opinion tht the NSA didn't want us hearing about the building conflict between the two superpowers of the world and the ever-threatening thought of destruction.

Then for five days, we were kept in solitary confinement. Our only contact with other human beings was by photo-radio transmissions. That was the hardest test of all, but we all passed. At least on the actual USS Time Freeze we would have music, movies, and other entertainment.

As the final days approached, the excitement grew. Then our hopes were shattered when we heard rumors that the President might have to abort the mission!

During our last days of testing, we had been kept from hearing all outside information, but I later found out the following news: The Middle East problem had flared up and now the nation had been put on alert in case of war. The Egyptians were attacking Israel from the south with the help of Soviet armies. There was a suspicion that the USSR was preparing to invade Israel from the north. The President had sent in reinforcement troops to aid Israel, but the fighting at the southern borders only increased. Congress was now preparing to send in the American Naval, Air and Land Forces. As a last resort, the President had even threatened the Soviet Union that if they didn't cease the aggression against Israel, the United States would invade Cuba. No response came from the Soviet Union; all was quiet. The American fleets were on their way to the Middle East, several armed with nuclear-thurmal weapons. Across the United States and allied countries, thousands of huge nuclear missile silos opened.



The USS Time Freeze was at T-Plus 26 hours to launch. With time passing ever so fast, it was soon less than 24 hours to launch. The phone connecting Mission Control with the White House rang. This would be the President calling, giving us either a go-ahead or an order to abort the mission. Someone answered it.

The President said, "The UN has just removed the USSR from membership in the United Nations. The world is on the edge of both nuclear destruction and extinction. So it is my decision that Project Time Freeze should be continued in the hope that the Hybernauts will discover a time machine in the distant future and will return to the present to warn the world of the horrible results of such a war. If they do not succeed . . . I wish them the best of luck."

With the mission set at 23 hours and 50 minutes to launch, we were suited and given our last orders and briefings. We were told that we were to continue as planned and to search, explore, and record data from the future. Most of all, we were told to search out a time machine and fulfill the President's dream of warning the world of the new present and coming nuclear holocaust. We were also told that the Hyber-animation unit was assured of working and that it worked successfully with monkeys a dozen times without failure. We were informed that the on-board computers would put the Hyber-animation unit into functioning once we sustained orbit.

We said our good-bys to the people we had worked with on the project; then we boarded the field bus that took us to the huge, waiting space vessel.

On our way to the waiting launch pad, while chatting with the others, I heard a newscast, "We interrupt this station to bring you an emergency broadcast report: Five atomic bombs have been dropped in Israel by the Soviet Union. The U.S. is preparing for a counterattack in Cuba. ALL CITIZENS ARE TO REPORT TO THE NEAREST BOMB SHELTER AND..." Click! The driver turned off the radio.

At the launch pad we were met by two scientists who escorted us to our new home and then left in the same field bus that we had come in. The elevator moved quickly by and we were soon within the spacecraft with the rest of the world closed out. Judy took the first Hyber-pod, I took the second, and so on by rank.

Mission Control radioed us: "Mission Control to USS Time Freeze, this will be your last contact with Earth, at least until 150 years from now; we wish you luck and success in the year 2136. Your computer will relay your altitude and time after launch until you reach an orbital status, at which time you will become unconscious and stay unconscious until the year 2136. Good luck, Mission Control, over and out." Our captain, Judy Ramsey, acknowledged for us all; then it was quiet except for the sound of our computer relaying data to us. For some reason, Mission Control hadn't turned off the radio transmitter.

Then I heard something over the radio that was not meant for us to hear. "Yes, Sir, that's right. The Soviets have just launched six killer satellites on an orbit . . ." The radio went silent and was now dead.

Our computer continued to relay data, "30 seconds to launch and counting." Twenty seconds later, "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, LIFT-OFF!" This was the time we had all been waiting for. Then why was I shaking? Not because the ship was shaking, but because I was nervous, and even a little scared.

"Fifty thousand feet and climbing." We were rising now into an orbit. "Third and final stage igniting. The ship is entering a substantial enough orbit to begin orbital reading." My eyes fluttered. My body felt a cold chill. My eyelids . . . slowly . . . closed.

My thoughts wandered. Would the world below be destroyed? Would I, Judy, the others, and the USS Time Freeze be destroyed? Would the world be a paradise or a radioactive cinder in the year 2136? There are a million questions; there are a million answers. Let's hope for the best.

* * * * *

And so, Mahlon McCorby, Judy, the others, and the USS Time Freeze continued its slow and lonely orbit, while on Earth in a dimly lighted bomb shelter a few miles from Washington, D.C., sat the President of the United States of America. He sat looking at a scrap book of news paper articles; one of them from the Washington Times caught his attention. He sighed and said, "Gentlemen, listen to this:

July 5, 1979

Reported from Washington, D.C.

Today five persons claiming to be from the future were arrested 20 miles from the capital. They were disturbing the peace and holding a demonstration against nuclear weapons. When one of them was asked why, one of them replied, "In the year 1986 men will destroy this world unless nuclear weapons are eliminated." Officials scoffed at their story and they were released with a \$50 fine. Later today, when officials tried to contact the group of five, none of them could be found; no evidence of their existence remained and they were never seen again. Officials say the incident was filed and will be forgotten."

The dim lights of the bomb shelter flickered and went out.



A WORLD'S END

The majestic warships of the Imperial planet Sirius II were speeding swiftly over the horizon, returning from another victory battle in the deep of space.

Inside the Imperial Military Headquarters, the Supreme Chief of Staff was giving his field commander a briefing:

"Commander, our Emperor wishes me to inform you that we must gain more territory before the end of this starmonth."

"I agree totally with you, Sir. By the end of the next solarweek, we should be able to conquer at least five solar systems between Einar III and Tri-opious."

"That's great. However, the Emperor is interested in our present situation. Give me a full report."

"Well, Sir, our ships are just now returning from a successful, routine mission in the Armenon VII system, located on the parallel plain of the elliptic galaxy.

"We overtook three solar systems within the duration of 70 hours. Of the three systems, we conquered three inhabited planets and imperialized two races of intelligent species. One civilization wouldn't submit to our demands and they resisted invasion, so we destroyed the entire planet.

"After that we returned to home base, Sir."

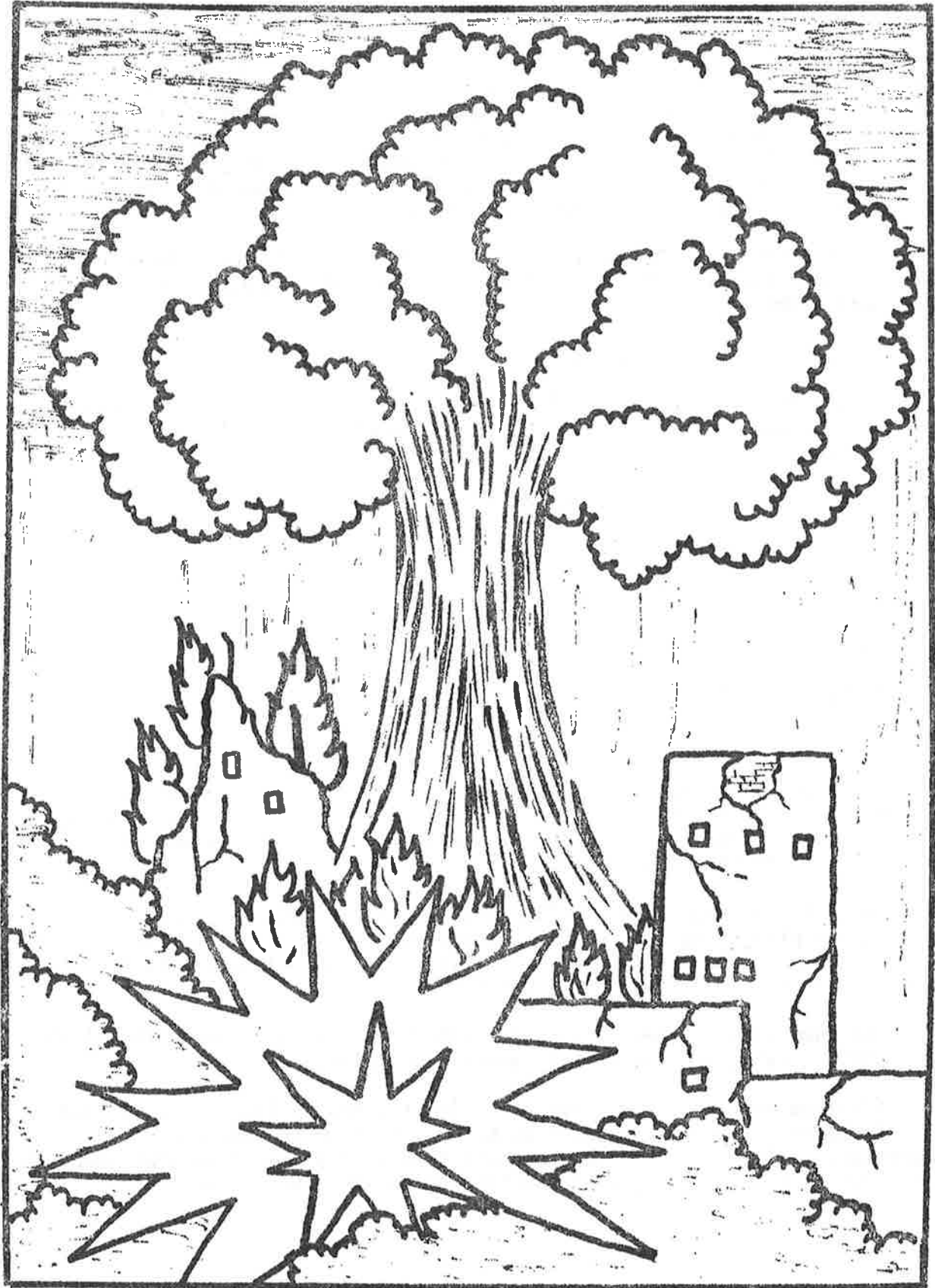
"Please detail the tactics you used, Commander! The Emperor will want to know."

"Yes, Sir.

"The first inhabited planet that we came across was an insectoid species that lived in case colonies. Very primitive, Sir. So we sent down a landing force armed with laser rifles and executed a third of the race. The rest were organized into slave labor camps and prepared for mineral mining purposes. We left one squadron of men in charge and then continued on to the next solar system.

"At the next system, we found two sister planets with primitive space travel and a low scale, intelligent government. At first they resisted our demands, but after we invaded their capital cities and decapitated their heads of state, they submitted to our wishes. The only trouble we had was minor damages to our ships by their outdated nuclear weapons.

"The fourth planet gave us the most resistance with their advanced thermo-space missiles. We were in need of time so we simply annihilated the planet.



"The last inhabited planet we encountered was too primitive to bother with. It was in an ice-age, so we began our return trip home.

"However, Supreme Commander, on our return trip we came across an uncharted planet. The inhabitants called the planet Earth. It was highly civilized but I would guess that they weren't much past a primitive trans-nuclear age. We devastated the farmlands, destroyed their space outposts, and established a temporary Imperial government. Since they submitted willfully and we were low on fuel, we declined to suppress their military armaments, deciding to wait until a later time."

"Field Commander, let me remind you that if that planet called Earth gives us any problem with their military, you could lose your rank for not suppressing them!"

"Yes, Supreme Commander, Sir, but . . ."

"But nothing! You know well the laws of Imperial Command! It was specifically stated that all alien military functions will be suppressed upon take-over."

"I'm sorry, Sir. I'll remember next time."

"If there is a next time . . ."

"Sir, the silent alarm!!"

"We're under attack! Report immediately to your post!"

"Yes, S . . ."

The missiles of the unsuppressed planet shot quickly over the dark horizon. Their fiery engines ignited the midnight sky with brilliant light. Like a meteor storm, the missiles covered the planet and then made their deadly plunge to the surface below.

In vital locations the missiles made precise pinpoint strikes. Within seconds the planet was aflame in one massive, nuclear fireball. The planet heaved; then the planet strained a gigantic, last convulsion. Its inner core collapsed in on itself in a dramatic world's end.

The once great Imperial planet called Sirius II died among the stars that night, giving freedom to its suppressed empire.

Floating not too far away in the cold of space an Earth ship floated. "Squad Leader calling Earth, calling Earth. We have encountered our oppressors. I'd guess that they weren't much past a primitive trans-nuclear age. Due to time, we simply annihilated the entire planet, Sir . . ."

THE YEAR 2000

It is the year 2000; it's a miracle Earth is still inhabited. The Russians have forced the world into Communism by threatening their destruction with the exception of the democratic United States of America. The Earth is in the midst of World War III.

President Bob McKee has ordered all long-range missiles to be aimed at Moscow, East Germany, and China. He has direct communication with Russia. The debate goes on for a long 72 hours.

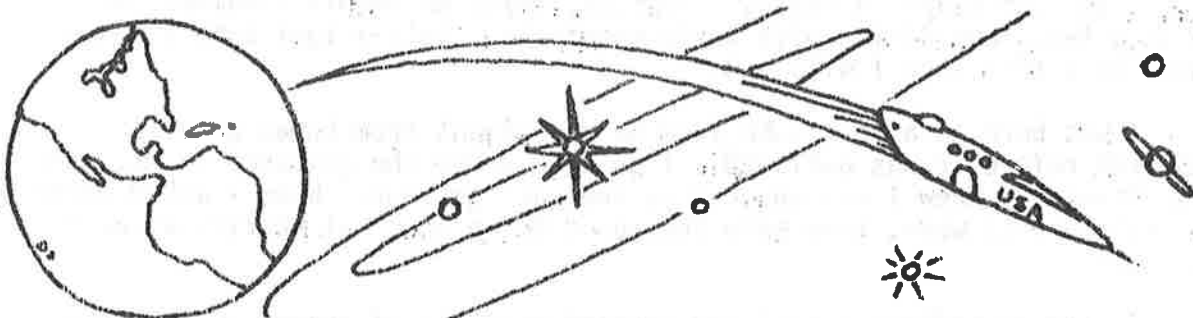
The public has heard nothing. The United States is in a great silence. But, even during the scare, the people vote ninety-five percent Democracy, five percent Communist.

During the conversation, the Russians are firm. Some of the other Communist countries are pleading with Russia to back off. They don't want a war that could destroy the world.

Now the secured world countries are tired of the overpowering countries. In recent years, they have gained more technology than in their whole history, and even now the United States and Russia don't know it. The Middle East has enough nuclear war heads to wipe them out.

As the conversation between the United States and Russia ends, the war starts. They are getting ready to fire - but the missiles never make it.

Range 300 - 200 - 100 - FIRE . . .



A New Planet

After the United States established a government on Mars, they decided it was time to launch another rocket. It would land on a new planet that had begun its orbit through their star system. When the Earth crew landed on the new planet, they were greeted by the Myloneons who told the Earth men that they were on the spaceship Mylon, not a planet. The Earthmen invited the Myloneons to visit Mars which they did.

Soon, they migrated to Earth. The Myloneons loved Earth. In fact, they liked Earth so much, they tried to take over the United States government.

Within a week Mars and the freight station on the moon fell into the hands of the Myloneons. This was caused by reinforcements sent from the ship Mylon. The first thing the Myloneons did on Earth was to completely destroy England with one bomb. World War III was well under way.

The Myloneons invaded the Atlantic Coast and took over Washington, D.C. The American people rushed westward. People started riots over who was to live in the underwater station that the Smithsonian Institution built for sea research. A choice few were allowed freedom.

The Myloneons held all land on the planet Earth. They proceeded to completely destroy the human race. Everyone was killed except for the people hidden on the bottom of the sea.

Time passed. Normally, most of the group under water took part in the daily chore of going out in scuba gear to look for food. But, one day all were out for either exercise or for food. Everything was normal until one of the men discovered he hadn't had any air in his tanks. He had been breathing water for twenty minutes! He told the others and they discovered that they, too, didn't need air anymore! After a lengthy discussion, they decided to go back to the complex and continue life as normally as possible. They had to hurry home though because they had important things to do - the first was to flood the complex.

THE TEST TUBE

I am John Grant, a famous scientist, ready to commit suicide. Before me is a test tube filled with toxic chemicals. With a test tube I began and with a test tube I will end.

I was born in a test tube from an experiment from human genetic research before it was outlawed. I grew up under the guidance of Mr. and Mrs. Grant. I knew I was adopted by them at age four. When I asked where my real parents were, they said they died in an accident shortly after I was born.

I went to medical school and studied genetics of animals. I have made much progress in this field even though it is debated whether or not it is right to make animals without a mother or father.

One day I needed some information for an experiment. I checked the computer at Harvard to find it. What I found was information on how I became a living organism from a test tube. I found it was me when the computer spewed out the data of my adoption from the lab.

This meant that I was inferior, without parents, and born in a test tube. Now I realized why genetic research on man was outlawed. The bodies formed in test tubes are inferior and suffer from letdowns, knowing they aren't normal.

The mixture of chemicals felt cold in my mouth and went down my throat easily before I died.

PORTRAIT OF A CITY

Just one of the thousands of cities similar to it, this city had reached the result of ultimate technology.

* * * * *

The year is 2013 A.D. The city is Denver, Colorado. Once the world's fastest growing city of modern society, the huge metropolis called Denver now stands still with an eerie quietness. The world had been following the footsteps that had led Denver to be the Earth's ultimate city of technological Utopia.

The age of supreme computer control had reached the point where there was no longer the threat of weather disaster, political oppression, danger of starvation, or the threat of economic depression.

All world problems had been solved. All people in all lands were free to live long, happy, fulfilling lives.

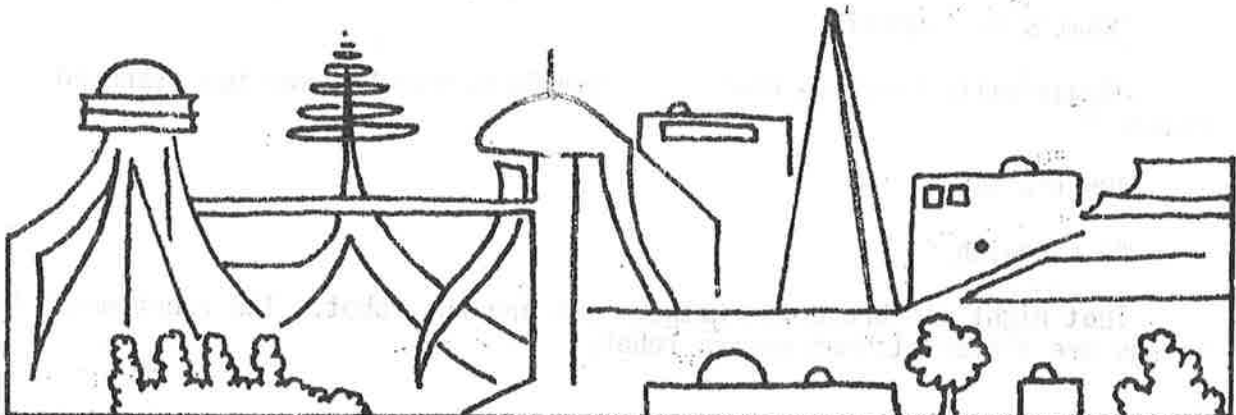
Yet, with all the greatness that 'Civilization' had to offer, there still remained that part of every man that had been the destructive flaw in the ultimate plan for world peace. Hate! Hate had been the killing flaw in the world's perfect Utopia. From the beginning of time, hate had been present and even how it could be felt as Denver sat motionless and cold.

It had happened! The final, destructive flaw had swept the globe, striking even Denver, the ultimate city.

The one thing that mankind had vowed never to use had been used.

The world stands still - dead and lonely, destroyed by a radioactive, thermonuclear war that had devastated and burned every inch of the globe. All is quiet and still. Every city and human dwelling is extinct of life. If ever this place called Earth shall see life again, it will not be for a very long time to come.

Though man's destructive flaw had destroyed himself and every living creature on Earth, he had, in fact, in a very strange way, accomplished what he had been searching to acquire for hundreds of years - total, worldwide, everlasting peace on Earth!!



ROBOT

It was March 15, 1979, 6:00 o'clock in the morning. A bunch of computer lights blinked on. A high toned voice said, "Time to get up." The curtains flew open, the thermostat boosted up to a cozy 70 degrees.

"Is it 6:00 already?" asked Mr. Larsen.

"Affirmative," said the computer.

"I don't want to get up!"

"You'll disturb my computer circuits if you don't stop your rest now."

"What's for breakfast?"

"Animal capsules and animal protein plus orange starched powder."

"What's that?"

"Bacon and eggs with Tang."

"Why did I ever get this computer!"

"Because you're lazy!"

"I'm not!"

"Yes, you are; you son of a circuit breaker!"

"What's on T.V.?"

"Bugs Bunny."

"Yeek. I want to watch a videotape of Star Wars."

That afternoon they were still arguing.

"What's for lunch?"

"Organically inactive meat or vegetable matter between two starched planes."

"What's that?"

"A sandwich."

That night war broke out between man and the robot. The robot won. Now things are different; man serves robot.

The last one

Billy managed to get himself locked in a bathroom, the first time in all of his seventeen years that he had been alone. A great sensation came over Billy. He felt cold because he no longer had the hundreds of bodies pushing into him. He felt great. He just lay there, on the floor, until the pounding began. Some others from his section II apartment were breaking the door down. He was scared and confused. Were the next few seconds of privacy worth his life? They would surely kill him out of jealousy. He jumped out of the window and ran.

It was hard dodging the people, the bullets, and the mangled bodies on the streets. He knew he must escape this war, but where could he go? He heard a whistling sound. He instantly knew it was a bomb because when he was seven they had the great war with Omara.

Omarian people were exactly like man as we know them today. They are believed to be a colony built by man's expeditions into space around 2400 A.D. Their population skyrocketed so they wanted to put some of their people here since their roots were on Earth, but high Earth officials said no. This led to a war which we lost. They then sent billions of people in cargo ships to colonize Earth until the rich had huge estates and were in control again like when they had started. We would have re-attacked but Earth was in utter chaos.

Billy ran to the nearest bomb shelter which was a block away. He had little trouble getting there since the crowd was dispersing with panic. He slammed the door shut, and boom. The small room shook. After things were quiet, he turned the light on and looked around. There was some food and blankets, but that was all. He wondered how many others had made it to shelter. He certainly couldn't be the last one, or could he?

After weeks of searching for another man he gave up. He had once thought he would love to be the last one on Earth, but now he knew he was wrong.

He thought he must have been in a desert for he was sweating all over. He was weak from hunger and delirious. Then, across the land, over there, was it . . . was it, another man? He ran frantically towards the figure as fast as he could until he fell. The cliff was the last murderer on the now uninhabited planet.

ALPHA 1, 2142



I've been in here sixteen days, or has it been seventeen? I don't know how much longer I can last. There is now eleven centimeters of water in my prison and it's rising fast.

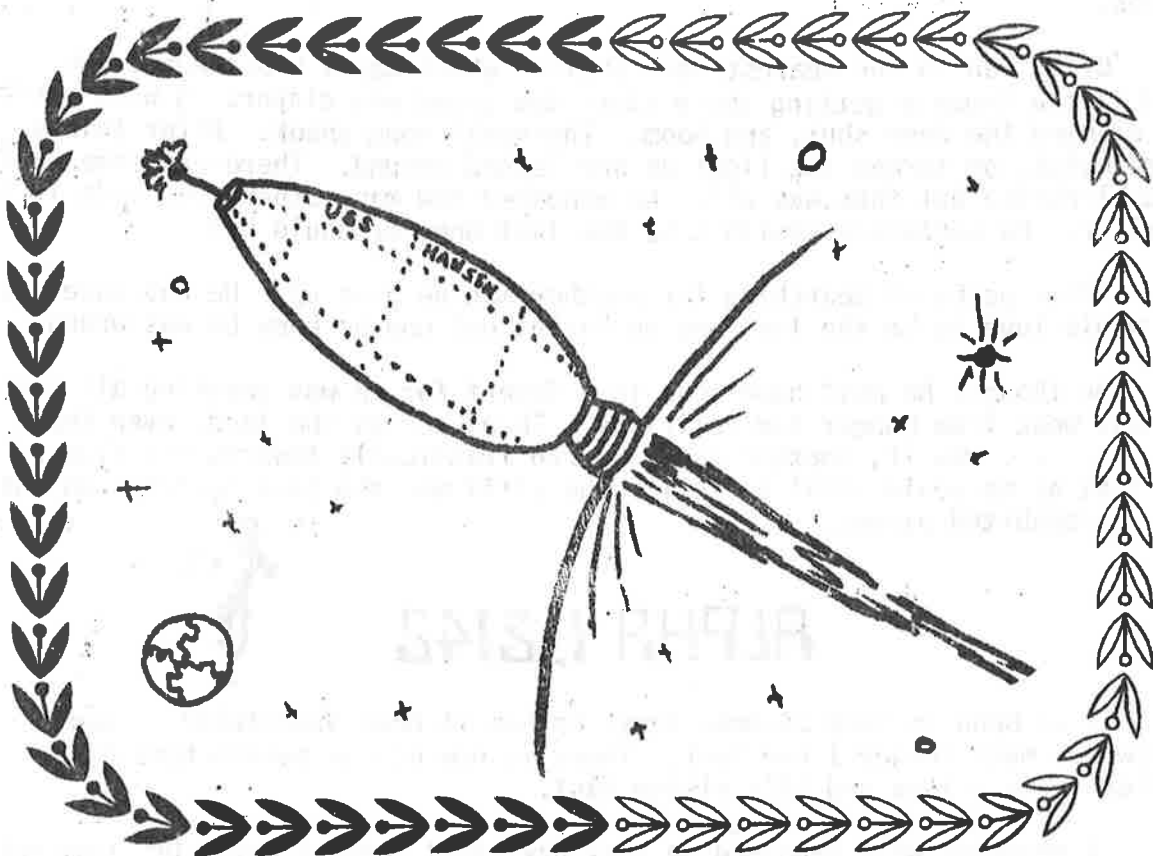
I remember what happened on that day, that fateful day. Dr. Reymond and I were doing our daily research on our new environment, the sea. We were about to go to the lab when I remembered I had forgotten my charts in the briefing wing. The doctor said that he would see in in the lab and walked out the door. I never saw him again. All of a sudden, a great tremor from the ocean floor shook the complex. A great crack appeared on

the floor of the sea, and the briefing wing, with me in it, fell into the great black hole. We fell almost three hours before we finally came to a rest on an outcropping.

The first and last Alpha, I thought, never again would man send a skilled staff of ninety-seven to the bottom of the sea to die in a multi-billion dollar complex. Then my attention turned to my own problems. The air gill, built into the wall, still worked so I would have air; but there was a crack along the base of it, and sea water was slowly seeping in.

Every day I look at the red handle on the wall. If I pulled it, the window would automatically open. It was installed in case of an emergency; you could put on scuba gear and swim to safety. There was only one problem, I had no scuba gear.

So here I am, hundreds of meters below the bottom of the ocean, trapped with myself. How long will I last? How long can a man go without food or water? How long can I keep myself from pulling that handle? I stand by the window, looking out into the vast darkness, thinking about my family, my friends, and my future, if any; but more than anything else, I think of the bright red handle on the wall.



Promise of a New World

Five years ago I joined a group of people that came to be known as Pilgrims. A great adventure took place that led our group to the New World. This is my story.

It was a cold, bitter evening in mid-September. I had been wandering the streets of the big city, hunting for a job. I was poor, hungry, and tired. I'd been searching for hours when something caught my interest. It was a poster that read:

FREE LAND IN NEW WORLD
Claim it, and it's yours.
Passage to the New World-
1000 pounds. Sign up at
the port.

I thought about the offer for several hours and by morning I was sold on the suggestion.

During the course of the next week, I sold my modest home and all my belongings. I scraped up a thousand pounds for my passage to the New World and went down to the port to sign up.

At the port I met many people that had also signed up for the journey. They, too, were poor but mostly were religiously suppressed. They were seeking freedom of religion in the New World.

By the end of the week, we had come to be called Pilgrims and as Pilgrims, great things would be expected from us once we reached the New World.

On September 25th, the ship was loaded and the voyage was ready to begin. I went down to the living chambers of the ship and found my bed in the rear of the cabin.

There was little privacy to be found and it was very crowded, but all of us soon became used to the many people. There must have been at least 200 people on board.

As the ship lurched away from the port, it rolled and swayed in the wind. It was a mighty force pushing us onward to the New World.

Hours passed, then days. We were out in the open vastness of nowhere. The only thing to look at was the sun by day and the stars by night.

The first several weeks of the voyage were quite carefree for most of us. It was a chance to catch up on lost sleep. The minor duties of the men were keeping the ship and its instruments ship-shape. The duties of the women were too few to make a major difference in the course of the voyage.

Then it struck! It was too sudden for any one to anticipate a storm. It thrashed the ship around as if it were a log in a mighty ocean. The hull creaked; the ship moaned beneath the mighty pressure.

People inside the ship were tossed about with ease. As soon as it came, the storm departed. The storm had left the ship badly damaged and much of the food and fresh water supply had been destroyed. Five people died and were buried in the sea of darkness.

Small leaks were repaired before major destruction could come to the ship.

The day after the storm several of the children became ill. Nothing serious, we thought.

By the end of the next week, 43 people had died and two-thirds of those still alive had the fever.

The ship was in havoc and many wanted to turn back. But, we could not turn back for we only had two days' worth of food left and no fresh water.

After five days without food and the burning fever within, eight more people died.

We should have been at the new world three weeks ago. Had we overshot our destiny? Was all hope lost?

In a last hour of desperate hope, the men mutinied against the captain and murdered him.

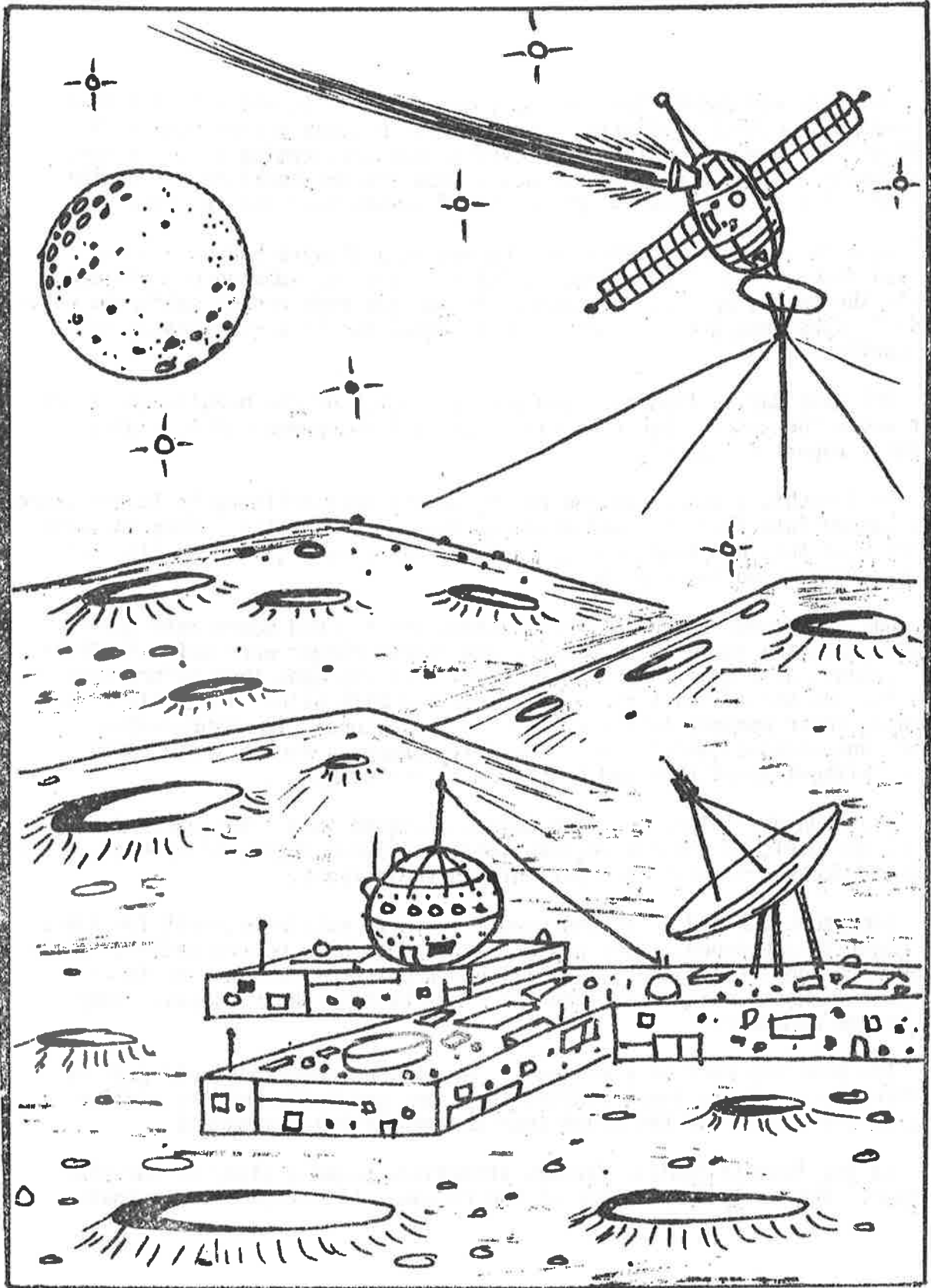
The fever making them crazy, the men prepared to burn the ship. Then.. the..new..world! We saw it. It was finally there!

After arrival, we sent out a landing party and by the end of the week, we had chosen a place for colonization and evacuated the ship.

After a month of hard work, the colony began to grow strong. The fever was gone and our crops on the new world grew fast. The strange new soil made our plants huge and plentiful. Because of the harsh environment of the New World, we covered our farms with domes. Also, we built strong, protective buildings in which to live.

The journey had taken a great deal out of us but we were alive and safe. In a couple of months, another ship of colonists and supplies arrived from Earth and our Martian colony began to thrive. It grew fast and strong.

To see the sunset on Mars was a dream come true.



THE DEADLY FOG

The date was August 10th in the year of 1985. It was reported that the sea bottom shook violently several times that day approximately 25 miles off the coast of Maine. The reports had been coming in since noon from freighters, trawlers, and pleasure boats to the Rockland Sea Weather Station. All of the reports were centered in the Seal Island area.

Down in the extreme depths of the ocean, a fissure had opened on the sea floor. The fissure began emitting a gaseous substance, from deep within the earth, up into the water. As the gas made contact with the water, a deadly substance began to form. As it grew, the bacteria floated to the surface.

The next day, a fisherman saw a purple patch of fog hanging about ten feet above the water. Since he was so far off shore and had no radio, he couldn't report it quickly.

That night, a couple on the beach saw the mist drifting in toward shore. They jumped into their car and drove to the police station. They told the police what they had seen, but the police said they had seen an illusion and for them to go see a doctor.

While the people were at the station, the fog had moved onto shore. Farther down the beach, Jack Jenkins and Alfred Burger were out with their girl friends at a small beach party. The mist was upon them before they knew it. As the mist hit them, they screamed with pain. The mist, after touching their bodies, left a residue on the ground. The four people lay there, unconscious, until dawn. The next morning a dock officer named Jason Philbert found them and took them to the hospital.

The town physician, Dr. John Royce, examined them. He gasped loudly. One of the girls on the examination table was Susan Royce, his younger sister. He asked Jackson to wheel the patients to their rooms.

The faces and bodies of the people began to mutate the next few days. One night they escaped. They had hair covering their entire bodies. Their noses were completely gone. They all had a patch of red hair on their chests. It was a darker red than the other hair on their bodies. They had become monsters.

The monsters went on a rampage. They killed several people just by touching them. Their touch mangled the faces and bodies of the victims. It also drained all of the blood from the people being attacked.

At the Augusta Medical Center, scientists began a study of the mist residue. They rejuvenated some of the residue and tested it on animals.

The scientists found that if a match were held within a foot of the mutated animals, they would explode into dust. In other words, the bacteria made the animals highly combustible. This information was sent to the Constable of Dovenshire.

The Town Constable made a call to the National Guard. He told them to bring all of the flame throwers and laser guns they had. They were to meet outside of Dovenshire on Gimple Hilton Road. When the National Guard arrived, they set up the guns and filled the flame throwers' tanks. They then began the long wait for sundown.

The Constable's plan was to have some of the Guard's fastest runners be the bait. They had found where the monsters were hiding, and these men were going to flush them out. They were to get the monsters to chase them to within the flame throwers' range.

As the sun began to set, the men - John Bates, Harvey Angled, and Joe Piner - went to where the monsters were hiding. They made enough noise to attract the monsters' attention and get them to chase them. The chase was on! The men easily outran them because the monsters were big and clumsy.

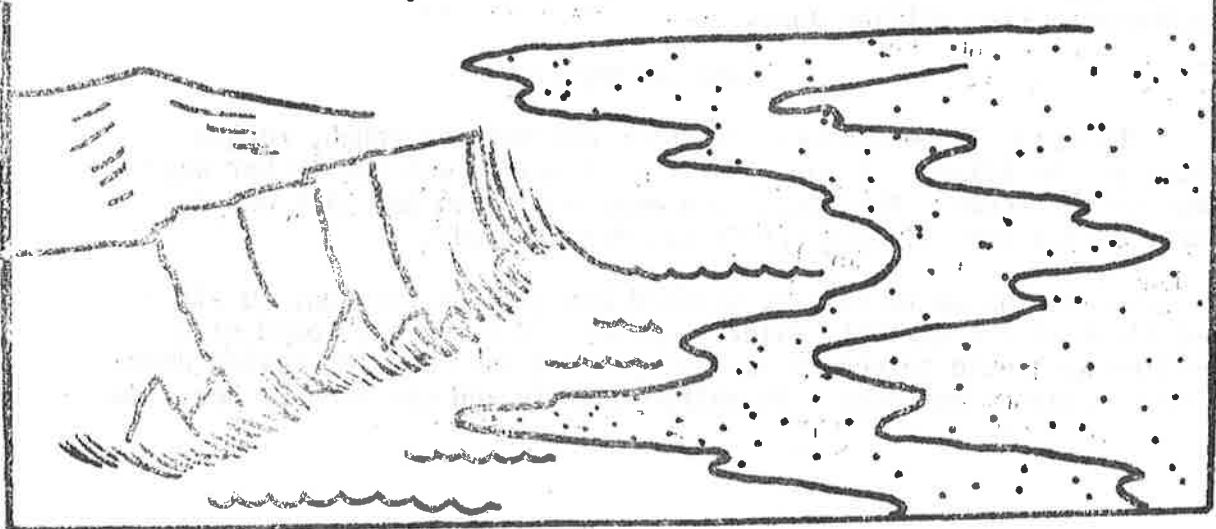
As the men came into sight, the Guardsmen readied their guns.

Then the monsters appeared. When they saw all of the people, they stopped and stared. Then they began to charge the guns!

The men went into a panic and were not able to fire the guns. They began to run.

Since Alfred Burger had been in the Army before turning into a monster, his instincts told him how to fire the lasers. He killed all of the men, except one. Harvey Angled had stayed at his post and in the process killed three of the monsters. Only Burger and Angled were left, but Angled didn't know that Burger was alive!

Angled heaved a sigh of relief and announced, "Oh, God, am I glad this is over!" Just then hairy hands closed around his neck!



Escape from Alaun

Prologue:

Twenty miles off the coast of Antarctica there is an island called Alaun. At one time Alaun was part of Antarctica, but as continental drift was taking place, Alaun broke free from the huge, frozen continent of the south.

Millions of years ago Alaun was a huge volcano. As it died, it left huge caverns and caves in its crater. These caverns soon became inhabited by cave dwellers.

When earthquakes struck the island ages ago, the volcanic crater was closed off, leaving only a tiny entrance to the massive chambers underground. The island also sank several thousand feet, leaving only the island and the entrance to the underground caves.

The inhabitants of Alaun recovered from the disaster and soon adapted to their new, enclosed home in the underground, volcanic caverns.

Frequently, the natives would come out on the rocky exterior of the island to collect seafood. However, the natives found that fungus, mushrooms, and lush, green, moss-like flora grew rapidly in the warm, humid caves. These plants became their major food source.

With thermal energy heating the caves, the people of Alaun found a happy, very contented life even though their island was so far south.

To this very day the people of Alaun are leading a happy, fulfilling life, left undiscovered by the rest of the world. The only thing they do not know is that their small island is preparing to become an active volcano again.

(end prologue)

The cold, icy waves were crashing against the rough, ragged rocks of the island. A young, beautiful maiden was making her way down to the water. Her long, dark hair hung down her back and a furry animal skin clothed her small, fragile body.

She had begun to collect seaweed but gave up the hunt to sit and stare at the distant, watery horizon. Hearing the sound of a falling rock, she turned to see the chief's son, Metole, coming down from the cavern entrance. He walked quickly and was soon by her side.

He spoke to the young maiden, "Telana! What are you doing out here on these dangerous rocks?"

She continued to stare at the ocean, ignoring his question of concern.

The tall, young son of the tribe's chief tried again, "Telana, what do you stare at on those distant waters?"

This time she answered, but again without a glance of her eyes, "Metole, my love, have you ever wondered what lies beyond the distant waves?"

"Of course not, Telana! The ancient gods of our ancestors told us that we were the people of the world, and there are no others!"

Telana rose and stood closely to Metole. She spoke to him in a gentle voice, "If we are the only people, then what are those birds that roar and leave trails in the skies?"

"Telana, you ask too many questions. Come let us return to the caverns before the tides rise too high."

Deep within the caves, in the major chamber, a crowd of natives was grouping around the old wise chief and Telana's older sister. Telana's sister, Shana, stood in front of the elderly chief. Shana, a dominate female of the tribe, frequently found confrontation with the chief.

Shana and the chief were arguing violently. Shana was bored with the cavern life and wanted the chief to permit her and her followers to explore the Holy Tunnels. In actuality, the Holy Tunnels were nothing more than lava tubes that led far under the ocean floor.

Shana had already convinced her young sister, Telana, to be part of her group. Because Telana's love for Metole was so strong, it was her dream that he would help them seek new worlds. At present, Metole's father would not permit it.

"Shana!" The chief spoke boldly, "I cannot allow you to enter the Holy Tunnels and disturb the gods!" The chief was angry and his wrinkles showed his emotion.

Shana was just as angry as the chief, and her followers were becoming rebellious. "Oh, great Chief, this life of your fathers is not for us! We must seek for new things. Allow us to take our fishing boats and explore the distant seas!"

The chief's eyes flew open in astonishment, "Shana! Are you a blasphemer? I cannot allow you and your followers to seek the worlds of the ocean gods!" His voice rose louder, "My word shall stand! If you go against my word, I tell you now, that the gods of the Earth shall consume us all!"

His frightening words scattered most of the crowd back to their own caves where they returned to their daily, contented tasks of life. But not Shana; she took her angry followers and went to brood over their temporary defeat.

Meanwhile, Telana and Metole had found a quiet ledge far in the rear of the cavern where they could share their thoughts. Metole and Telana had been attracted to each other since the time when they were children. Now Metole's father, the tribesman chief, was urging him to take Telana as his wife. Metole had considered this idea, but was waiting until the day when his father would make him chief of the tribe.

Metole liked to listen to Telana tell her stories of other worlds. Although her beliefs were the opposite of everything he had been taught, he would still spend hours listening to her.

The night passed quickly although the people had been disturbed by an earthquake during the early morning. When the morning came, the people found that the temperature of the caverns had risen as a result of a new volcanic action. In a nearby cave, Metole could hear his father telling the people fearful warnings.

The chief said to the people in an angry voice, "The temperatures of our world have risen as a warning from the gods not to disturb their peace!"

Ignoring the chief's warning, Shana had grouped together some followers and was preparing to enter the Holy Tunnels.

Metole had come over to Shana. He had begun to question her as if he were the chief, "Shana, why must you seek these new places?"

"We are tired of the old life and we must seek new adventure!"

"Will you take away my love?" asked Metole.

"If Telana wishes to come, then yes, I will take my sister away. I am sorry, Metole, but your father's ways are not for me. I was hoping you would choose to come with us."

"If you believe this, Shana, then do what you must." With those words Metole went to be with his father.

Shana and her group gathered in the entrance of the tunnel, preparing to bid their chief farewell.

The chief's face shone with strain as he flew into a rage of anger. Other tribesmen, loyal to their chief, gathered to protest Shana's actions. Ignoring them, Shana and her followers turned and proceeded into the tunnel.

At that very moment and with terrible timing, nature decided it was time to revive an old friend, the volcano.

The ground beneath their feet began to shake and rocks began to fall loose from the roof of the cavern.

Shana and her followers ran into the tunnel screaming for the gods to save them. Telana, also terror stricken, joined them.

The older tribespeople, believing the gods of the ocean would save them, began to make their way to the surface of the island.

The heat was becoming unbearably hot while Metole and his father stood in the midst of the falling rock and the steam filling the caverns.

"My son," the chief began, "I do not understand the ways of you younger people, but because you are my son I will respect your chosen life. May your choice be wise and may you one day become a great chief." The chief finished, turned toward the cavern exit, and made his way through the fallen rock as quickly as possible.

Now Metole stood staring first at the exit above and then at the Holy Tunnels below. He was torn between his father and the woman he loved.

Should he follow his father and be saved by the ocean gods, or follow Telana into the tunnel and live with the results?

Lakes of boiling brimstone and molting lava had begun to form. The roof of the cavern was edging downward preparing to collapse on the smoke-filled chamber.

A decision had to be made! Metole, with a tear in his eye, turned and began to run for his life, barely escaping a river of lava that had exploded into the cavern chamber.

Just after he had entered the Holy Tunnel, its entrance collapsed making it impossible for anyone to turn back.

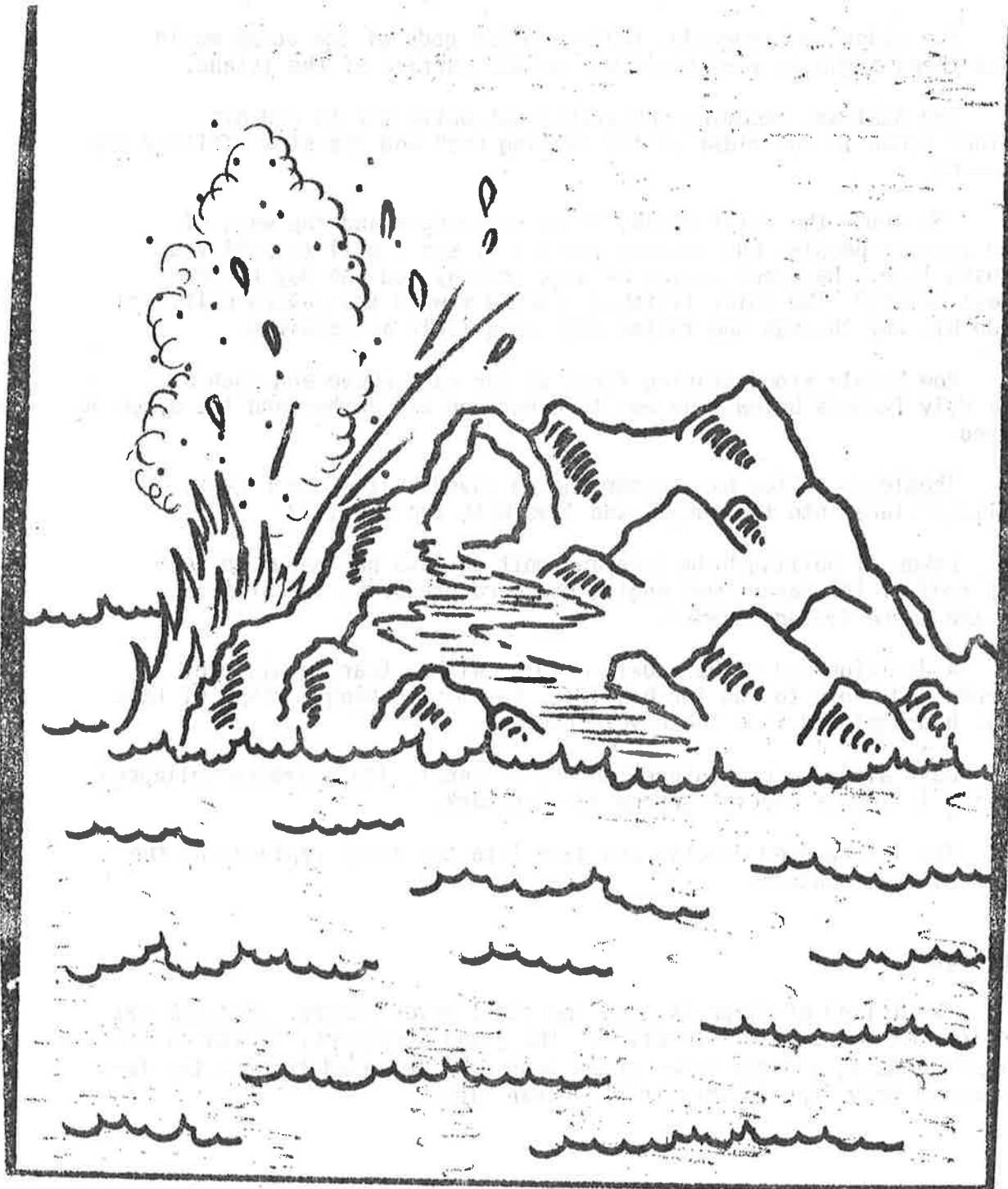
The island died quickly and sank into the ocean replaced by the cold Atlantic waters.

Epilogue:

The island of Alaun is gone and shall never return. But not all is lost of the tiny civilization. The young survivors, including Telana, Metole, Shana, and the other young people all escaped through the lava tubes or Holy Tunnels beneath the ocean floor.

The lava tubes led them to Antarctica where they were rescued by a Canadian archeology team.

Now these young people will live and discover a new world that their fathers thought to be unreal. Maybe now Telana will sit and stare at the stars at night and wonder what they hold for mankind and this small lost world.



ENDING OF A FALSE BEGINNING

Sitting in the field with the sun warm on her face, it seemed hard for Anna to believe that what was going on in the world was nothing more than a bad dream. Ever since the late 1980's when scientists first successfully cloned¹ a human being, nothing had been the same.

Being able to "play God" had revolutionized the medical world. If a person's limb was badly injured or dismembered, a clone's limb could be taken. This was a costly process; only the very wealthy could afford to be cloned. Anna herself was cloned from the cell of a very rich and beautiful heiress.

For twenty-three years of her life, Anna had made her home in the living hell of Zone 9. In actuality, these zones were clone colonies, closely resembling the leper colonies in the times of Christ; and as lepers, the clones were also social outcasts.

Clones were thought of as possession, not people. They had no feelings, emotional or otherwise. They could not think for themselves; therefore, no schools were provided. There was no scientific proof to back up these two hypothetical statements. Clones were just extra insurance for the rich, nothing to waste extra time and money on.

Anna sat pondering her luck of never having been called into the medical station as her dearest and closest friend, Trudi, had been that morning. Being called in meant something had happened to your twin; maybe an auto accident, maybe some disease of the internal organs, but it was something that required a clone to give up a part of his body to replace the damaged part of his twin's body. Since clones were identical to their twins, there was never any danger of the twin's body rejecting the new part.

7:30. It was time for Anna to start back to the place she was forced to call home, a one room shanty in what could be called "the better section of town". They (that is, Anna, Jonathan, Phillip, and Joanie) even had indoor plumbing and a little electricity. Anna was caring for three young clones, sort of acting as a guardian to them until they could fend for themselves.

Once home, Anna was bombarded with questions concerning her whereabouts. She had all but forgotten her friend Trudi when little Phillip stuck a beige-colored envelope in her face and said, "Here. This came for you." Taking the envelope from his grubby hands, she tore off one end and pulled out the letter it contained. This is what met her horror-stricken eyes:

¹Cloning is a process in which a cell is taken from a person, put in a favorable environment and allowed to multiply. Eventually, the cell develops into a human being, identical in everyway to the owner of the original cell.

Dear Anna . . .

This is the last you will hear of me. I was just told by the doctors that my twin, Mrs. Radcliff, had a massive stroke. The lower right section of her brain was damaged. They are taking part of my brain and giving it to her. If I live through the operation, I will be a vegetable. If I don't live, all my problems will be solved. I wish I could say the same for those I leave behind.

Love, Trudi

Calmly, Anna dropped the letter to the floor and ran out into the streets. Little Joanie ran after her wailing, "Annie, wassa matter?" But Joanie's short, choppy steps couldn't keep up with Anna's determined strides, and soon Joanie lost sight of her in the darkness.

Anna kept running down the black street, toward what she did not know. Tiring, she slowed down to a hurried walk and found herself in front of the meeting hall. Loud voices issued from inside as Anna remembered it was zone meeting night. Representatives from each of the zones met to discuss ways to better their living area.

The loud voices continued and Anna stopped to do a little eavesdropping.

"That's crazy! Us, maybe 200 at the most, against millions? We are just clones. We have no education, nothing!"

"That's not the point!" an excited voice answered back. "We have their bomb! We have taken it out from under their noses. We have their ultimate weapon. They had their chance to listen to us, but they didn't!"

"We don't know to use it. We could end up losing more than we gain."

"Face facts, Griffin; you're the only one who doesn't want to blow it off. So it's settled then, tomorrow at 2:15."

Anna could not believe what she had just heard. Turning toward home, she groped her way back to the shack. Maybe Trudi would be spared; maybe no clone would ever be considered a "spare parts shop" where arms and legs could be taken whenever they were needed. She had never thought about how disgusted she was that zones were considered junk heaps. Here, unfortunate misfits waited to be cut apart at the whim of a sickly, rich person. But, if the zone council's plan worked, all that would end.

Reaching home, Anna busied herself with getting the children ready for bed, not realizing how exhausted she was until her own head touched her pillow. She was asleep in seconds. She was rudely awakened the next morning by a series of intermittent knocks on her door. To her shock, upon opening the door, she found three armed guards from the city. They pulled her rudely from the house with no explanation. Looking back over

her shoulder, she saw Jonathan standing in the doorway with a look on his face that said, "What do we do now?" for Jonathan was far wiser than any other five year old. He knew just as well as Anna that the guards were taking her to the medical station. Never in a thousand years would Anna forget the sorrowful look in Jonathan's big, brown eyes.

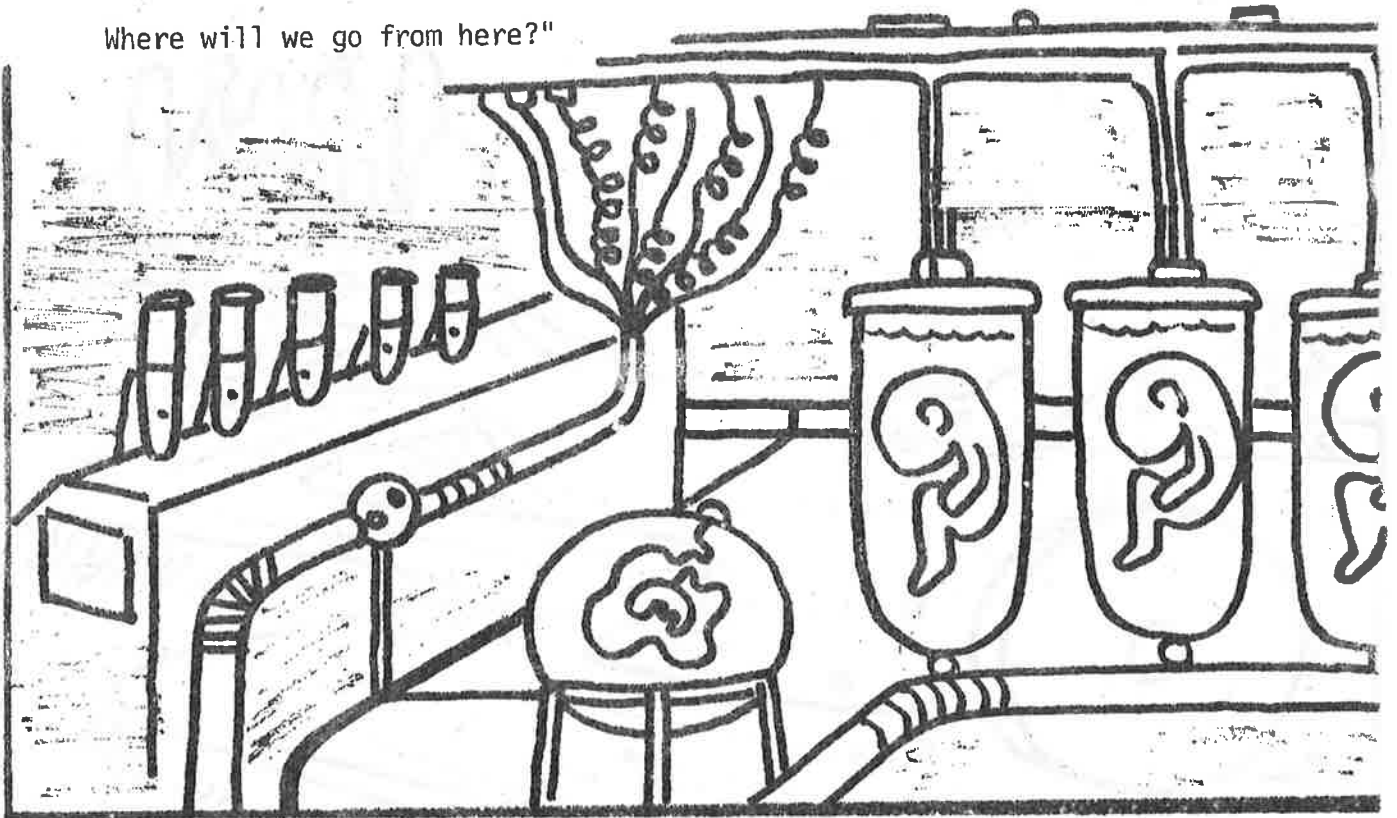
Arriving at the hospital, Anna was taken to a small dark room and left there for several hours. She dozed off and when she awoke, she was surrounded by doctors about to strap her to a table.

"What are you doing?!" Anna cried anxiously. Getting no answer, she continued on, "I am a living, breathing human being! I am alive. I'm not just someone's possession. Whether you think so or not, I have rights. I'm not staying here so you can butcher me!!" Suddenly, she was endowed with a strength not her own. She burst her bonds and was out of the room in seconds.

Once in the corridor, Anna slowed her pace, and passing a large digital clock, noticed that it read 2:12. A slow dread crept over her as she realized there were three minutes until the bomb went off. Blindly, she dashed out into the street, heading in the direction of home. Then all was black.

The next thing Anna knew, Jonathan was putting something cold and damp on her forehead. Jonathan did not speak, but Anna knew what his thoughts were. Four cities had been destroyed by the bomb. Joanie and Philip had been crushed by flying debris. Jonathan would never be able to forget the look on Anna's face. It seemed to say, "What do we do now?"

Where will we go from here?"



DUMB MACHINES

"It all started with the wheel," said Nick. "They made machines from the wheel. Dumb machines!"

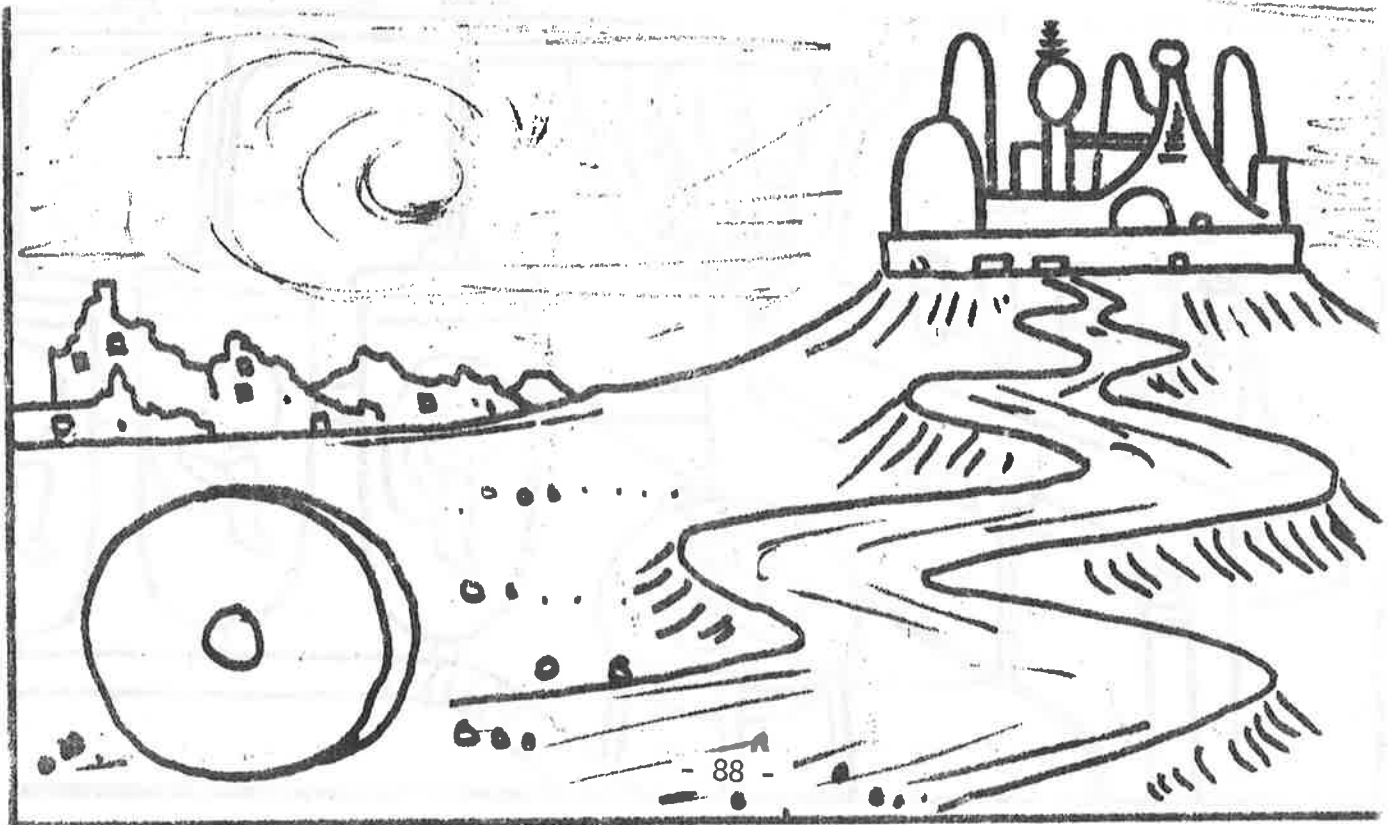
Nick and his family had been fighting against the machines for a long time now. They are among some of the few that left the easy city life. In the city Nick didn't like it because he didn't want to sit home and rot his brain watching his breakfast being cooked. So, he left.

At this time, everyone except a few (Nick included) could read or add one plus one. The machines that supported them had started to fail. Since they had been built a few generations before, no one knew how to repair them.

Nick and his family had started helping the machines break down once they saw that people couldn't fix them. People had started to die of malnutrition because nobody knew how to take care of them.

* * * * *

Now almost all of the people have died. In the city closest to Nick, everyone has died. Nick has disposed of most of the remains of machines and people so there are no reminders of what has happened. His family lived happily until one day when Nick's son, Robert, returned from a hike and said, "Look what I found, Daddy. I'm going to call it a wheel. See, it rolls!"



Transfer 825

An unknown eye glides smoothly over the vastness of the cosmos. Ahead, in sight, is the magnificent Andromeda Galaxy, positioned perfectly in the heavens.

As the galaxy closes ever nearer, it explodes into a universe of stars, each with its planets and moons. To accompany the constellations are governments of people who have spread their explorations to the edge of the unknown. One of these governments is the peaceful society of the Omerikan Star Kingdom. The Kingdom's largest rival is their politically opposed enemies of the corrupt Zadarian Empire.

The Omerikans and the Zadarians have been at cold war for many decades. Each has strived to become politically and technologically dominate in the galaxy; but with each succeeding try, it becomes another stalemate in the never ending battle for the infinite.

The unknown eye quickly speeds through the solar systems, spreading abroad throughout the Omerikan Kingdom. Then as quickly as it traveled, it soon slows, zeroing in on a very beautiful planet. The planet happens to be called Belos and is the capital planet of the Omerikan Kingdom. Our view is soon blurred by the atmosphere of the planet as we glide swiftly to the planet below.

In the clearing beneath the clouds, an awesome sight is seen. An enormous city towering into the sky sits quietly, while inside the metropolis, it is very much alive and busy with the lives of millions of inhabitants. Our view is taken into the city as the eye floats silently over the landscape around us.

We find ourselves inside a gigantic hanger building located by a canal at the center of the city. It is eternally hollow and now houses an extremely large, derelict transfer ship. Ships of this kind once explored the unending boundaries of the universe; but as more advanced vessels took their place, the derelicts became cargo and transfer ships to supply the many planets with needed materials.

The derelict now housed in the hanger building was being loaded with rocket tanks of trioxon. While the trioxon was being loaded, computers checked the ship over, giving it clearance for its 825th transfer mission.

The trioxon by itself is useless, but when combined with trioxene crystal, it reacts with a powerful interfusion. When the power is harnessed, it can be collected in unending quantities. Because the trioxene crystals are abundant in most planets across the Andromeda Galaxy, the power source was adopted quickly. The only problem was that the trioxon which is needed to form the power from the crystals became more expensive and more valuable as the years went by.

Also, because the trioxon can only be produced under special conditions and in very expensive factories, it soon became a government project in both the Omerikan Kingdom and the Zadarian Empires. As a result, private parties

obtaining the trioxon soon put it into the black market. Government ships were hijacked for their trioxon and once-simple missions became top secret excursions.

When maintained lawfully, the business was profitable for both private and government organizations, especially because the power source was the most common and used for everything from miniature radios to hyperlight engines in the biggest starships ever built.

The derelict ship now being loaded was under top secret orders but would prepare for a casual journey to the planet Sirius, a planet controlled by the Kingdom but still considered disputed by the Zadarians.

On arriving at Sirius, the derelict would transfer the trioxon to the new industries and cities. With this trioxon the planet would soon grow strong economically and politically, giving the Omerikan Kingdom a stronghold in a disputed area of space.

Meanwhile, out in the not-so-secret world, a Science and Fleet Convention was prepared to begin on the planet, Kunipulus 5. Major ships of the fleet and representative vessels from all the planets in the Omerikan Kingdom were scheduled to be there.

The two most important ships would be the starship Ala Vesta and the Ambassador's vessel from the new world Sirius.

The starship Ala Vesta would be representing the capital planet, Belos. Being the fleet's flagship, the Ala Vesta was assigned to protect the capital world and its inhabitants.

The other ship, from Sirius, would be bringing the Ambassador of a new and very important planet. Their arrival at the convention would be of utmost importance to the Omerikan Kingdom.

While the Science and Fleet Convention was preparing to begin and all the spaceships were embarking to the planet Kunipulus 5, something very sinister was undergoing plans. In the corrupt Zadarian Empire, plans were being formulated for a full scale assault on the peaceful Omerikan Kingdom. Their plans were to enter the Kingdom slowly, taking over all ships encountered and then to swiftly take control of Belos while its major protection, the Ala Vesta, was out of the way.

* * * * *

Our unknown eye that gives us the view of the universe now plunges into the vastness and streaks to another starfield, 582 trillion miles away.

This time our view is captured by the graceful Belos; and at a high orbit, we see a space station called Augna 3, one of many in orbit around Belos. A tiny section of the station seems to be breaking free but is actually the starship Ala Vesta, leaving its docking position on Augna 3.

A closeup view of the Ala Vesta shows that it is over 3,000 feet long but is dwarfed by the awesome size of the space station. Don't be fooled by size, for the Ala Vesta has more battle capacity than three of the 60-year old space stations.

The Ala Vesta leaves the boundaries of Belos and speeds toward Kunipulus 5.

* * * * *

Once again we view the city of Utopia, capital city of the Omerikan Kingdom, located on the planet Belos. The hanger building opens its gigantic doors and the derelict slowly comes forth. The ship speeds out of the city and turns upward into the clouds. Within minutes, it has left Belos and is on its way to Sirius.

* * * * *

Back in the Zadarian Empire, the bulk of the Zadarian star fleet has left their assigned quadrants and have joined, in massive groups, at the Omerikan/Zader border. One ship ahead of all the others leads the way; the others follow in unison. They have crossed the invisible border separating the Kingdom from the Empire, thus breaking the treaty signed by both governments 23 years before. To break the treaty means war and war is what they want.

The first Omerikan ship that the Zadarians came across was the Ambassador's ship from Sirius on its way to Kunipulus 5. The Ambassador's vessel was caught completely off guard. With few weapons for defence, they quickly fall into the hands of the Zadarians. However, they did get one desperate chance at sending a distress signal before the Zadarians finished off their victim.

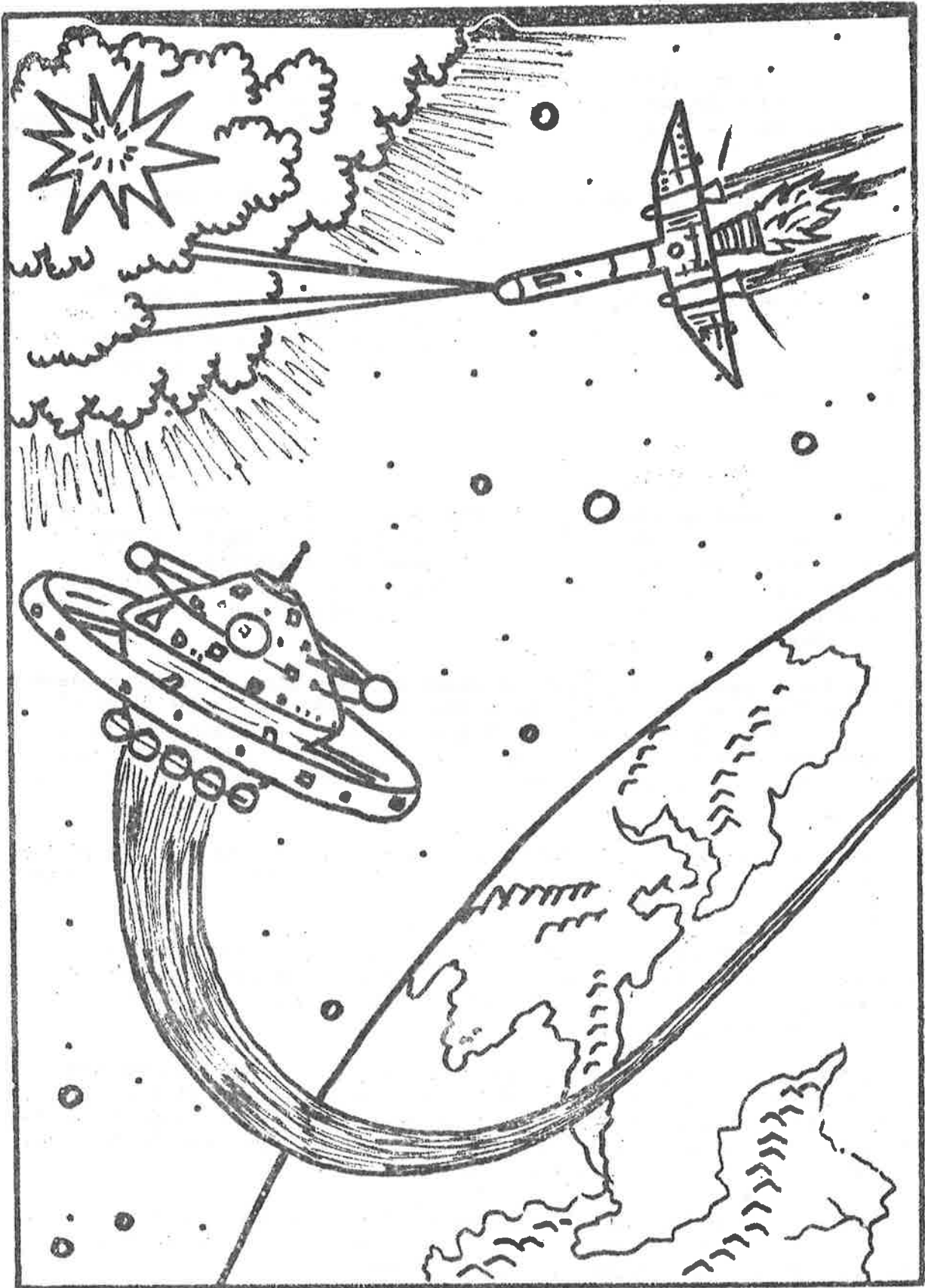
The view is taken across the light years of time to the place where the Ala Vesta is enroute to the convention. The distress signal is received and the Ala Vesta changes course without hesitation.

On the planet Kunipulus 5 at the Science and Fleet Convention, all scheduled guests are present and accounted for with the exception of the starship Ala Vesta and the Ambassador's ship from Sirius. The officials attending the convention start to become worried.

Three and a half hours later, the Ala Vesta arrives in quadrant S19, the last reported position of the Ambassador's ship, only to find scrap metal, space debris, and no survivors. Enraged by the savagery of the Zadarians, the Ala Vesta sets course for the 12-hour journey to Belos where they know they will find their enemies.

Meanwhile, the Zadarians have already intercepted the derelict and are carrying it in tow. They feel that they have a victory at hand and they are only one and one-half hours from Belos.

At the same time, Belos is unprepared and not expecting an Imperial invasion. Hostility of this kind has never faced the peaceful Omerikans.



One and a half hours later at the convention, the officials have become extremely concerned and have cancelled their meeting. They have ordered all available ships to proceed immediately to Belos on emergency alert.

The eye beams across the galaxy of light years back to the planet Belos where a vicious battle is at its beginning. Belos now knows of the invasion. The planet has gone to pieces and the whole world is panic stricken. Doomsday is at hand.

In the midst of the enemy battleships is an ally, the derelict. Inside the derelict are patriots of the Omerikan Kingdom. In the storage bay of the derelict, the patriots have congregated. With them they have gathered leftover ZILON 7x from past missions. The ZILON 7x is a harmless fuel unless added to certain liquids such as trioxon!

The patriots have mixed the ZILON 7x into the tanks of trioxon, causing it to become molecularly unstable, highly explosive, and radio active. They have loaded the tanks, very carefully, into the torpedo banks of the derelict. They will now wait until the right moment to

Outside the derelict, the battle is raging between the Zadarian battleship and the 60-year-old space stations. The stations are taking a bad beating and are starting to evacuate to the surface of Belos. Laser bolts are piercing every corner of space and few ships have been spared damage. The Zadarian's main objective is to knock out the main power station on Belos, located only ten miles from Utopia. They have succeeded so far in causing a dead volcano to burst alive again with molten lave and to awaken age-old faults, causing fast-moving fires across the surface of the planet.

The Ala Vesta has appeared in a distant quadrant but is of no concern to the Zadarians who are now faced with a missile attack from the surface. Missiles and probes armed with atom warheads have begun to shoot up towards the heavens.

The lead Zadarian warships aims at an approaching missile, fires, and hits it! It ignites, taking with it all the other missiles in a hundred mile radius. The thermal explosion on the planet surface is awesome. Fortunately, the explosion occurred at a fairly high altitude, not at ground level.

Now the Ala Vesta is at battle range and is closing in from behind space station Augna 7.

A ripple in space occurs. The space that the Ala Vesta occupied one second becomes empty the next; but at the very same instant, a multitude of enemy laser beams hits a weak shield on Augna 7. The total area is engulfed in a multitude of colorful explosions, then a gaseous cloud expansion.

As space clears, nothing can be seen but a starry background. Not even the Ala Vesta remains.

At this moment, the derelict captain decides to fire the tanks. The tanks shoot off into the midst of the Zadarian ships just as they are radioing to their home world, Zadar, that they had victored over the Kingdom. Their message was a little premature.

The Zadarian ships, thinking that the tanks contain nothing but trioxon, fire their laser bolts at the oncoming tanks. In doing so, they sign their own death warrants. This time the explosion is more enormous and blinding than any other in this battle. It causes whiplash and shock waves in a 2,500 mile radius in the vacuum of space surrounding Belos. Another ripple in space occurs. Then the explosion clears. There is Belos, a beaten up derelict, and even the Ala Vesta!

The mysterious disappearance of the Ala Vesta in the midst of the battle can be explained simply by the natural phenomenon of space ripples. The first ripple swallowed the Ala Vesta into another dimension, and the second ripple returned it. Had the ripple not appeared when it did, the Ala Vesta might now be space dust. So go the mysteries of the universe.

As for the planet Belos, it would take Mother Nature a few months of hard work with a little help from man before everything would be back to normal.

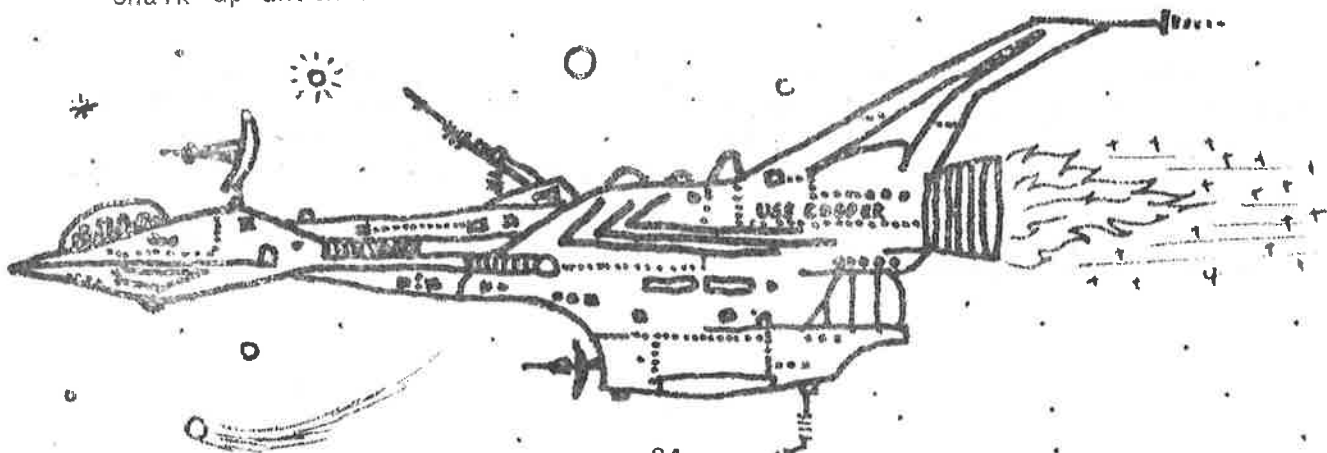
EPILOGUE

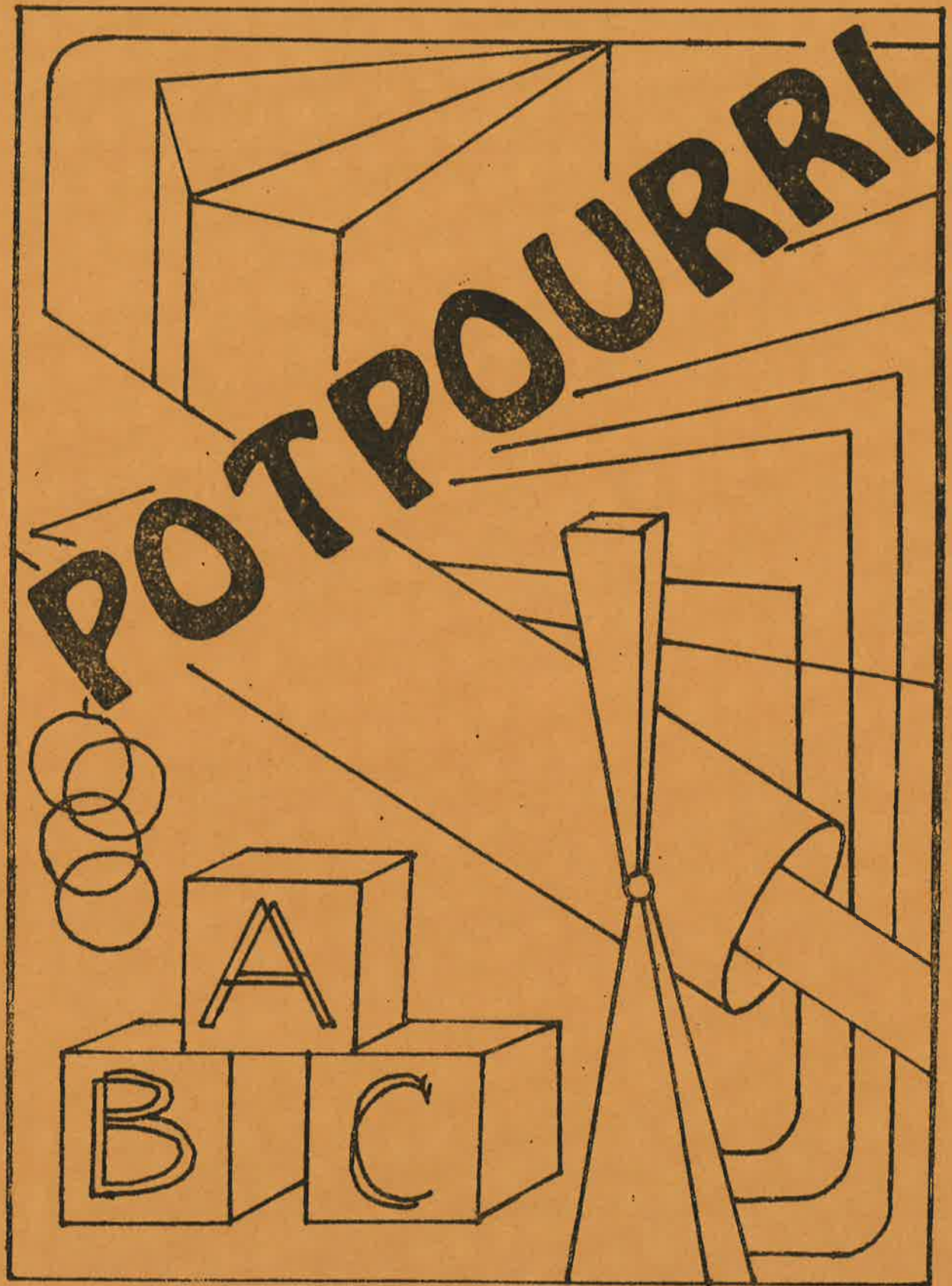
Ten days after the battle of the Zadarian invasion on the planet Kunipulus 5, a Royal Ceremony of Honor was held with its most honored guest, the derelict from Transfer 825 and its crew. They were awarded a Badge of Honor, similar to the one the Ala Vesta had received the year before. To conclude the ceremony, the officials of the Omerikan Kingdom reopened the Science and Fleet Convention. This time the representative from Sirius arrived, safely and on time.

As for political officials, the Zadarians were charged 986 billion dollars in damages to property, space stations, and trioxon. They gladly paid so that their own honor would not destroy them.

A new treaty was signed, new borders were agreed upon, and the same old 'cold war' continued.

Chalk up another stalemate in the never ending battle for the infinite.





ENDZONE WARRIOR

It was 1971. Professional football was becoming a sport that all Americans liked to watch.

Another team was brought into the league, calling themselves the New Orleans Saints. They had a lot to learn about the tactics of playing together because there were a lot of rookies on the team, except for the quarterback - whose name was William J. Lyons, better known as "Bad-Arm Bill." Bill's only problem was that he was 39 years old; his time was up. The fans booed him every time he came on the field because of his failing performance in the past season.

Training camp had started in July, and it was hot and humid. Bill was having extreme difficulty getting back into shape but so were the rookies. Bill wasn't sure if he was going to finish out the whole season because he was having trouble getting into condition, especially strengthening his bad knees.

Everyone Bill knew told him that he was too old and should quit. "Stop while you're ahead, man; you were the best in your time." But, Bill could not face the fact that he was past his peak as an athlete, even though he knew he was traded to the Saints because he was too old to play for the fast moving team he had led to three Super Bowl wins.

Bill sat in the locker room thinking about the last game, one week away. He didn't know for sure whether he would even stay with the team. Bill looked at the clock. It was six o'clock. He got up to leave. A fellow teammate, "Moose", (Moose was over-the-hill as a player, too) walked into the room.

"Hay, Bill," Moose said, "you really look down."

"Yea," Bill answered. "I guess I am."

Moose thought for a second, then said, "Hell, why should we stay here? We don't owe anybody anything. We've both been here 13 years. Why should we stay."

"I don't know, but there is something in me that says: 'It's my game; stick with it, man'", Bill replied.

It was the morning of the game. The men were all sitting in the dining room eating, and Bill was thinking of the first plays he would run. Sitting up, he felt that sharp pain below his ribs that he had noticed after practice the last week. Must be a pulled muscle from passing the ball too much, Bill thought to himself.

As the men were dressing, Coach Richards walked over to Bill's locker.

"Bill, I'm gonna start the rookie today. Hope you understand," the coach said.

As the game started, Bill sat on the bench and watched as the rookie struggled to keep the plays moving. He threw two interceptions and by halftime, the team was lagging by 17 points. At the start of the second half, the coach sent Bill into the game. On the first four downs, Bill brought the Saints in range for a field goal. The score became 20 to 6. Halfway through the fourth quarter, they were trailing by three points. Bill was nervous and felt that sharp pain under his ribs again. The coach called time-out and Bill ran over to him.

"Can you finish the game?" the coach asked.

"Sure," Bill replied. Send me back in. I'm fine."

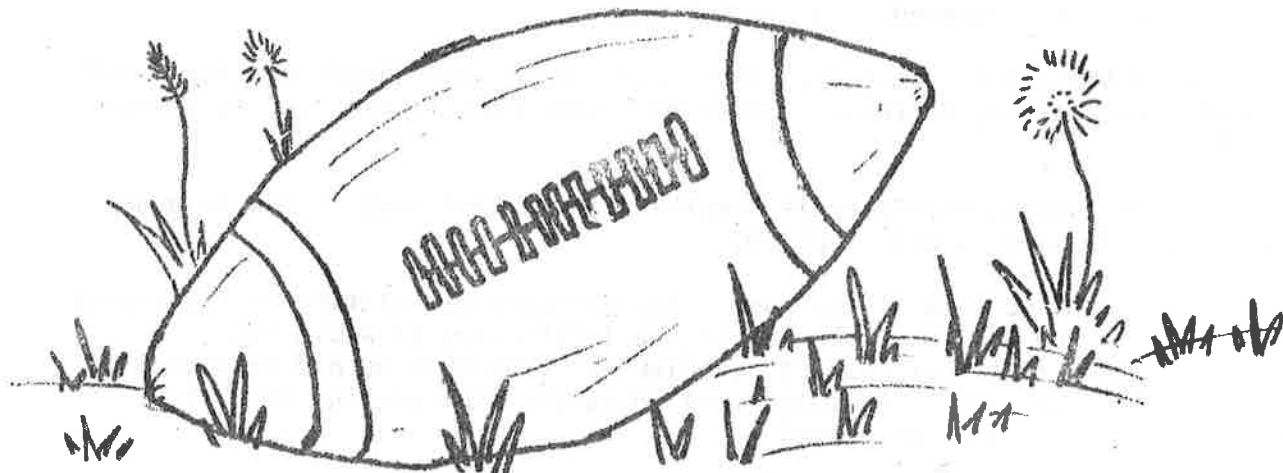
The coach sensed that something wasn't right, but he needed this win. The clock was down to 12 seconds, and there were 60 yards to go for a touch-down.

Should I pass and risk my arm and the game, or should I hand off the ball? Bill thought as he called the play.

The players moved into position and the center hiked the ball. Bill tried to pass the ball, but his receiver was not open. He had no choice - he had to run the ball himself!

Bill counted the yards as he ran: 10, 20, 30. He felt the pain again. Only ten yards to go! He slowed to a jog and dodged the last tackler as he crossed the goal. As he was crossing it, he was hit by an on-rushing tackler and was left lying in the end zone in silence. The team doctor, the coach, and the trainers ran to congratulate him. As they approached, a fear overtook them. Bill was dead; those pains he felt were from his heart, not from his arm.

The doctor said that Bill's death was caused by overexertion, and he was too old to be in the game.



The Hunt

Thor was a fifteen year old who lived in Great Britain. He didn't and couldn't know this because he lived in the Stone Age. Thor and the rest of his family lived in caves. The wind and the rain had formed these caves over a period of hundreds of years. The caves were near the present city of Sheringham.

There was a rumor going about that a monster dinosaur was in the area. So, two hunting parties were dispatched. Thor was in the second hunting party. He was going because he wanted to prove his manhood. The first hunting party started out close to the coast while the second stayed inland to hunt.

The two parties kept in touch with runners because they were sometimes too far apart. Otherwise, they would send a "drum message." These messages could be heard quite far away.

Unfortunately, a storm came up. The first hunting party tried to seek shelter in a cave. They were then trapped inside by the roaring ocean. The second party couldn't even send anyone to help because they didn't know about the storm.

Soon, the second party was wondering where the other hunting party was. Thor volunteered to backtrack to search for the group.

As soon as he arrived at the chalk cliffs of Dover, he searched all over for the missing hunting party. Finally, he found them. They were in a cave high up in the cliffs. Since the caves were made of chalk, they had a good chance of collapsing.

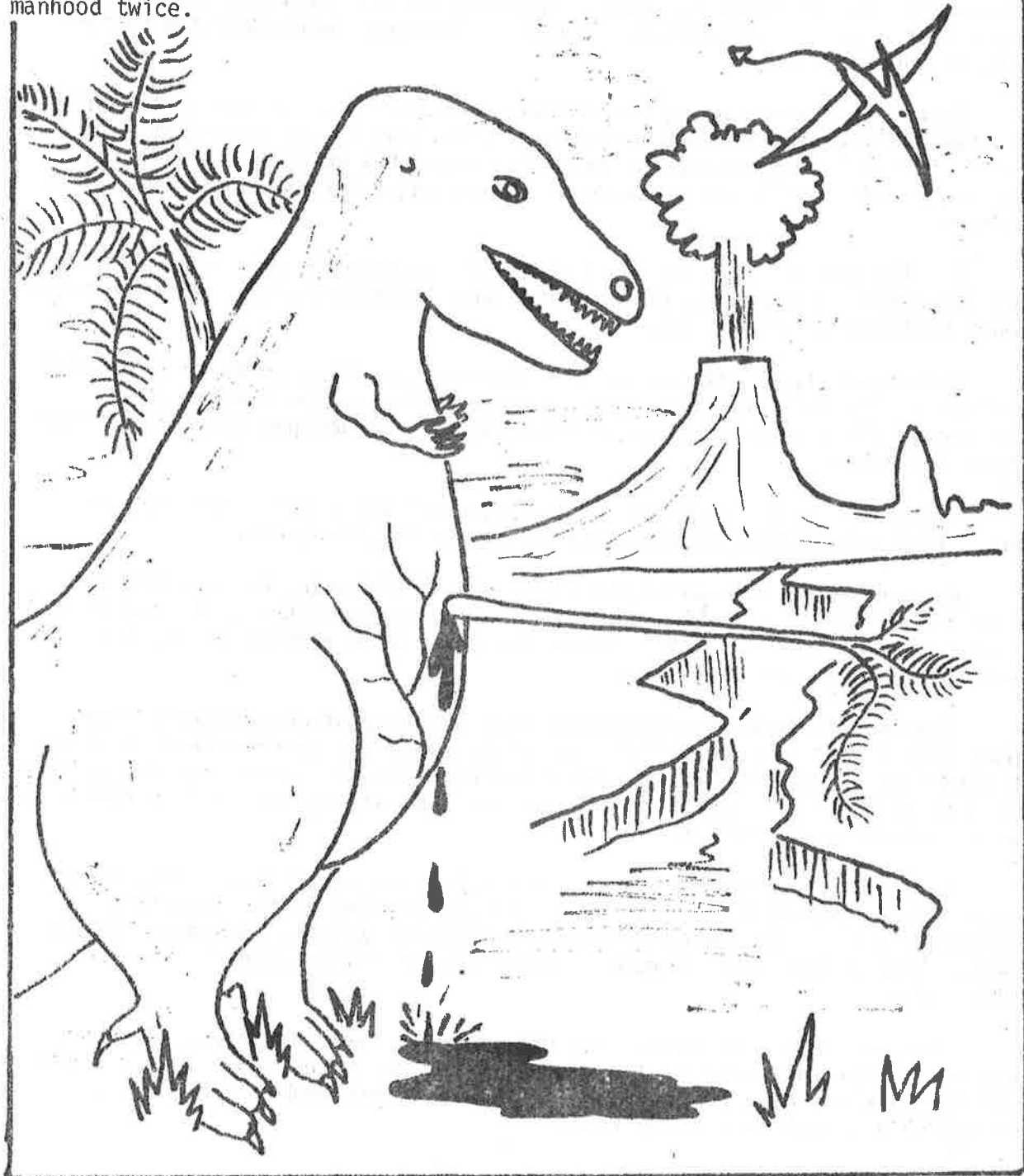
Thor hurriedly made a vine-rope that was very strong and very long. Thor didn't want to rescue them from right above the cave because there was a chance of a cave-in. He then tied the rope securely to a tree and everyone climbed to the top. Shortly after everyone was at the top, a deep rumble was heard and the cave fell in.

Soon after the close call, the first hunting party spotted the dinosaur. They drummed the signal to the second hunting party; then they hurriedly met and discussed different methods of attack. One was decided upon. Thor didn't like it much at all, but, of course, didn't raise any objections.

Thor was to be the bait. The others would come and attack after he had gotten the attention of the dinosaur. He was more than a little scared. The dinosaur was over thirty feet long and ten feet high! (It greatly resembled a dragon in a fairy tale).

Thor got the attention of the dinosaur all right. The big Allosaurus seemed to grin wickedly at Thor as he moved closer to him. Its teeth were two inches long and didn't really look very inviting. The strong Allosaurus was almost upon Thor, so he thrust his spear into the heart of the dinosaur. The Allosaurus let out a scream in agony and fell down dead.

The hunt was over and the dinosaur was dead. Thor had proved his manhood twice.



A FANTASY WITHIN A FANTASY

It was a cold winter evening in a little town called Mutial, Switzerland. It was, let me see, 8:05 P.M. The year was 1977; the date was November 7. This story is focused on a girl 12 years old; height, five feet two inches; hair, brown; eyes, brown; name, Jana Hall.

"Jana, get down here and clean this filthy bedroom," Jana's mom yelled.

"I can't now, Mom. Maybe later, okay, Mom?"

"No, it's not okay. Get in here right now!"

"Yes, 'em." Jana was very disappointed. Her room wasn't dirty at all. All she had was her robe in one corner. She went over and picked up her robe. As she did so, she saw a very big hole in the corner.

"Oh, oh, if Mom finds this she'll kill me." Then Jana added, "I wonder where it leads to."

She crawled part way into the hole. Saying aloud, "It's dark in here; I'd better get a flashlight," she crawled back out. Then she got her flashlight and crawled back in. She went another three to six feet. She went back out, got her coat, and crawled back in. She went on.

Suddenly she saw a beam of light. She turned off her flashlight and went on. Then, before she knew it, she was in a place where it was sunny and everything was perfect.

"Wow . . . how beautiful this is. I wonder where I am."

She walked about 12 steps, maybe more, maybe less. Then she saw a beautiful flower.

Instinctively, she stretched her hand towards the lovely blossom. But, before she had a chance to pick it, someone grabbed her hand and said, "You musn't pick the flowers; it's against the law. Can't you read that sign over there?" He pointed to a very big sign.

"Yes, of course I can read, but that sign wasn't there before."

"Yes, I know. Things just pop up out of nowhere."

Jana took a liking to this boy, so she asked him his name.

"What's your name?"

"Oh, sorry. I usually introduce myself. My name is Mark. What's yours?"

"My name is Jana. Where are we?"

"We're in a land called 'Arrumph'. How do you like it?"

"It's wonderful, but why can't I pick the flowers?"

She turned to face Mark, but he was gone.

"Mark, Mark, where are you? Where did you go? Please come back."

He was nowhere in sight.

She decided that she would go on. Maybe she would find Mark. Maybe she wouldn't. She did not know.

She still wondered why she couldn't pick the flowers. Still she went on. She heard a strange noise. She had to find a place to hide. She looked around. All of a sudden everything was gone.

There was no place to hide. She ran in circles. Then, everything popped back. She ran behind a tree. Then she saw what was making the noise. It was Snow White and the seven dwarfs.

Jana sighed, "Ohhhhh, how wonderful!"

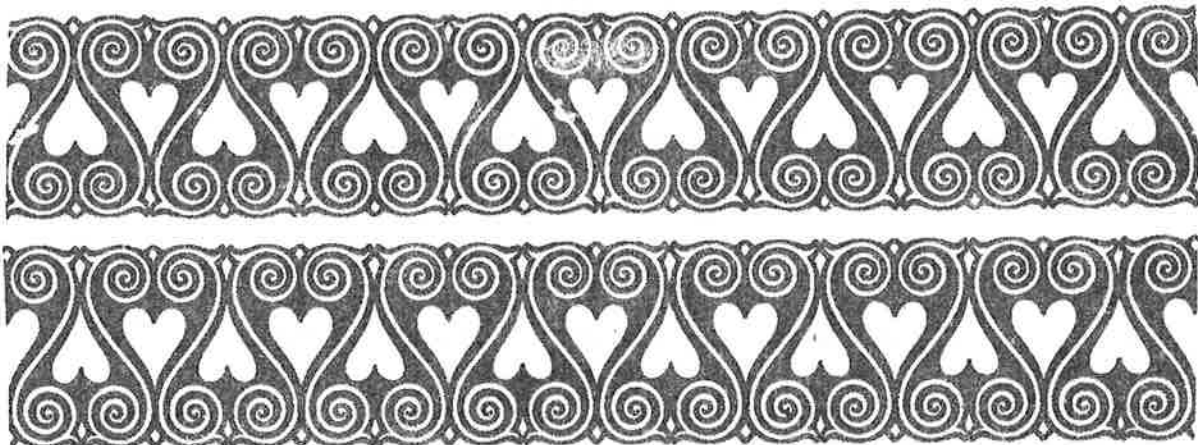
The reason it was so wonderful was that it was her favorite fairy tale.

She didn't know if she should venture from behind the tree, but she decided that she would. When she ran out, they were gone. She didn't know what to do.

It was getting dark out. She was starved and very cold. Then she saw a bevy of eyes. She reached for her flashlight and shone it on the eyes. She saw at least six to eight tigers staring up at her.

She closed her eyes and screamed. When she opened her eyes again, the tigers were gone. Then she thought a minute.

"That happened in my dream once!"



FLUFFY

My name is Fluffy. I am a cat. My favorite foods are canned cat food, warmed milk, tuna, and fish. I also like birds and mice and things like that.

I belong to a little girl named Karen.

"Here, Fluffy! Kitty, Kitty, Kitty!"

Oh, boy. Here she comes now. I think I'll run. Good! There's the garage. Oh, no! She saw me come in here! There's a window over there! Whoops! Too far to jump! Hey! Maybe I'll commit suicide! No, better not.

"Fluffy! All I want to do is feed you!"

Feed me! I bet! She's probably just saying that. Oh, well, I am kind of hungry.

Dry cat food and cold milk. Ugh! I think I'll choke.

Hey, you stupid girl, let me out of here! Shoot! She locked me in this dumb garage again. Boy, now what? I guess I'll go to sleep.

Hey, put me down! Can't you see that I'm trying to sleep?

"Oh, Fluffy, you're so cute when you're sleeping!"

Oh, shut up. Well, at least she's taking me outside. Maybe if I spit on her, she'll put me down. Good! She's going back into the house.

Look at that bird up in that tree! Sure looks good! Now my stupid teeth are chattering. I have to have it! Here I go! I'm just about to pounce on it. Oh, no! I missed the branch! I'm falling, falling, falling! Thud!

Oh, boy, I think I'm dead.

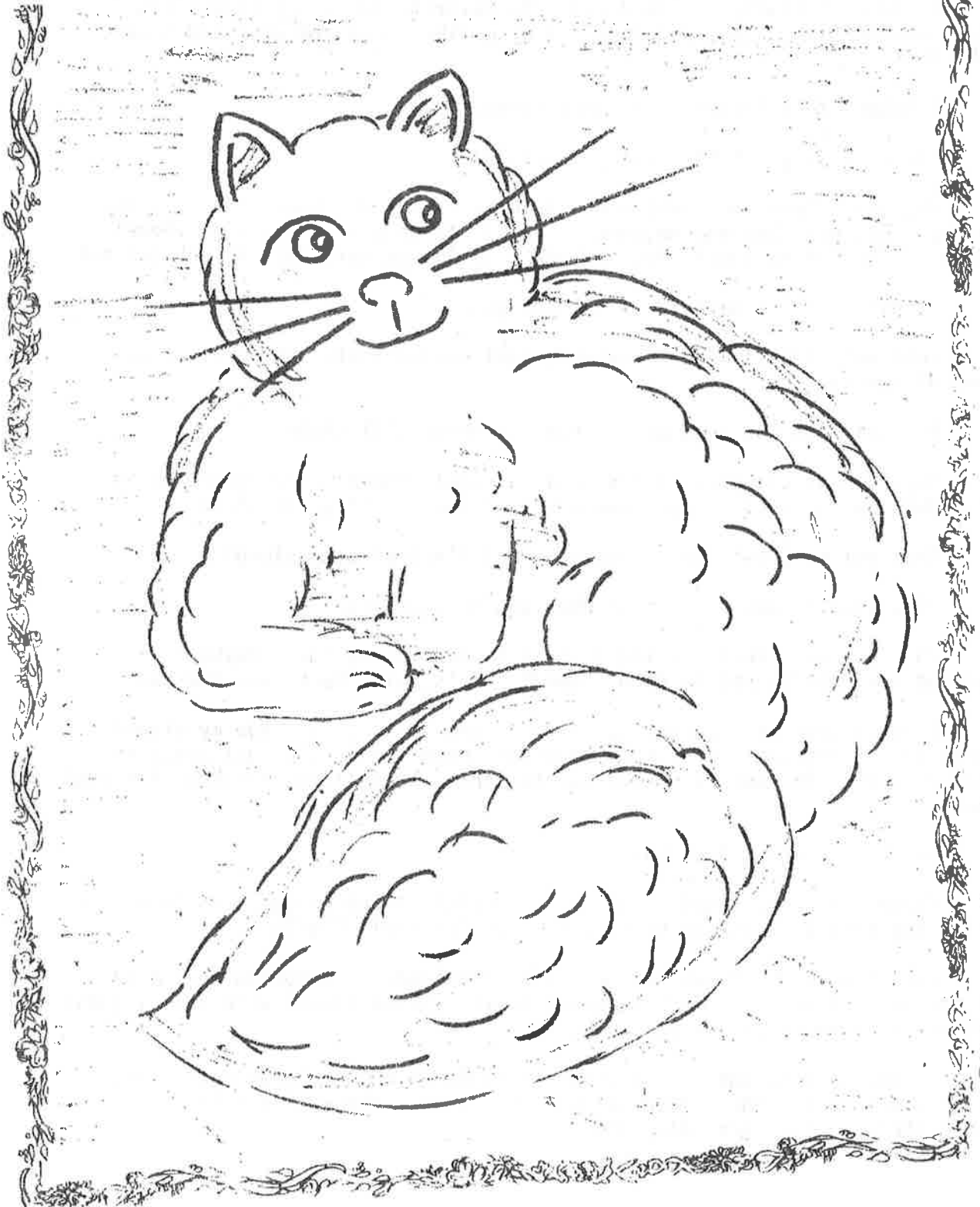
There they are. What? Two stupid girls? I had enough trouble with one. Well, the stupid girls are both screaming, "Fluffy! Fluffy"

When I woke up, I was in some kind of office. I supposed that I was at the vet. I had to spend the night there. Karen stayed with me. I guess I never knew how much she cared for me.

In the morning the vet said that I could go home. Karen petted me all the way home. She talked to me, too. I mean she really talked! Maybe she's pretty nice after all.

When we got home Karen fed me some canned chicken, my favorite, and a drink of warm milk. She also fixed me a nice warm, comfy bed, right in front of the fire!

Yep, I guess Karen isn't too bad. She's all right.



THE HUNTING TRIP

"All right, there's your grizzly," I said to Tom Wade (I had already gotten mine) as we held 8X binoculars on the trophy bear we had just sighted 350 yards upwind. Tom wore a grin of delight. You could see that he figured this was why he had been born. He rested his .300 Weatherby magnum over a boulder. He tilted his hot brim against the sun, lined the .300's scope sight, and fired with easy confidence - like a veteran.

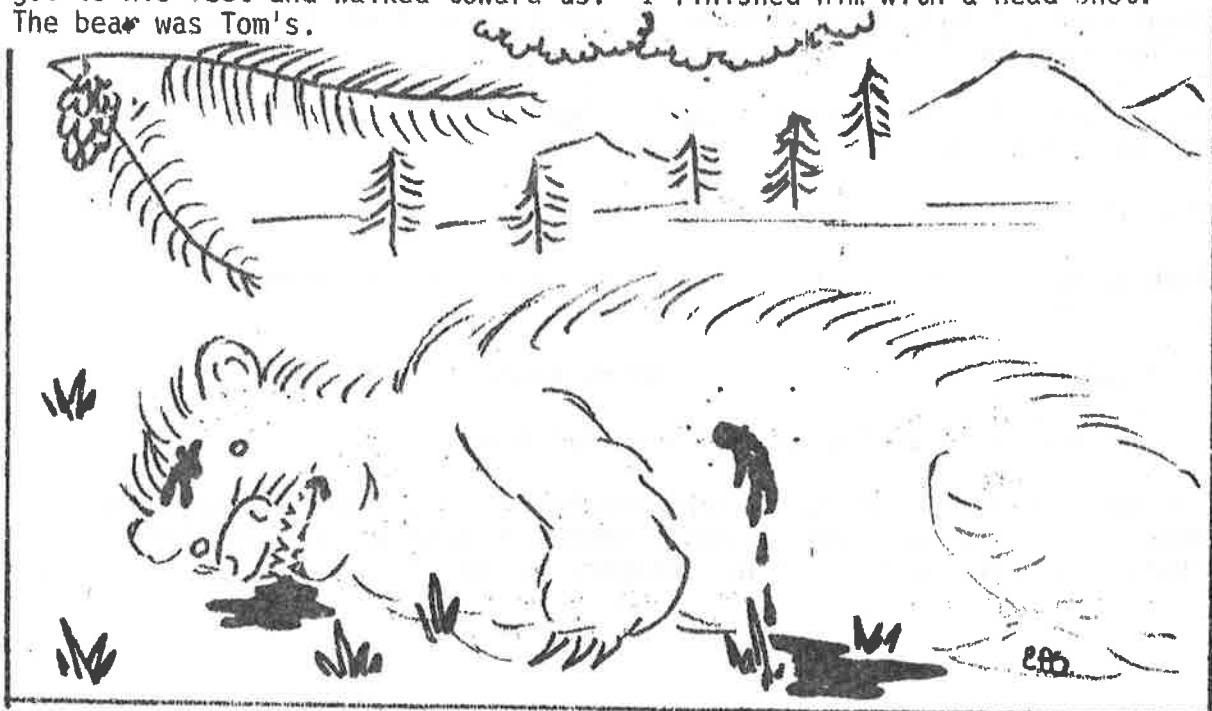
I was listening and heard the 180-grain "softnose" hit, a hollow whoomp. The impact spun the bear and he bawled. He went down on one shoulder, scrambling, but he got back up. Steadying the glasses, I could make out a red smear on his left side - a little too far back. It widened; then blood streamed from it. The bear bawled again and braced on spread legs. He bit at the wound.

I wished that he'd lay down because the slope was a mean 80 yards of rim rocks and rose brush. If he fell, his fancy pelt probably would take a beating.

Tom now chambered another shell - whackety-clack - and snuggled the .300's stock up to his cheek once more. I guess he thought he could anchor the bear, but he didn't get a chance to try.

The big grizzly's legs buckled (delayed bullet shock). Then, abruptly, before Tom could shoot, he started to tumble. Blood and dung flew as he bounced off a boulder and landed about ten yards from us.

I slung the .30-60 Remington off my shoulder and aimed. The bear got to his feet and walked toward us. I finished him with a head shot. The bear was Tom's.



BEST FRIENDS

It was a crisp autumn day as John and Diane walked across the meadow, kicking bright red maple leaves blown down by an October breeze. The last days of autumn are beautiful in New Hampshire, and they both appreciated the warm rays of the sun and the blue, cloudless sky.

"How were your classes at school today?" asked John.

"They were great! My science teacher, Mr. Michelson, was cracking puns all period."

"Really. My classes were really boring, except for math, where we played a joke on old Mr. Smith," chuckled John.

They continued walking in silence until they reached their favorite grove of maple trees near Shady Creek. He stopped and took hold of Diane's hands. They stood there, looking into one another's eyes and for the first time, John kissed Diane. He knew that kissing her was the wrong thing to do. As he looked at her, John knew he had kissed her because it was expected of him. Really, they were just best friends.

As Diane pulled away, she knew she had liked being kissed but wondered why John had kissed her. Was it only because his friends expected him to, or had his feelings for her changed?

Seeing the look on her face, John knew she questioned why, and, in embarrassment, he turned and walked away.

It was almost a week later and Diane saw John waiting at the edge of the school yard. I hope he is waiting to walk home with me, she thought. It is a lot more fun to walk home with John than alone.

"Hi," said John as he swung alongside her. "I really hope you are not mad at me for the other day."

"No, I'm not," Diane said.

Back across the meadow, the leaves were deeper and the breeze a little chillier.

"Did you play another joke on Mr. Smith today?"

"No, we were really nice to him," replied John.

All the way across the meadow they chatted about the things happening in school. As they approached the maple grove, John said, "I think I'm going to turn out for basketball in a couple of weeks."

"Oh, really! Some of the girls has asked me to turn out for our team and I think I might."

"Hey, maybe we could practice together. We have a good basketball hoop on the side of our garage."

"I know I'm going to need a lot of practice," Diane said.

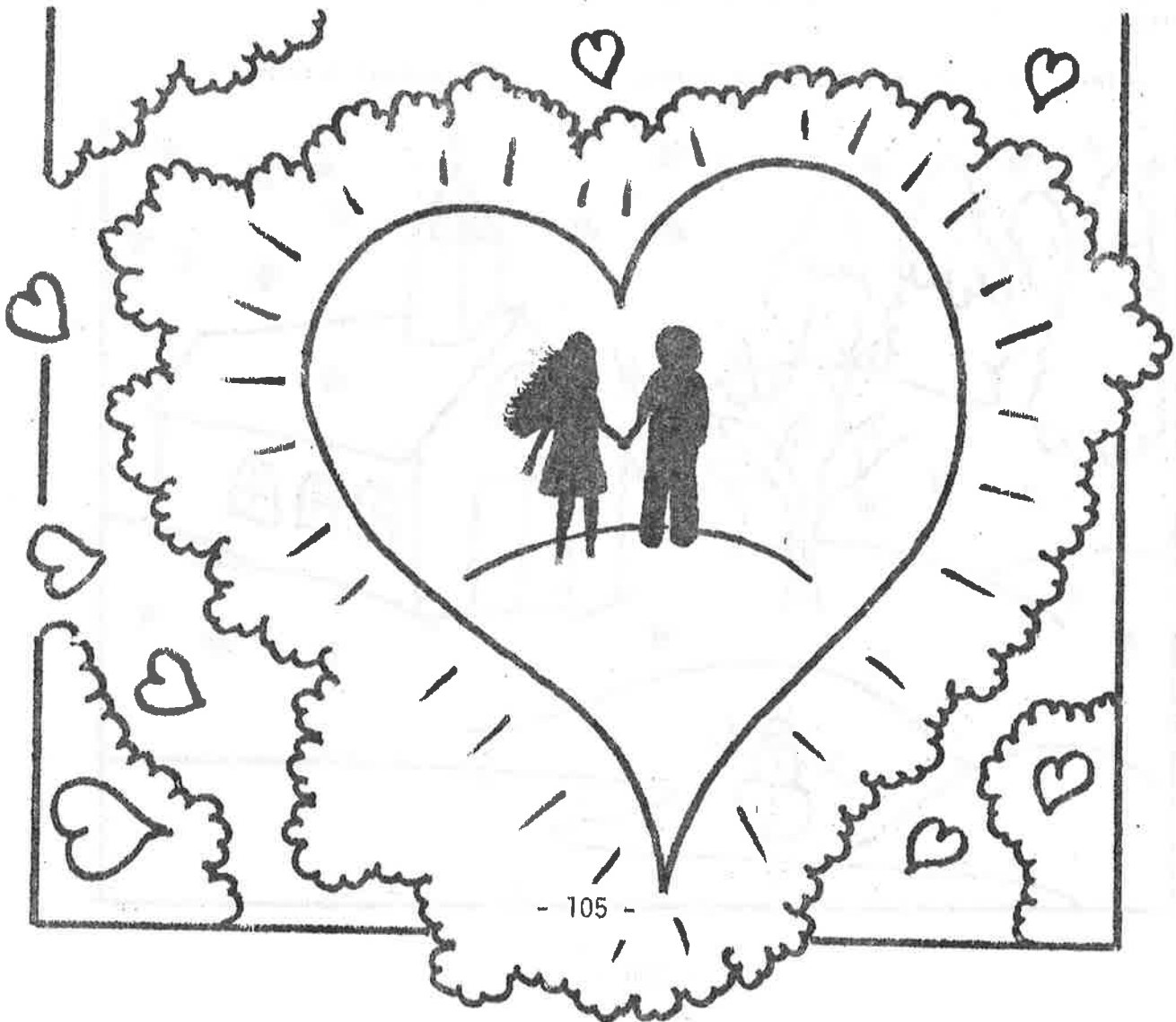
"Do you want to shoot some baskets this afternoon?"

"Sure, that would be fun."

"Okay," John said excitedly.

"I'll run home and sweep the leaves off the driveway while you get your tennis shoes."

"Okay, John. I'll be over in just a few minutes," Diane said as she turned toward home, realizing that this was the kind of thing she enjoyed sharing most with John. He must feel that way, too, she thought. At least we can still be friends.



Sounds of Winter

Listen, hear that crunch? It is the footsteps of a winter walker on a cold, crisp winter night. The snow is hard and dry like cracker crumbs under the shoes of people out for air. The church bells echo in the hills, awakening the wild geese to song as they fly south for the winter.

Laughter and yells combining with songs of the skaters in the nearby pond are music to my ears. The melody is sharpened by the slicing of metal on the ice.

This is the season when sleigh bells ring out the carols of the coming Christmas and cheer. The sounds of carolers and sleigh bells announce the coming of Santa Claus.

The solitude of winter is the peace after a snow storm; the quiet of a rabbit looking for food in the soft snow, not making a noise; and the stillness of the crisp morning air when an owl wings home after a night of hunting.

Winter is a joyful and quiet season with many pleasant sounds.



Only the Cautious Survive

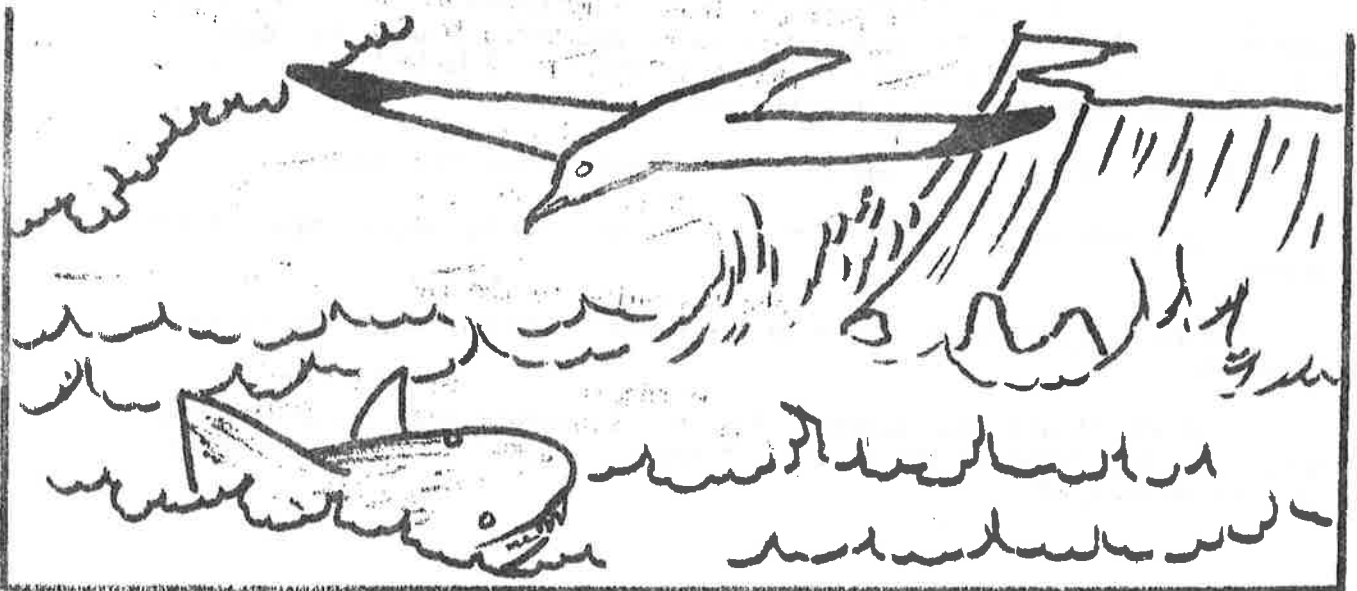
The summer breeze blew gently against the rotten branches of the old oak tree. A seagull and her mate sat perched upon the aging limbs which overlooked the tranquil sea. When the ocean was in good spirit, her bountiful waves would leave a few of her many treasures upon the bare shores. These gifts did not interest the gulls for their meal was to be found beyond the waves.

As the sun peeked over the Kaspain mountains, the ocean reflected the colorful rays. The morning was unusually warm and the gulls began the day with light hearts. The beachcombers were already searching the shores for the sea had been very generous.

The female gull took to the air first, and the male quickly followed suit. As the distance between the shore and the gulls increased, so did the life in the sea. A school of fish could be seen through the crystal clear salt water. Suddenly, without warning, several of the fish were snapped up in the jaws of a shark. But that was the way of the sea; only the cautious survived.

As the gulls flew on, the sun beamed down on their gray-tipped wings. The female was beginning to tire, so she gracefully landed upon the water. The male circled her, but remained in the air. Suddenly there was a wild flurry of feathers and blood! A white shark had swam up to the unexpecting gull and snatched her up in his powerful jaws. He then returned to the depth of the sea as quietly as he came.

The male gull slowly circled the spot where his mate had once been. He was careful not to get too near to the water for danger lurked underneath. The warmth the sun had once held seemed mocking to the gull, for his heart was heavy. But that was the way of the sea; only the cautious survived.



THE LAST GOOD-BY

As I waved good-bye to my daughter, Linda, I felt a feeling of loneliness overcome me. Even though she goes to camp every year with her best friend, Sue, I always feel lonely. She waved good-bye as the bus steamed off, but it didn't help me feel better, so I decided to go home and get some comfort from my wife, Fran.

Just as I reached my car, I saw a ticket on the windshield. I knew it wasn't going to be one of my better days. I got into my car and turned on the ignition, but it didn't start. I tried several times with no luck and finally got out, slamming the door behind me. I opened the hood and poof! A big cloud of smoke filled the air. After the smoke cleared, I checked over the car and found nothing wrong, so I tried again to start it. This time it started so I proceeded to go home.

I started feeling lonely again so I turned on the radio. "Attention," blasted the announcer, "It has just been reported that there has been a three-bus accident on the Westbend Turnpike. All able-bodied doctors and nurses are urged to come and help." Since I was a surgeon, I proceeded to the Turnpike.

When I got there, an officer instructed me to go to the closest bus and help get the casualties ready for transportation to County Hospital. When I arrived at the bus, I saw Sue lying on the ground. A young intern told me she would be fine so I paid no further attention. I worked there for two hours until the last ambulance left. I followed it into County Hospital since it was time for my shift anyway.

When I got there, it was a madhouse. People were everywhere. There were so many doctors that they told me to wait in the waiting room until they needed me.

As I sat in the waiting room, I saw sheet-covered bodies being taken downstairs. I felt a cringe in my stomach, something I never had before. For some reason, I felt overly attached to the dead I hadn't even seen. As I was pondering my thoughts, my wife stormed in.

"Robert, Robert, is Linda all right?" cried Fran frantically.

"Why should you say that? She must be halfway to camp by now," I reasoned.

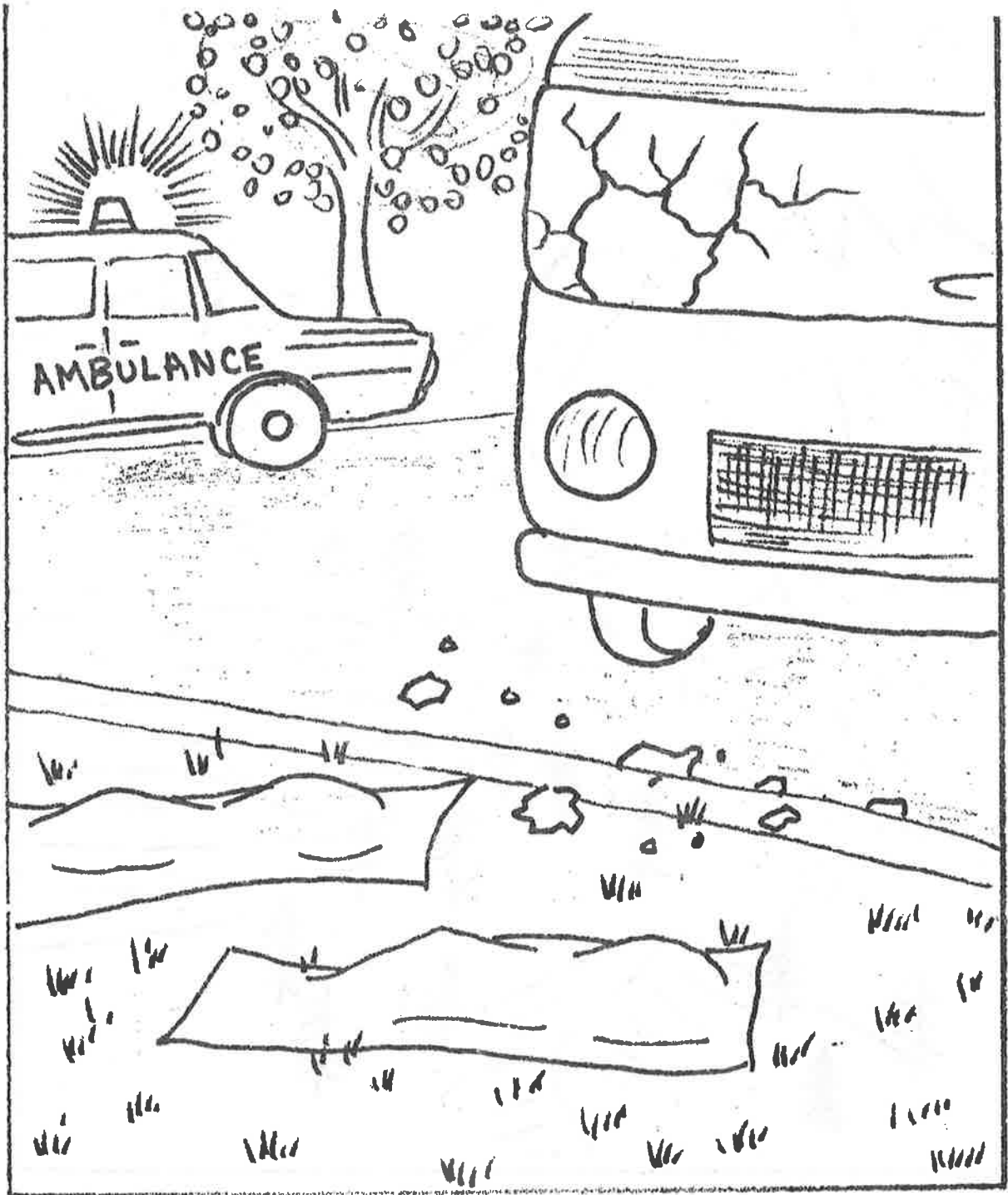
"Haven't you been listening to the radio? The bus Linda was on was in an accident!"

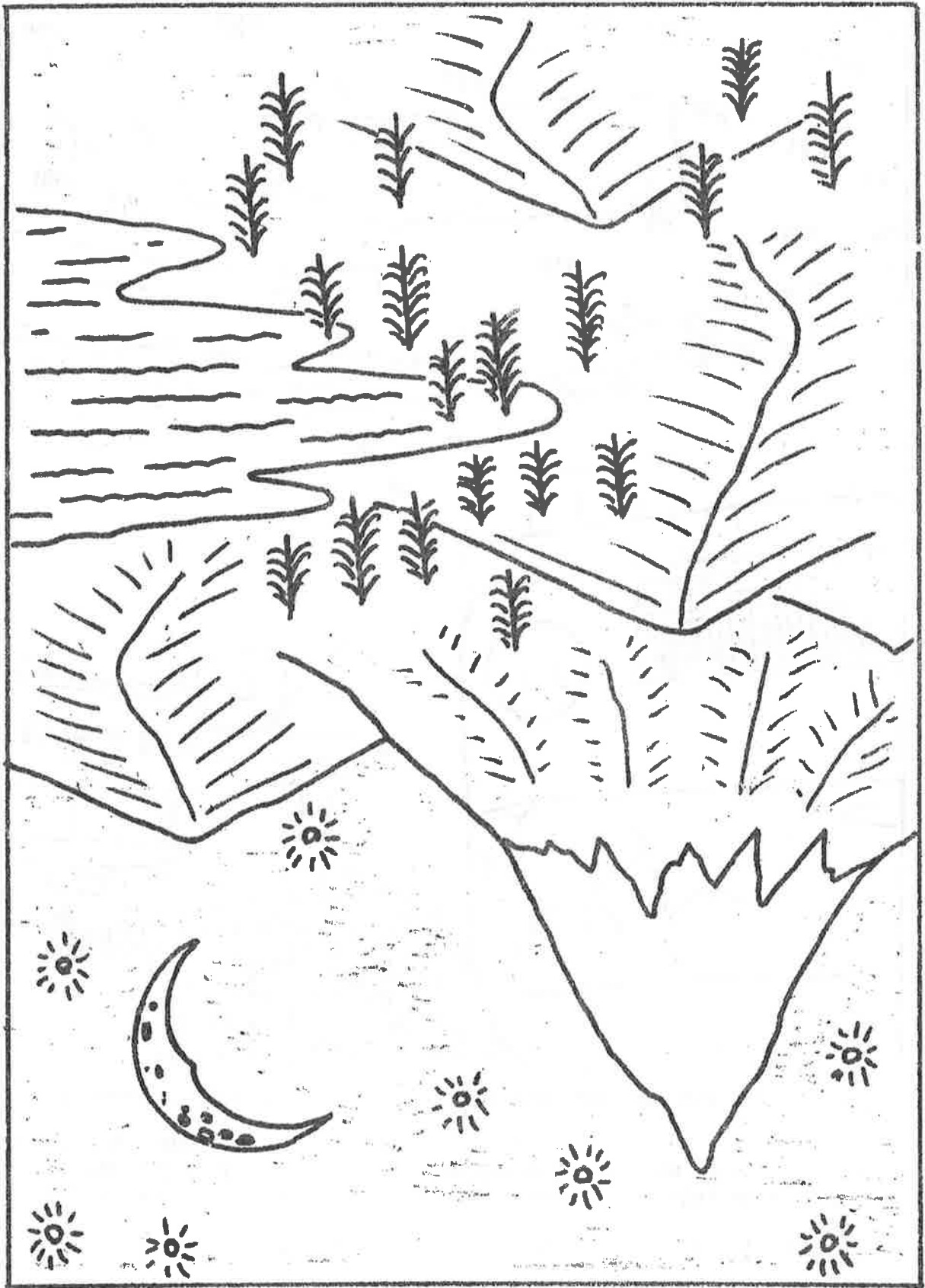
Suddenly it all came together for me. "I didn't even think of Linda when I saw Sue lying on the ground. I feel so stupid!" I said, resting my head on my hands.

"Well, let's go see if she's all right," Fran frantically stated.

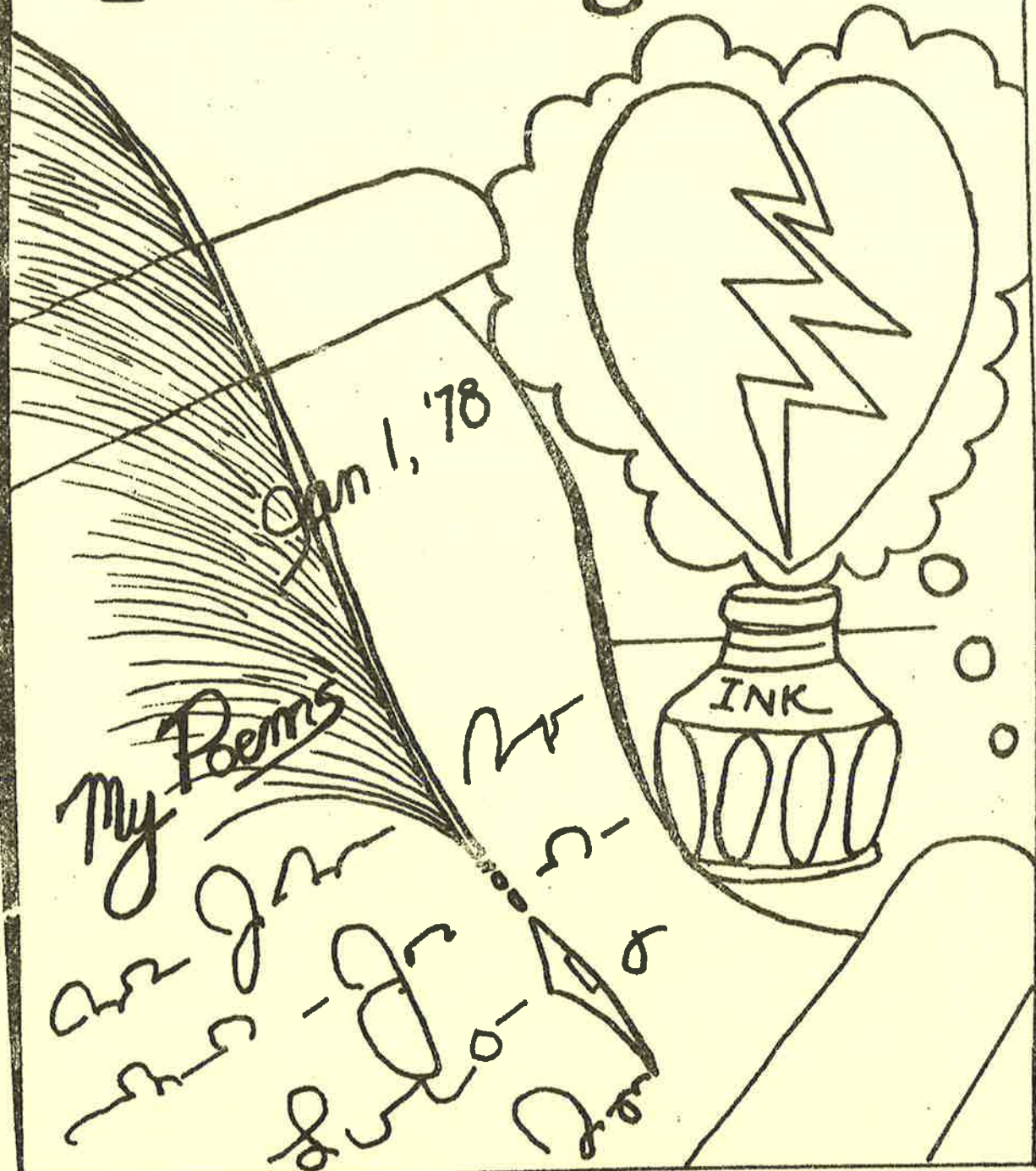
When we got to the admissions desk, the news wasn't what we wanted to hear. Linda had died before she reached the hospital. We identified the body and went home.

I'll never forget that day or Linda's face when she waved good-by.





Poetry





HER AND THE STARS

The stars in the sky so bright,
I wish I was with her tonight.
I remember how I held her tight;
She and I never fight.
The times we are together,
They're a-w-r-i-g-h-t.

ODE TO MAC

There was a man named Mac.
His job was a lumberjack.
One day Mac fell off his track,
Broke his back - and never did come back.

MY FRIEND

One day as I was walking through the park,
I started to think of a long lost friend,
One I have known for a very long time,
One I have grown up with and shared
secrets with and been a buddy with,
She is one I have known for many years,
And now she is gone - gone forever.
She has moved far, far away.

THE PILOT

The pilot brings his plane around
And he fires his gun.
The enemy crashes into the ground,
And the battle is done.

The pilot goes home to get some sleep.
He is done with his work in the sky.
Many miles away, a wife begins to weep.
A child begins to cry.

THE SNIPER

A glinting helmet reflecting the sun,
This is all the sniper sees.
He aims his deadly gun,
From way up in the tree.
The sniper takes his time,
For he is very tired.

He aims for a head the size of a dime,
And then the shot is fired.
A cry is thrust into the air,
The figure falls in a crumpled heap.
He had taken the chance that others dared,
And will never wake from his eternal sleep.

TUG-O-WAR

There once was a team from Mitchell's class,
Who thought they were going to win.
They entered into the Tug-O-War
With only a few men.


They grabbed the rope and started to pull,
And their feet started to slip.
Said Mitchell to his trying team,
"I think we're getting whipped."

We pulled and pulled but lost the first
And started the second one.
Our arms were sore and weak in strength;
It felt like we were pullin' a ton.

Suddenly, there came a great big surge
From the other side of the rope.
I looked around and saw their team
And suddenly gave up hope.

We lost the first and lost the second,
But Mitchell laughed and said,
"Worry not; we'll win next time,
Though we should fight till we are dead."





I WILL BE RELEASED

To be released
would be a blessing;

Only God
knows how
hard it is
to survive.

But if I
were to be
released
and should
go to hell,

Then surely
Earth is the only
place to
dwell.

No, I must
go to heaven
and sit by
the golden
gate.

I will wait
for the day
when I will
be released, for
God to
condemn
me to heaven
or hell.

HIM

He is my day
today.

My night
tonight.

My sun in the
sun shine

My moon in its
light.

He has my
heart in his
hands.

My thoughts
in his
head.

He knows
my feelings
which were
never
said.

SKATE BOARDS

Fast and sleek,
Rolling down a hill as fast as a car.
Why are you so rough on knees and elbows?

GEESE

Flying so high in the sky
Like a big plane up in the sky,
Gliding like a cloud,
Swimming like a fish,
Gliding down a stream,
Swimming so graceful in a pond.

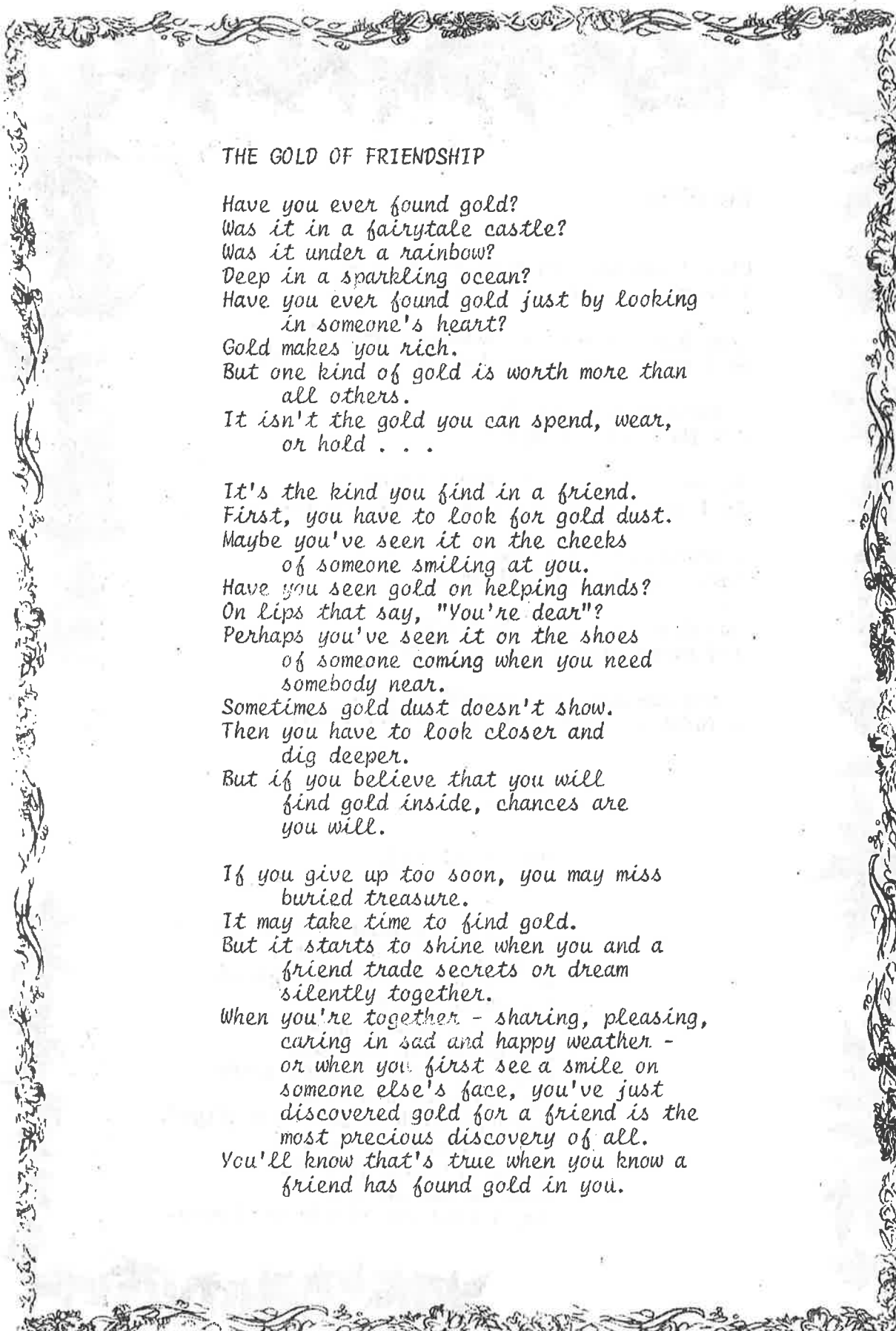
DUCKS

Soft and cute,
Swimming like a fish,
Gliding like a cloud.

THE CAR

Black and fast;
It goes faster than sound,
It looks like a streak of lightning going down the street,
Its grille looks like a big face looking at you in the dark.
It kills cops trying to stop it anywhere, anytime.





THE GOLD OF FRIENDSHIP

Have you ever found gold?
Was it in a fairytale castle?
Was it under a rainbow?
Deep in a sparkling ocean?
Have you ever found gold just by looking
in someone's heart?
Gold makes you rich.
But one kind of gold is worth more than
all others.
It isn't the gold you can spend, wear,
or hold . . .

It's the kind you find in a friend.
First, you have to look for gold dust.
Maybe you've seen it on the cheeks
of someone smiling at you.
Have you seen gold on helping hands?
On lips that say, "You're dear"?
Perhaps you've seen it on the shoes
of someone coming when you need
somebody near.
Sometimes gold dust doesn't show.
Then you have to look closer and
dig deeper.
But if you believe that you will
find gold inside, chances are
you will.

If you give up too soon, you may miss
buried treasure.
It may take time to find gold.
But it starts to shine when you and a
friend trade secrets or dream
silently together.
When you're together - sharing, pleasing,
caring in sad and happy weather -
or when you first see a smile on
someone else's face, you've just
discovered gold for a friend is the
most precious discovery of all.
You'll know that's true when you know a
friend has found gold in you.



THE NOISE

When I was walking home one night,
I heard a sound that gave me fright.

Some bums is what I instantly thought,
So I went to a store, but nothing I bought.

I started out just then,
But there it was again.

At once I knew that it was spies,
So I tried to hide under the starry skies.

I heard the noise and ran
Into a great big garbage can.

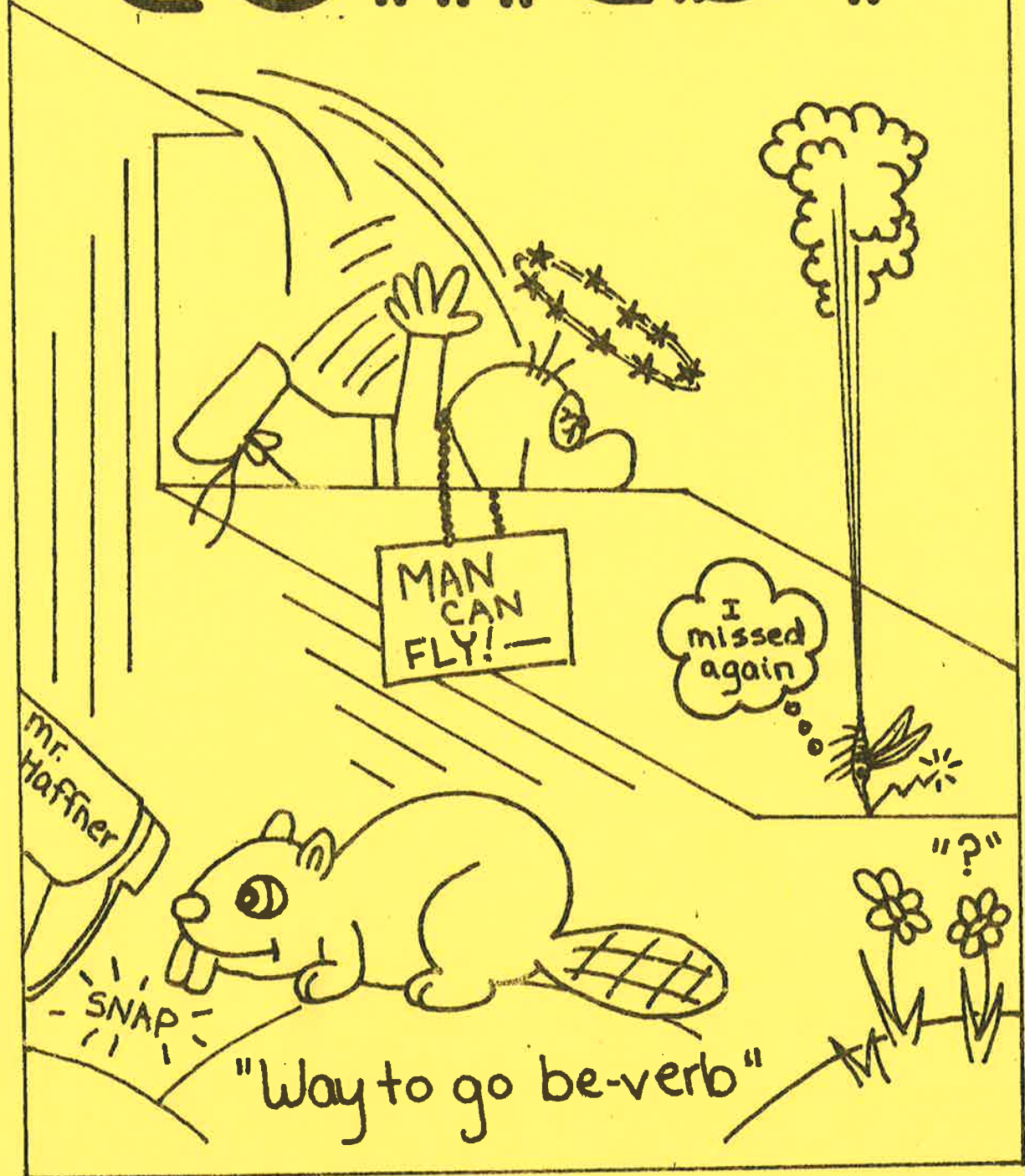
Mad dogs in a pack that roam,
I'd swear they'd chased me home.

I ran upstairs and jumped in bed,
I think I'd rather be there than dead.

THE LITTLE BIRD

I once was flying through the air.
Time, I could not spare.
When I heard a strange sound,
I flew toward it
And guess what I found?
A tiny little creature
With the cutest little feature.
He was brown and white
But had got hurt during a flight.
I took him to my home
Where he lived in a dome.
Soon he was better.
So, I sent the little bird away.

COMEDY



A WALK IN THE WOODS

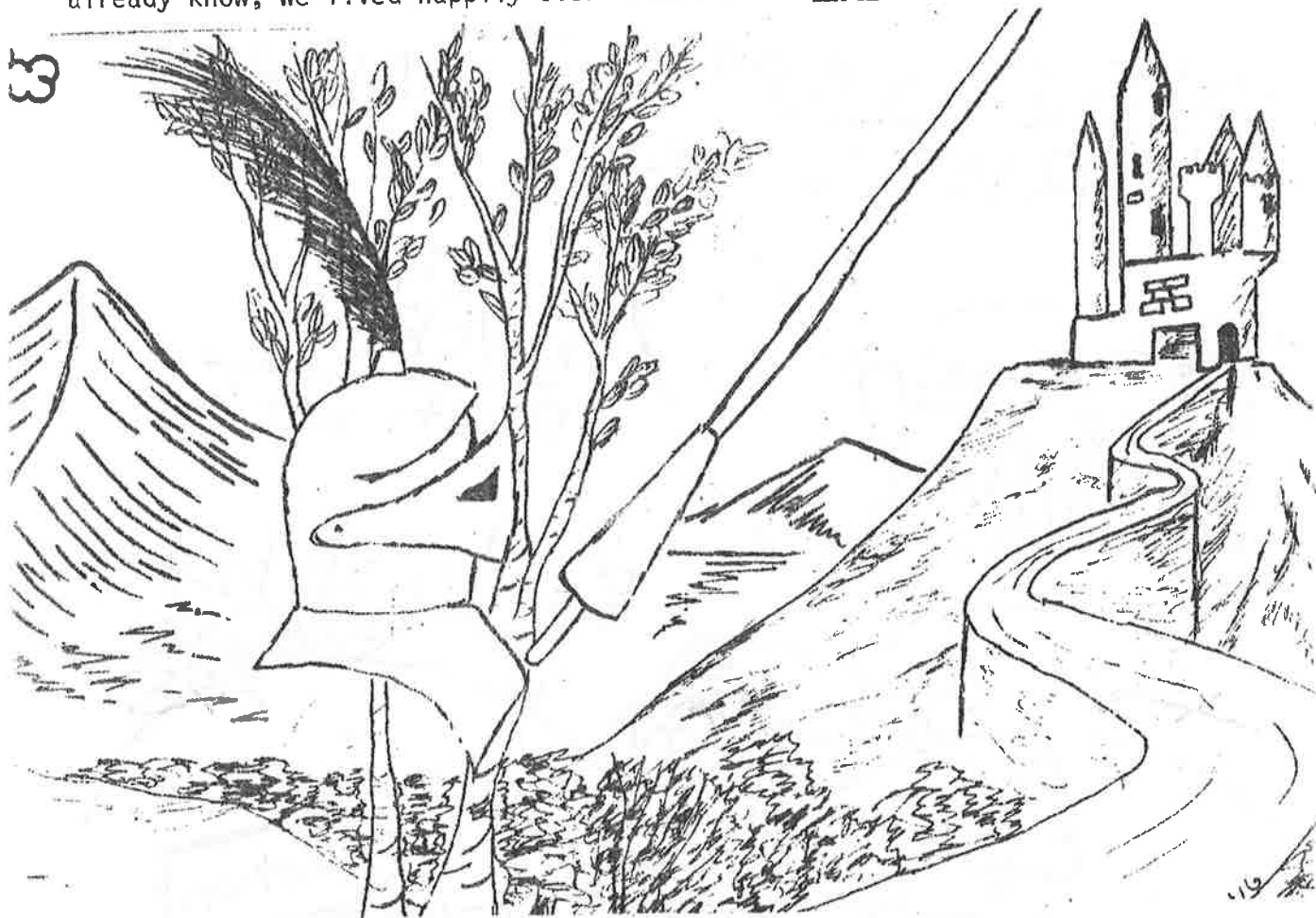
One warm and cozy morning in June, I decided to go for a walk in the woods. While I was walking, the strangest thing happened. I saw a knight riding a black stallion; the knight kept repeating over again, "Ya-hoo!"

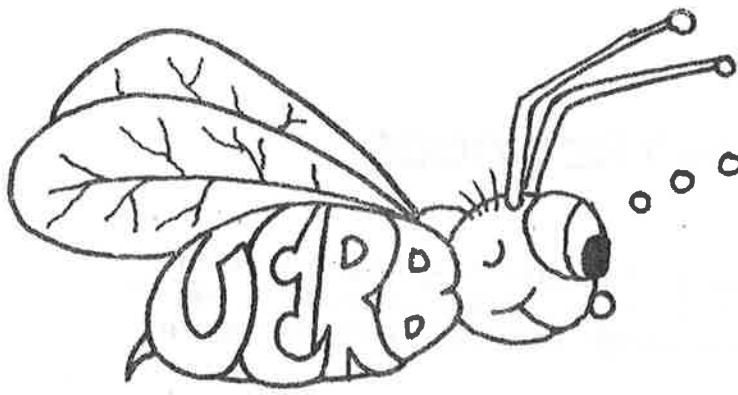
There was a beautiful red-headed lady who was being held prisoner in a huge castle not too far away. The lady was yelling, "Help, save me; please, save me!"

Me, being a nice helpful person and all, I started up to help her; but before I knew it, the knight came riding up behind me and stabbed me in the back with his lance. Boy, talk about hurt! That jab really did for awhile.

However, I wasn't going to let a little stab in the back stop me from saving that beautiful lady. I just got up and made that knight eat his lance -- point and all. He gained so much weight, he couldn't move for weeks thereafter.

I went on to save that beautiful red-headed lady; and as you probably already know, we lived happily ever after. . . . so far!

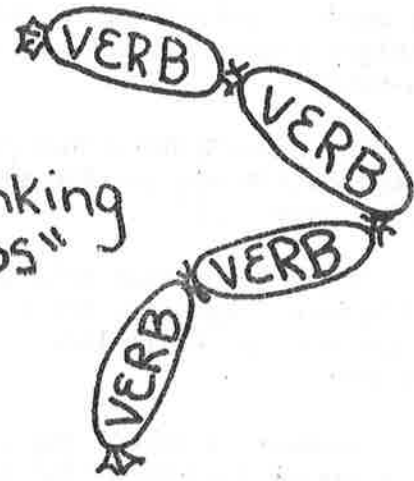




"Bee Verb?"

Prov-verbs

"Linking verbs"



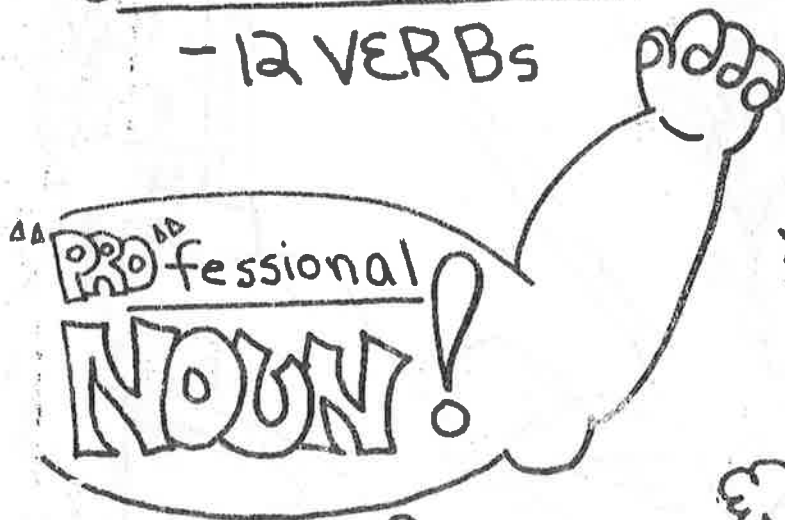
VERB
+ VERB

ADDVERBS

VERB
- VERB

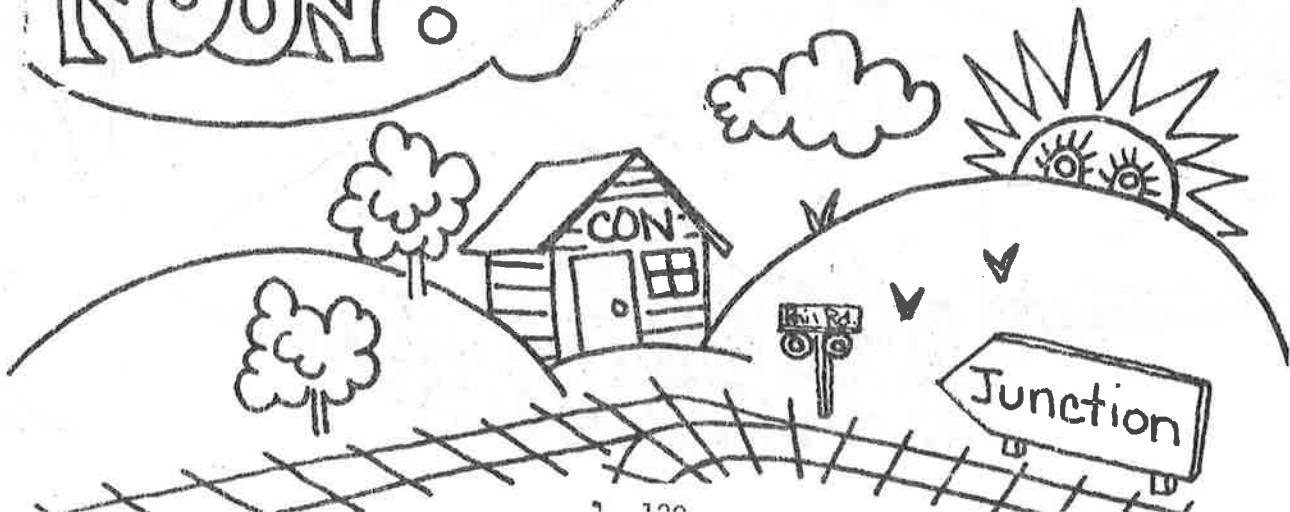
SUB-VERB

$5 \text{ VERB}^2 + 6 \text{ VERBs}^{10} = \text{ALGAVERBS}$
- 12 VERBS



VERB^{10}
x VERB^2

multi-verbs





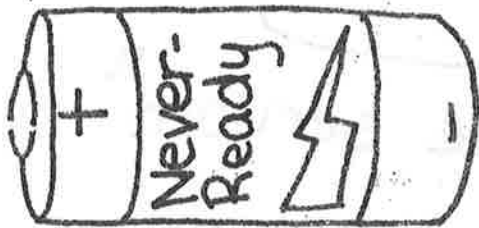
Oregon State 'be-verbs'
Always asleep on the job.

Jective
+ Jective

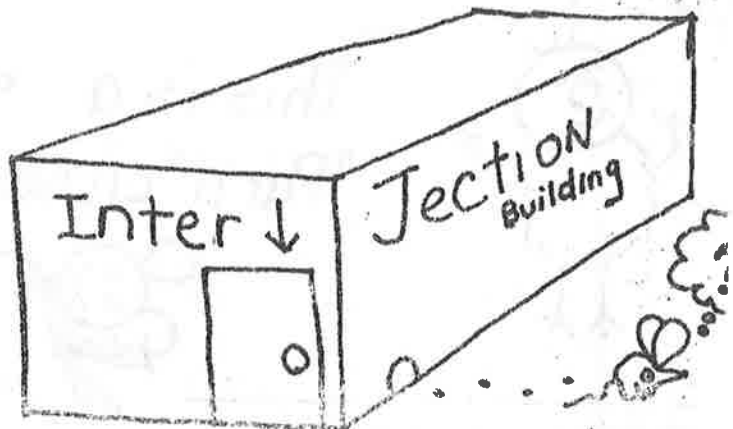
Adjectives

Prepositional phrase
another stupid

Beware
of
Perverbs!



The opposite of
a negative is an
'appositive'



Complements:

wonderful / super!

great job staff

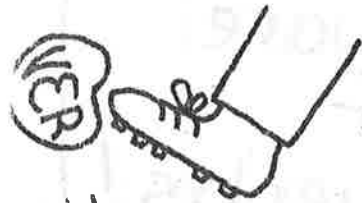
very ingeniutive!

fantastic magazine



grund
- President
ut Jimmy
won.

ball



ball abuse

This is a
ciple:



This is a ciple servant

This is a
"Parti" ciple



This is part
of a
ciple:



An Autobiography

by a Garbage Can

I am now being sent to the metal shredder to be shredded and melted into something useful or extravagant, pretty or ugly. I don't care as long as I am not made into a wastebasket. In my opinion, any death is better than rusting away in some junkyard or, even worse, to spend another two years in a junior high school. Since I am going to tell you my life's story I might as well start at the beginning.

I came off the assembly line in 1970 during the month of June, and right off the bat my life started to go downhill. Those idiots instantly gave me three coats of the ugliest army-surplus, olive-drab paint you ever did see. They, at least, could have used blue or something like that. The only thing I had going for me at that time was that I was created with a small amount of E.S.P.; that is how I am talking to you now.

I was sent to a junior high on what was supposed to be the last day, but at the last minute the school year was extended to make up for the cancellation of school during winter. What a day! Kids, out of pure frustration, kicked and dented me, rolled me down the hall, and planted firecrackers in me. That was one of the more terrible experiences that I had.

That first summer was wonderful. There were absolutely no students to do all those awful things to me. During that summer I made good friends with a recycle box whose contents were set on fire and beat out with a baseball bat.

When school started again, my biggest worry was being stuck in a room with a teacher who didn't allow chewing gum in her class. Boy, talk about bad luck! The first day alone I had sixteen slimy, spitty, grotesque wads of chewing gum dropped into me. Only one person had the decency to wrap the gum in paper before throwing it into me so it wouldn't stick to my innards. Those janitors; they did not show any respect for me at all. They turned me upside down, pounded on my bottom, and smashed my rim against the rim of a big barrel. Boy, did I get motion sickness!

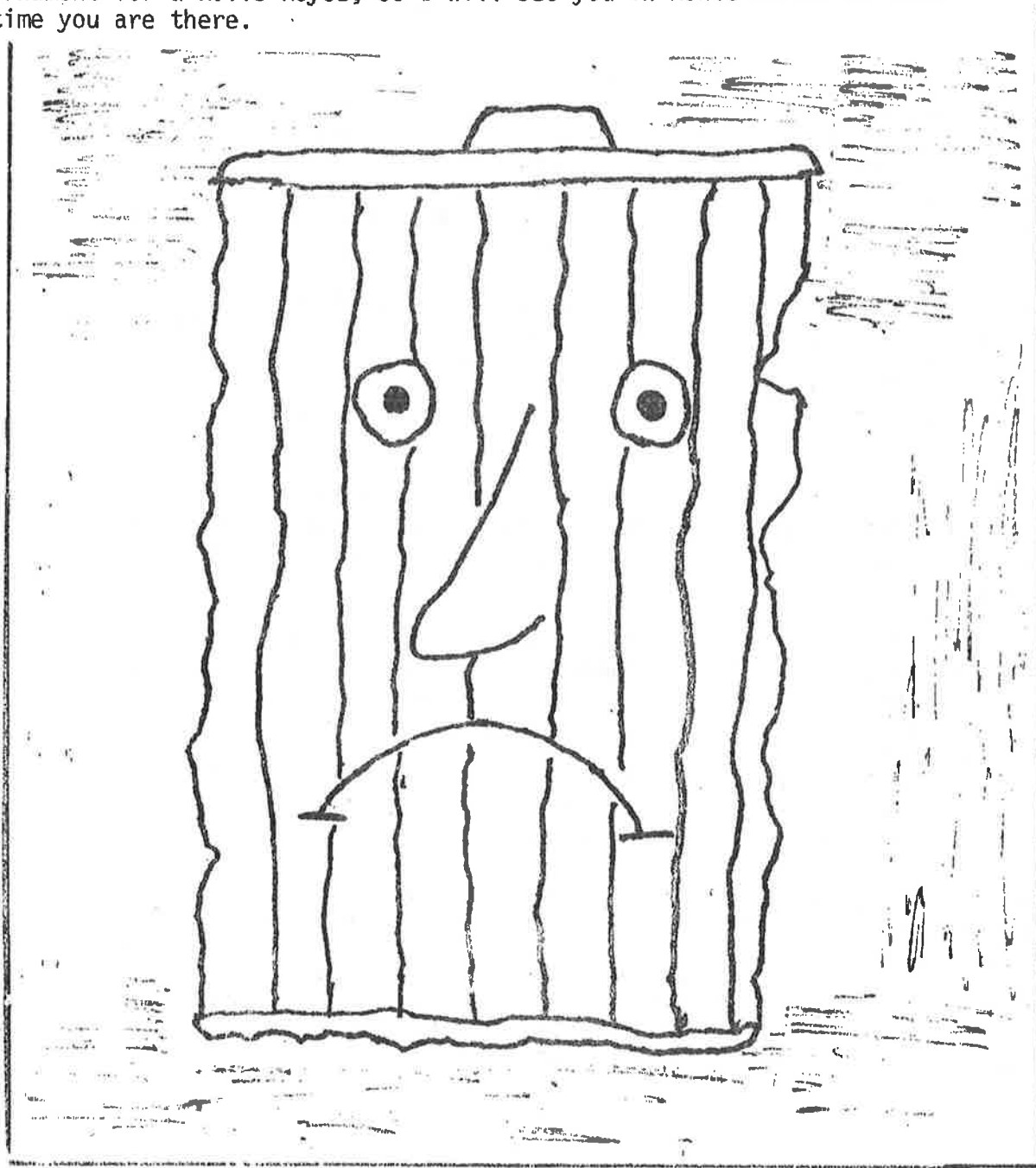
I was used for a great many things by the students, ranging from a plaything to be rolled down the hall to a basket for paperwad basketball. That was fun. I would use my E.S.P. to make the wad miss or go in, to get a kid in trouble, or to save a kid. My favorite hobby was keeping a kid after school. When I got a kid in trouble with my E.S.P., the teacher would make him shoot fifty shots and make them all before he could go home. I would let him make forty-nine shots, but make the kid miss the last one, so the dummy would have to start all over again.

The worst time of my life was bathroom detail. I was on the job for only one week before I had my insides scorched by the wonderful bathroom

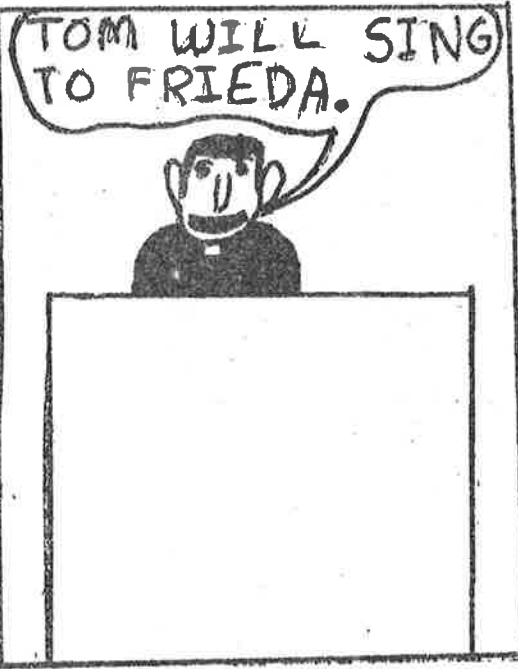
smokers, alias future arsonists. Boy! Talk about heartburn!

Three weeks and a new paint job later, I was transferred to the school kitchen. How disgusting! They used me to dispose of their decomposing chef salads, the ones that sat in the refrigerator for six weeks. Did you know that each day they blop on another layer of leftover junk to make the decomposing chef salad look fresh?

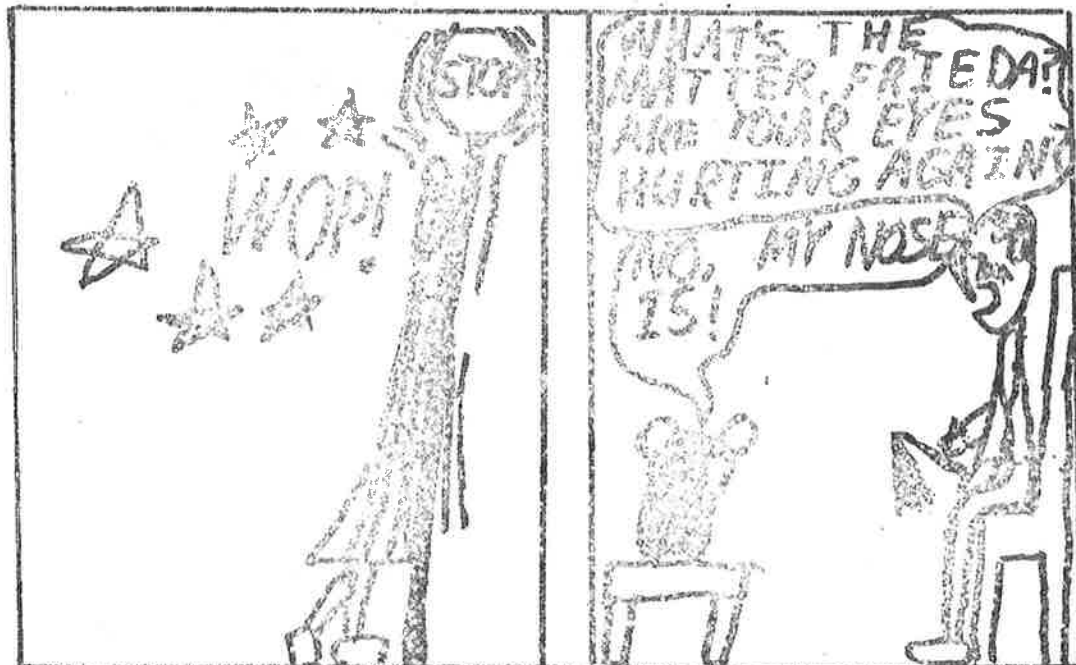
That brings me to where I am now, on my way to becoming a hood ornament for a Rolls Royce, so I will see you in Monte Carlo the next time you are there.



THE McBEARS



The McBears Part II



The McBears Part III



NIGHTMARE IN RED

We were flying a recon mission over the Soviet Union. I was playing with the old bombing apparatus in the reconvered B-17 we called a plane, a dilapidated old crate that should have been scrapped twelve years ago.

"Go in the back and get some of the gin," said Captain McCauley.

Not watching what I was doing, I slipped and fell out of the bombay doors I had previously opened by accident. My joyous mood quickly left as I saw the plane fading into the distance. Not wanting to splatter all over the Russian countryside, I pulled the ripcord and my parachute blossomed above me. I came down much faster than I had expected, and I hit the sod with a "whump."

Much later, I groggily awoke to find myself in the back of a truck that rattled and jostled so much I swore it would fall apart. There were two guards in the truck. I tried to get up but was pushed down again by the biggest of the two. Through an interpreter, I was informed that I was to be taken to the notorious Borsh Stroganoff, a Colonel in the K.G.B. (Russian Secret Police.)

Three hours and fifty or more sore muscles later, we arrived at K.G.B. headquarters in Moscow. There I was informed that I was a spy, an enemy against the State. I was approached by Borsh, a huge, obese man with a face that could stop a train.

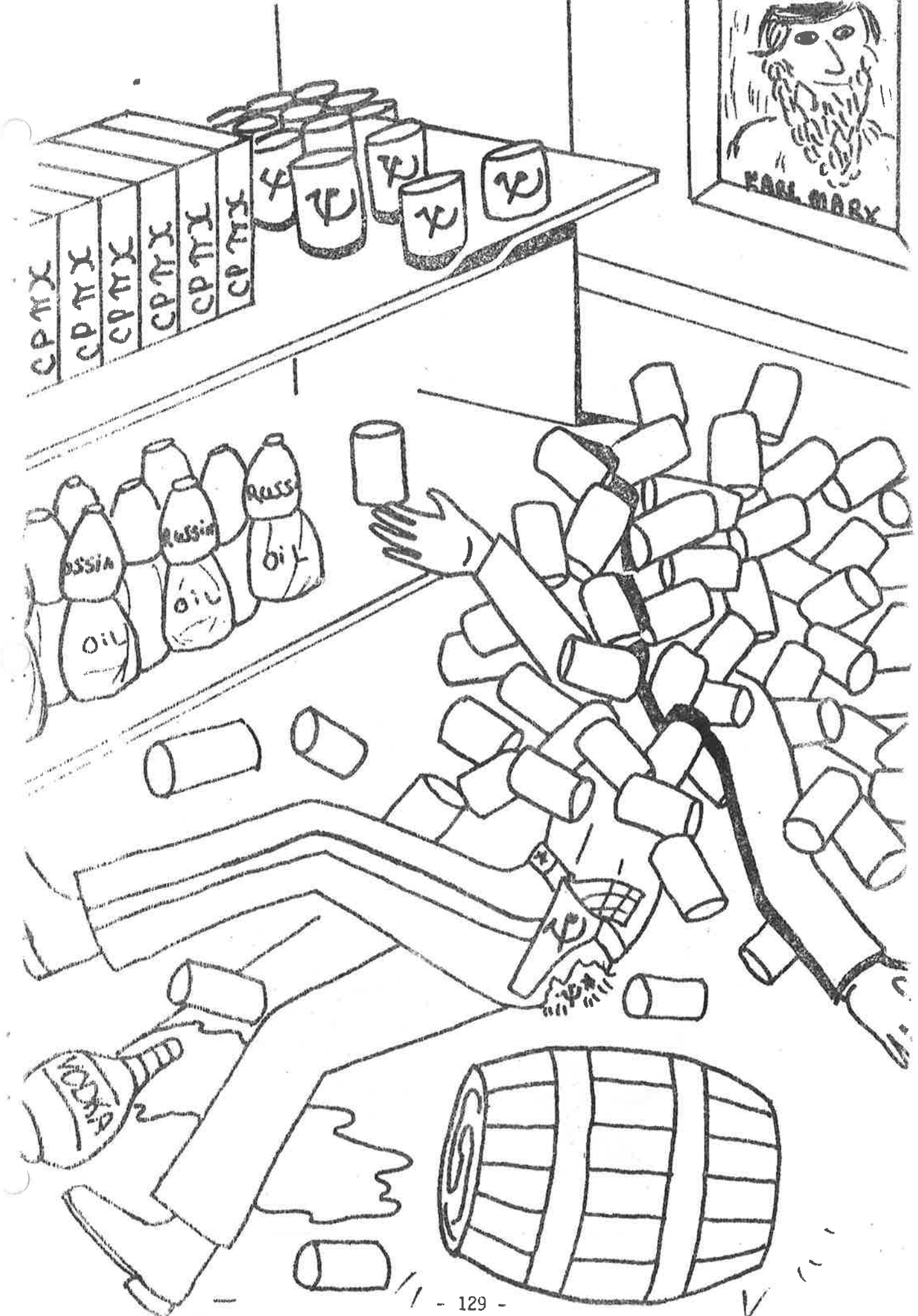
"What's your name?" he asked.

"George Washington," I replied.

"Liar," he screamed as he pelted me with the piece of chicken he had been chewing on. "You are going to be taken across the street and tortured," he growled.

We were halfway across the street when I made my break. I elbowed him in the ribs, turned around, kicked him, and knocked him down before the guards caught up with us. I ran off, scared and bewildered, into the streets of Moscow.

Three blocks later, I realized that Borsh was not far behind. I was getting tired so I made a bee-line for a weathered building that would have fallen at a sneeze. (I'm surprised his face didn't knock it down.) Borsh, despite his tremendous size, was almost upon me when I streaked into the morgue. All of a sudden, a casket, dark and forbidding, loomed up in front of us. I leaped over it and sprawled to the floor in a crumpled heap. Borsh was not as agile as I; he tripped and toppled onto the casket, crushing it with his tremendous weight. I sprang up from that floor as if it were too hot to touch. I was out of the door before Borsh even stood up.



Minutes later, I found myself in the Moscow Zoo. I was tired and could run no further. With Borsh catching up fast, I was forced to use whatever means of transportation could be had. I jumped onto the back of a protesting ostrich and headed for the American Embassy, gleaming on a hill about two miles away. I received many strange looks from bystanders on one of Moscow's busiest streets. All of a sudden, there was Borsh on a motorscooter, rapidly gaining on me. Even the ostrich didn't like him. The ostrich took me into a supermarket just seconds ahead of Borsh.

I was stealthily sneaking down an aisle when Borsh sprang out and nearly took my head off with a barrel. I managed to elude him again, but I was still trapped in that market. There was a back door and I decided to try to reach it. Halfway there, I was taken by surprise as Borsh sprang at me. In desperation, I rolled a barrel at him. He tripped, stumbled, and ripped his pants. The sickle and hammer were proudly displayed on his red boxer shorts as 3000 cans of beans toppled over and buried him. I continued my journey.

I was almost to the Embassy when Borsh jumped out of a police car full of men. I started to run, but then I realized that I was facing the wall of the Embassy and the front gate was on the other side. I was surrounded and it looked like there was no escape. Then, Borsh, gathering up all of his mighty strength, took a tremendous lunge at me. He missed and with a horrendous sound the wall caved in on Borsh. I scampered to freedom as bullets chipped away at the rubble.

Ten days later, I arrived in San Francisco. I was glad to begin the 30 days leave awarded me by the Army. I didn't know what to do with all that time; but one thing was for sure, I wasn't going to the Soviet Union.



How to give Harry Humdinger

a close scrape with death

Harry Humdinger is a real creep. I hate him! Do you? If so, follow these instructions and you can give him a real scare! I tried it. It works pretty good, only not good enough, I guess. Harry Humdinger is still alive, isn't he?

Anyway, I'll give you a few different variations. First, there's the "Circus Routine." What I did was: I got Harry to pose in front of an arrow target. I told him I was going to shoot a picture of him. Instead I shot an arrow at him. Bulls-eye! But I missed Harry. Anyway a hundred points is useless if you're trying to get Harry Humdinger. Maybe it will work better for you.

Another way I tried to kill Harry was so simple it was amazing! I got my white Samoyed, and we went hunting. Actually, neither of us know how to hunt, but I know how to shoot. I practiced shooting at Harry by shooting at a plastic bloated Bozo the Clown punching bag that was filled with sand at the bottom. If I can hit Bozo, I can hit Harry! But, I hadn't practiced shooting for two days because I hit Bozo the first time and he popped. Anyway, I borrowed the gun from a friend. My Samoyed, "Sureluck", and I took Harry Humdinger hunting. I told him not to bother to bring his gun because I had one. Harry said that was okay. He had some tennis balls he would fire at the deer. I reminded him we were shooting small game. Harry said a deer is small game compared to a Stegasauras. Harry isn't too bright. So, when we got there, we split up; he took his tennis balls and I took my friend's gun. Pretty soon I saw him up in a tree. Boy, Harry really is dumb! I cocked the gun, aimed, fired -- just as Harry slipped and fell out of the tree. I knew he was klutzy, but I had forgotten to work this minor detail into my plans.

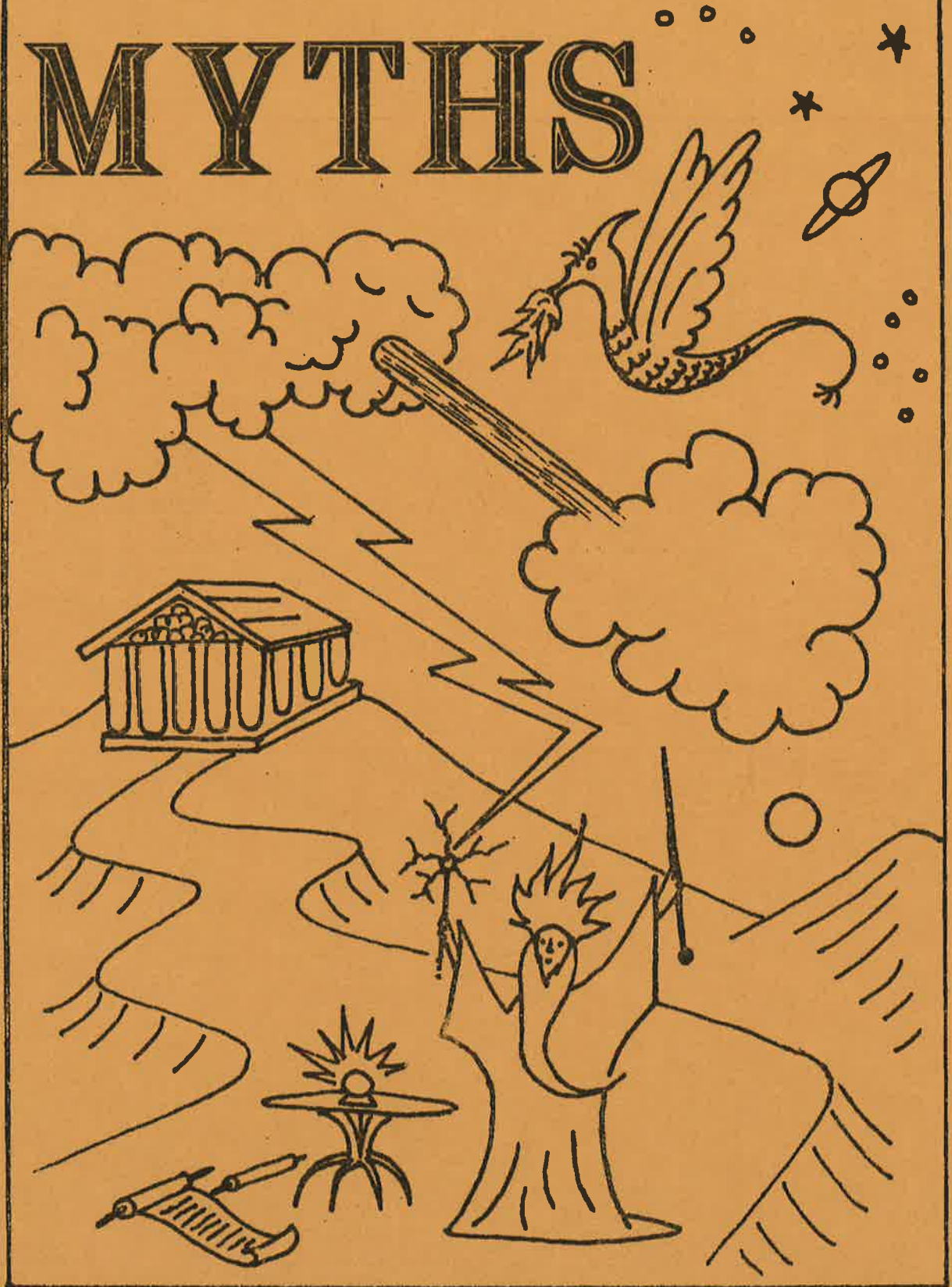
Maybe you can have one last way to kill Harry Humdinger. Find railroad tracks and challenge him to a wrestling match. Since he's such a klutz, you'll win easily. Just make sure to bring a rope. Tie him to the railroad tracks with the rope. It works (if the conductor doesn't see him lying there). In my case, it was just another fluke. Harry is a fluke. His ancestors are probably flukes. Anything doing with him, including plots to kill him, always end up in flukes. But, maybe if everyone had one shot at killing him . . .

Probably Harry's gonna last another generation. In fact, with his record, the whole world will probably die before he does -- which means that all grandchildren will end up surviving until --- VICTORY! Someone finally succeeds at killing him which will become a glorious day for the whole world, and everyone will celebrate his death. It will become a universe-wide holiday. Even Martians will celebrate.

But, in the meantime, try to kill him as soon as possible. Good luck!



MYTHS



The Acid God

This is a story about Gastric the Acid God. Gastric lives in a home that's called stomach and does lots of good, but when abused he creates a little pain and discomfort. During a normal day, Gastric helps to digest food that arrives in his home, moving it along the way into the other digestive tract. When Gastric's home is abused or upset, he reacts and overeats to the point of being a "real pain."

For example: a pizza with pepperoni, Italian Sausage, green peppers, onions, garlic, and whatever the pizzeria decides to garnish. This Gastric provoker is surely destined to get recognition when eaten after an exciting Oregon football game. Gastric secretes madly in the face of this abuse. Another sure fire way to bring Gastric out of his hiding place is to have a classroom full of noisy, disrespectful, lazy, and rude students right before lunch.

A typical day in the activity of Gastric might begin as early as five a.m. when awakened to be jostled around on the racquet ball court before breakfast. A late game might force Gastric to skip breakfast, the most important meal of the day, or - worse yet - force him to grab a quick sweet roll and orange juice on the run. Of course, missing one's bus and not having exact change when the next means of transportation arrives can produce a little over activity also.

After being settled down by a Tums, the Gastric tamer, things might go pretty smoothly until it is realized that lunch was left on the drain-board as a result of a hasty departure. That, of course, reactivates Gastric; and by the time lunch period is upon us, the greasy spoon, or, as sometimes referred to - the school cafeteria - doesn't appeal anyway. So, by the time lunch time is over, Gastric is working overtime and hardly notices the fact that the fifth period assignment is also on the counter with the lunch.

About the time sixth period begins, Gastric is doing a number by itself and thoughts of learning are overshadowed by the delightful thought of finally getting something to eat after school. Gastric is quickly aroused when, because an assignment was not forthcoming, Stomach had to stay after school which made it late arriving home. Upon arriving home, Gastric discovered a piano lesson took precedence over a snack.

Dinner was Stomach's last resort of a well-balanced and nutritious meal. It brought out the best in Gastric. This allowed Stomach to get a good night's sleep in preparation of the next day which, hopefully, would find Gastric a little more pleasant.



THE WORM THAT SPINS SILK

Nedolias, a beautiful maiden who sprang from King Pablo's blood, fell in love with Septosus, the son of Charon and Klepto.

The two were soon married and to them was born a daughter whom they called Silke.

Nedolias and Septosus were very proud of their daughter for she was the first child that both of them had ever had. Silke grew rapidly and along with her growth sprung an amazing ability . . . an ability so unique and so outstanding that no one could possibly think of an answer as to how she did it . . . an ability so beautiful and delicate that not even the most talented of the gods could surpass it. Silke had the ability to spin fine silk from the tips of her slender, mortal fingers.

Nedolias and Septosus were not yet aware of Silke's aptitude and had no suspicions of any sort of the power in her possession.

Silke was only 13 when her parents discovered her gift, and she was already a master at it. The two parents were greatly shocked for Silke was a mortal, but they became accustomed to it with time. Later, they interpreted it as a blessing from the gods. Nedolias and Septosus were so grateful for Silke's power that they prayed to the gods each night in hopes that they might protect Silke from any harm.

Zeus and Juno heard the couple's prayers and told Hermes to give them a message. Their prayers would be granted on one condition - that this special talent of Silke's be kept a secret between those three and no one else.

Sure enough, within minutes the message was given to the parents and Silke. All three were very pleased at this and rejoiced for many hours.

Days passed by, soon months, and years. Silke's ability to spin silk had tripled and so her great designs and creations also tripled. Silke could spin enormous masterpieces within minutes, and it seemed her talent would forever expand.

So graceful and magnificent are her inventions, Septosus thought, that they simply cannot be kept inside where nobody can see them. They must be exhibited so people can behold her amazing craft.

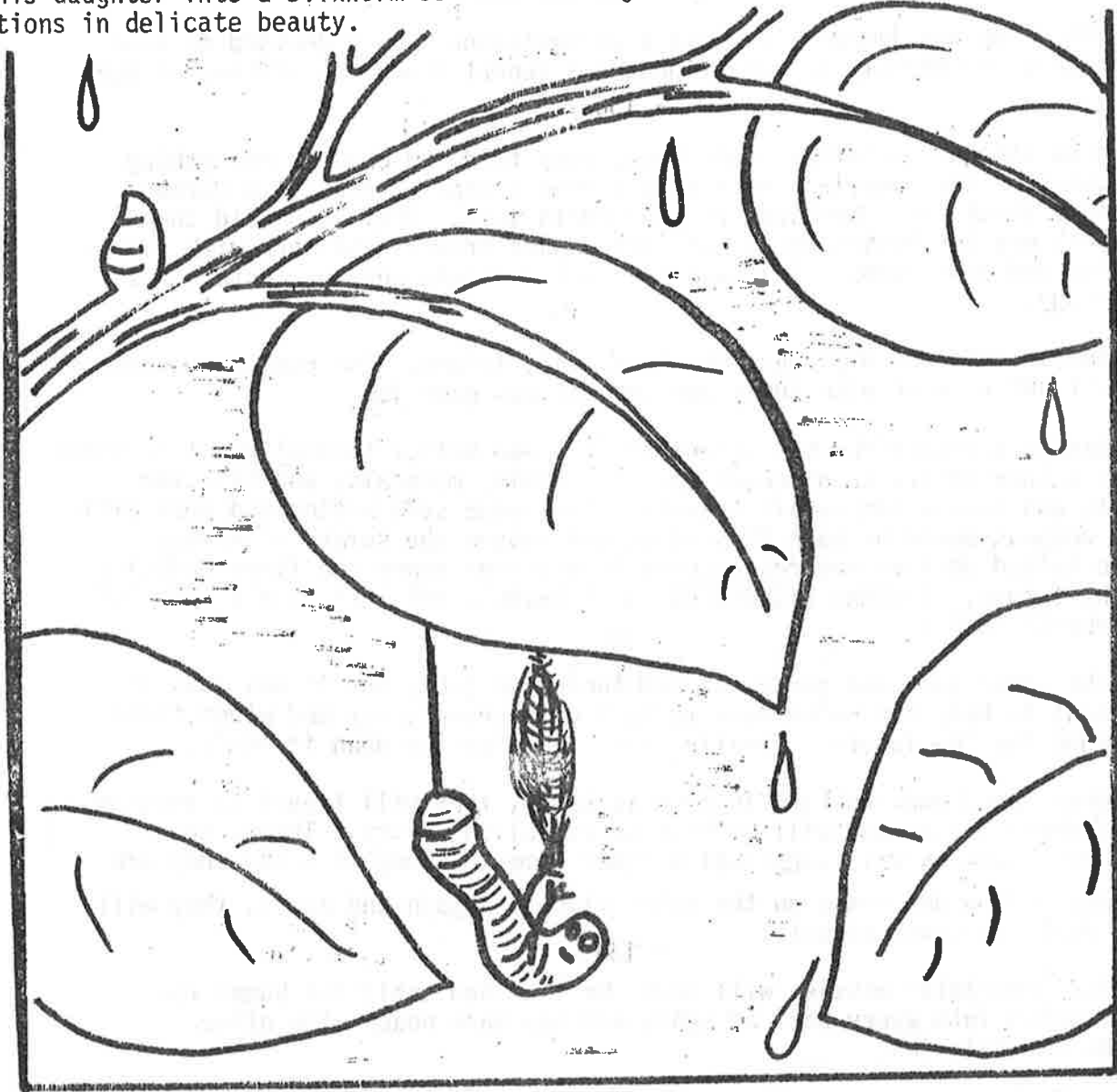
Without thinking of his promise to Zeus and Juno and to his wife and daughter, Septosus invited all of the people nearby to come and behold the awesome sights. He announced to all that his daughter, Silke, had made them by herself, by hand.

"Septosus!" cried a strangely familiar voice coming from the interior of the family's home. "Septosus, come quick! It's Silke!"

The so-familiar voice was that of Nedolias. Sobs of grief filled the air, and Septosus responded immediately. He rushed to the house and directed himself toward the commotion. He found Nedolias in Silke's room, wailing as she had never done before. A flush of fear and coolness ran through his entire body. Nedolias was crouched over on the floor, swaying back and forth rhythmically and holding a small, wriggling, greenish object in her shaky palms.

Septosus, realizing what he had done, slowly sank to the floor and joined his wife in continuous moans and cries that echoed through the house for many years.

Septosus had revealed the secret of Silke to all of his friends without even thinking of his promise not to do so. As a punishment, Zeus changed his daughter into a silkworm so that she may forever spin her silken creations in delicate beauty.



OLYMPIANS

Some say the gods were banished from the earth, but they really ascended to the sky where they have a dome in which they sleep, ready to be awakened when they are needed again.

As time flew by, the Olympians awakened and as they looked down on earth, they noticed a drastic change. Where the oracles and temples once stood, giant buildings seemed to scrape the sky. The streets where few people walked and horse-driven chariots rode now were strips of black pavement on which boxed-chariots rumbled, apparently drawn by invisible horses, and hundreds of people swarmed in strange garb. The beautiful sky in which Apollo drew his chariot was now gray and polluted.

The Olympians immediately held a consultation. They decided to send down Athena and Mercury to investigate and report about the affairs of the world.

When Athena and Mercury came back, they told the council everything from the time the immortals went into a deep sleep. Minerva and Hermes told them about the inventions and the world wars. They also told them that this was the beginning age of their space travels and work with radio-activity and atom bombs. This was the most delicate age for mortals with technology.

Apollo told the Olympians of the human's future. The gods and goddesses then set out to work with their own special assigned job.

Athena arranged for the scientists to make better technological machines. Vulcan helped miners to discover special metals, minerals, and oils for rockets and future spacecraft travels. Ares made sure better and more efficient weapons would be made to protect and insure the safety of humans. Apollo helped doctors and researchers to discover newer and finer medicines for the future. (HUMANS DISCOVERED THESE THINGS, BUT THEY DIDN'T KNOW THE GODS HELPED THEM.)

The other gods and goddesses had their own jobs, but it was just as important to help the human race to last until doom's day and widen their knowledge for the future. Finally, they would settle down in peace.

When the Olympians' job is done in Earth, they will travel to another planet where the humans will go next to establish a city. There, the gods and goddesses will construct another dome to sleep in until they are awakened and needed again on the other planet. Again and again, they will build domes on other planets.

The immortals' mission will never be finished until the human race has ventured into every part of space and has made peace with other planets and galaxies.

All of this, the mighty Olympians have done for us, the human race, though it has never been known.

THE STORY OF SCOTTDITE

Scottdite was the king of a huge land which was named after him. It was called Scotland. Scottdite's wife was a beautiful maiden named Susie. Most people called her Susie of Scott. Now Scottdite was not one to stick to one woman. He liked three or four at a time. This made Susie very mad and jealous. Susie decided to seek help from the gods, so Scottdite would stop flirting with so many women.

First, she prayed to the great king of the gods, Schulz. Most people called him Schulzie. Schulzie heard Susie's prayers but did not help her because he also was a run-around. Then Susie sought the help of Jeffery of Winter, the god of winter. Jeffery said he would be glad to help. He told her this is a dream she had, but he needed more help. He suggested the beautiful goddess of morning and night, Dawn. Dawn and Jeffery got together and figured that they could make Scottdite see nothing and feel coldness at all times.

Soon, Scottdite was only paying attention to Susie. Scottdite was very helpless for many years, and Susie started feeling sorry for him. Susie then prayed to the god Schulzie again. She prayed to him because she thought that Scottdite had learned his lesson; Schulzie thought so, too.

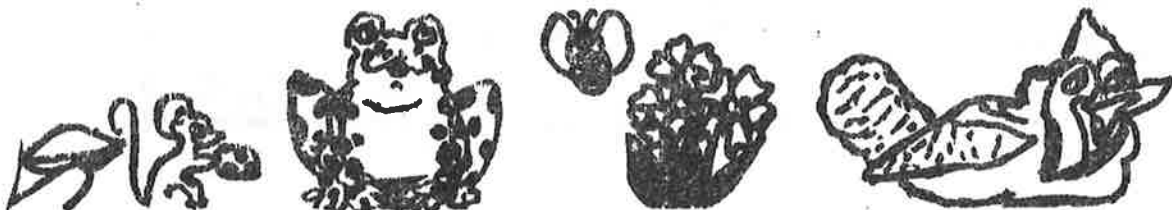
He gave Scottdite's sight and warmth back. Now Scottdite was free - for so long, he was helpless - now he was free. Scottdite decided that he wouldn't waste any more time sitting around. He wanted to get out and do things.

Scottdite decided to go on an adventure. He set out for the Land of the Devil where many evil creatures roam. This land was ruled by a creature named Nendel. Nendel was a five-legged creature with a body the size of a dinosaur.

Scottdite went to this land and was captured by Nendel and his animals. Scottdite was going to be a small snack for dinner. Susie heard about this and went to the Land of Candy and Niceness. This land was ruled by Taffty, goddess of candy and niceness.

Taffty and Susie got an army together and went to the Land of the Devil. When they got there, they started throwing their spears of candy canes. Taffty threw a spear right at Nendel's heart; Nendel died. When the other monsters saw this, they ran because their leader was dead.

They untied Scottdite and went to their castle in Scotland and lived happily ever after.



DRIPO and LEAKO

About a hundred years ago there lived two very handsome gods who were identical twins. Driipo was the god of athlete's foot and Leako was the god of sweatsocks. Both of these gods thought that they were super athletes. For years and years, these two gods debated about who was the better athlete.

Then, one day Driipo and Leako decided to have a contest. The two gods made Jocko the judge for the contest, and they had him pick the events. Jocko was the god of athletes. The three events that Jocko picked were a long-distance spitting contest, a hopscotch tournament, and a tiddledywinks championship. Also, Jocko would give his daughter to the winner, and the loser would have to marry his sister who was a real "dog."

When Leako heard this, he stole many powers from the other gods by his unique power. After he stole the powers, he gave Driipo a pair of defective sweatsocks that would make Driipo lose his coordination. On the other hand, Driipo didn't even think about cheating.

He went straight to his four sons Glit, Glort, Beeble, and Durp. They told Driipo to use his magical tiddledywinks to win and to give Leako a terrible case of athlete's foot and a giant planter wart on his big toe. Well, Driipo wasn't about to cheat like that. He was going to play the contest, fair and square. His parents had taught him to be fair, and he couldn't go against their wishes.

On the day of the contest, both gods were ready to go. It just happened to be that Leako won every event with all of his dirty powers. Therefore, Leako got the fair maiden, and Driipo got the ugly "dog." This proves that nice guys never win, and that you have to be dirty to win anything.

