



seem to be widely varied. The cover looked rather like Gray Morrow, I think (As you read all of these comments on art, please bear in mind that I am not an artist of any sort; I can barely draw a straight line. You might actually go so far as to say that I don't know what I'm talking about). Kline's strip was interesting, although somehow it seems to me that his talents are not particularly well suited to strips; he seems better on single illos. The writing was competent, something which is surprising with most artists. He made the "alien" beast convincingly horrible, although it didn't seem too alien to me. Most quote alien unquote beasts usually aren't...alien. No matter how well done they may be. How about, for example, something that isn't bi-laterally symmetric, instead of something that looks remarkably like a dinosaur? And, whether the above indicated it or not, I *did* like the strip.

Crandall's centerfold was truly beautiful, even if he isn't one of my favorite, favorite artists (people like Fra-zetta, Jones, Bode', Bok (!!), Finlay, and the Dillons are).

Another artist who has impressed me greatly is Kenneth Smith. I enjoy both his work in *Anomaly* and *Squa Tront*. I really don't like Phillips' art that much; maybe it's just that in comparison with so many other good people he comes off poorly.

In one of your ads, you speak of myriad offset crud-zines. You neglect to speak of another horror of the fanzine reader...the myriad first issue crudzines. And then there is the truly dread horror...the first issue, offset crudzine. Happily to say, I found none of these to be the case. For an ordinary issue, *Anomaly* was good, but for a first issue, it was excellent. May there be many more. And, hopefully, before the next eight years are up.

[Well, it hasn't been quite that long, and I'm getting a bit swifter at it all. Meanwhile, thanks for writing.]

[Perhaps this isn't quite cricket, but I thought you readers might be interested in a quasi-LoC postcard I received from John McGeehan, one of comic fandom's leading fanzine reviewers. As printed it emerges a bit short and snappy, but this is due simply to the lack of space John had on the card and not out of any taciturnity on John's part.]

John McGeehan
Santa Ana
California

I read *Anomaly* and it just doesn't contain enough comic oriented material to be included in my list. I have other zines with even more comic material that aren't included and the publisher (of *The Comic Reader*, the zine my listing is in) hardly has room to squeeze in all of the comic oriented zines without my making it any longer with info on other ones. Sometimes the entire listing of "other zines of interest to comic fans" gets left out due to space limitations and so I don't even bother listing zines like *Anomaly* with only a small fraction of the material comic oriented. Future issues might include enough amateur strip work to be included; but this first issue doesn't.

[Moving quickly on....]

Mark Barclay
Chicago
Illinois

Your name reads like a typo...a fact which innumerable other people have no doubt informed you. But...*Anomaly*. Text wise, *Anomaly* is moderately good,

but the artwork, particularly the beautiful graphics of Robert L. Kline make your fanzine excellent.

First, the text part of *Anomaly*. Harlan Ellison's short-short was amusing and light; it is interesting to contrast it with some of his more recent works, which have been, at times, rather grim and morbid. The Archie Goodwin interview, unlike almost all of the interviews that have appeared in fanzines recently, this one was interesting and informative. I might add, though, that my taste, for the most part, does not run to interviews; this, though, might be attributed to the fact that almost all of the interviews that I have read recently have been ineptly handled. My opinion on this kind of material is to stay away from it in the future if you can unless it is exceptionally well done.

Which brings us to more fiction. Your fiction. I approached it warily, considering the type of (very) amateur fiction that some fanzines have been printing recently. And I was surprised; pleasantly so. The stuff was actually *readable*, wonder of wonders. But I'm still dubious of the fan fiction that you promise for future issues. I suppose that it *might* be good, but then again, it might not...probably not. I really don't want to read fiction unless it's good enough to be published, in which case it probably should be. But I still will await the next issue--with the fiction that you promise--with as near to an open mind as I can.

Artwork, as I said before, was immensely good. Everything of Kline's I really enjoyed. His style, in various places, seems like that of a number of people. His talents

Jeffrey May
Springfield
Missouri

Enclosed is a postal money order in the amount of \$.75. This of course is for the next issue of *Anomaly*. As soon as you can I urge you to start taking

subscriptions.

You state that comic fandom is to be found profusely throughout your magazine, and so it is. However, it is my opinion that you should try and orient *Anomaly* toward "science fiction and sword & sorcery" as you say it is. Comics fandom in itself is pretty childish, no matter how much its fans like it. Mind you, I'm not running down the comic medium as a story-telling device (I'm awaiting Bob Kline's s&s strip eagerly), just the emphasis on it that I find in *Anomaly*. A fanzine with artists as good as yours and repro of high quality deserves something better than comic fandom. Please set your sights higher.

[Too much comic material, huh Jeff? Not enough comic material, huh John? Well, let's see. My first reaction to your letter, John, was that you're making no discrimination between quantity and quality. Defining "comic oriented" as strictly as possible, I come up with at least 13 pages of comic oriented stuff in *Anomaly* 1; a somewhat looser definition gives us 20 pages; and comparing the material with that of other "comic fanzines" I can only eliminate one of the 32 pages as being strictly non-comic (many comic fanzines print amateur fiction). Even allowing for only 13 pages of comic-oriented material, however, I find those 13 pages much more interesting than 32 pages of pure crud. And yet you would review a 32-page, comic-oriented crudzine, while ignoring 13 pages of quality material? Similarly, Jeff, I find only five pages that definitely wouldn't interest the pure s-f fan (I don't think he would dig the Goodwin interview). As for the rest, I don't see that graphic material in itself necessarily gives *Anomaly* a slant that would alienate the s-f people unless they had a particular antipathy for art in general. Conclusion: I need more opinions. What'd'ya think?

W.G. Bliss
Chillicothe
Illinois

There may come a day when almost all fanzines are better than prozines. The production of *Anomaly* is so good it has few peers; maybe *Trumpet* and *Double*

Bill and *Fantasy Illustrated* and *Witzend* and *Amra*. A way for a sequel to "His Brother's Keeper" occurs to me. The cells and perhaps also the soulstuff of Dorm and Mark dominate the creatures which ingested them, and the planet has two intelligent monsters who can change into almost anything, including splitting up into a lot of Marks and



Dorms. They feed some of those to other monsters and multiply and the plot thickens until all of the monsters are an equal number of Marks and Dorms. Dorm craves to have the whole planet for himself and tries to scraggy Mark and an almost impossibly fierce war ensues and all of both perish. A large egg rolls out of a cave and the sun warms it and it hatches a monster of the same breed that ate Mark and Dorm. In the last panel it is half grown and watches a spaceship setting down in the distance. One additional panel (my imagination keeps right on running on some things) the monster has changed itself into a medium sized building that has a pennant flying from its roof that says "Pleasure Palace" and five of the crew of the ship are headed towards it in a flitter.

Ellison -- A rather ingenious short, most of the plot twists have been used up for Adam & Eve stories, though come to think of it I wonder if anybody has used this one:

---for well nigh onto sixteen years he had traveled and wandered through the ruins never retracing his step. Everyone else was gone, dead. Then one day while cutting some wild asparagus for breakfast there was the roar of a motorcycle. It came closer. The last one ten years ago had been a disappointment: the rider had been a robot vainly seeking its master. It came up the road tooling skillfully around the rubble and stopped. It was a woman, young and dressed in dusty coveralls. Jubilation danced in his mind. "You are a woman and I am a man!" he exclaimed for lack of better inspiration on the spur of the moment. She frowned a bit and said, "How about that? I was raised by a robot on an island and I thought he was a man."---

Profile of Archie Goodwin is interesting & informative, especially as I like to do komic strip continuity, but it seems these days no comic artist is in need of any. And too I am overspecialized, only tune in perfectly to ones like the long extinct Krazy Katt and The Wizard of ID, whose creators are self sparking. Actually the only comic books I've read, except for casual scanning, were *Mad* back when "Humor in a Jugular Vein" was on the logo, and of late, *Wonder Wart-Hog*. I still think the Hog would have been a success with enough publicity. Maybe if Millar had gotten him banned in a few places as being entirely too much (the Hog did not operate strictly on the human superhuman set of morals, of course) for tender young slightly post-puberty psyches.

"Survivors" is topnotch fiction, and when it is all together in a book someday it should be a top seller. Could be the cause for the survivors mutating and becoming feral is the last chemical/biological warfare development before the war. There is the advantage of having few if any qualms of hunting down and destroying remnants of an enemy if they are no longer human and are dangerous. I wonder darkly sometimes if there is thought these days about some such method of eliminating humanitarianism following wars, some means of keeping up the wartime psychology after the war. It would be at the least horrendous and inhumane, but such are the logistics and economy of war.

"The Enchanted Sword" is a first chapter of a book. Getting the scabbard back becomes an unquenchable obsession for James.

Ah me yes--crackpot inventions. I suppose the definition of those is ones that don't work, or ones that no one else believes work. It seems that only certain things do work in this well-ordered universe. Still though, it is fascinating to consider that a gravity powered engine reversed would be an anti-gravity device, and that not all parts of a mechanism have to be tangible, a very common observation--so common as to hardly be worthy of note unless one happens to be wondering how it is no new basic mechanisms have shown up in this late marvelous (expensive too) scientific era.

Seeing that there is another *Anomaly*, I subscribed. Incidentally although he faded from the fanscene long ago, Ray Palmer is still at the same old stand publishing saucer-stuff.

I looked all through the rusty old file cabinet and couldn't find anything of *Anomaly* calibre; about the only thing I've done suitable for the format has already been run by Hank Lutrell in *Starling*, and no doubt the sheer quality of the zine has already drawn a five years supply of material, and enough LoCs for a *Niekas* size lettercol.

[I wonder about your statement about no new basic mechanisms being invented. Though I'm no scientist, I can't help but think of the transistor and those micro-miniature printed circuits (whatever they're called by people who know what they're talking about) as essentially new. True, they aren't

quite as basic as the wheel and the lever and the inclined plane; but they've opened up so many new areas of research and technological advancement that I have to regard them as basic to a large number of new sciences. And as for your idea that not all the parts of a machine have to be tangible, well, I can already imagine the scene where they award the Nobel prize to the inventor of the intangible framstat: "Congratulations, Professor; your device is the marvel of the ages!" "Oh, thank you," he replies, "but, really, it's nothing!"



[Ken Smith's letter, following, requires a bit of pre-explanation: his defense of *Witzend* came after a rather biting harangue of mine denouncing the magazine's new (beginning about issue #5) image under Bill Pearson's direction. I believe I had called the "new" *Witzend* "fecal matter".]

Kenneth Smith
New Haven
Connecticut

Great globs of busywork kept me from sending you a note immediately about *Anomaly* #1, but here is a rather more late sort of note anyway. I thought the issue was extremely handsome, lacking only a two- or three-color cover in order to rank with the very best.

Kline's story was pro material, and I was struck, as a matter of fact, at its coming out so soon after a Warren-Publication story with approximately the same twist...which unfortunately I can't locate, now that I look for it. In the future, keep your galleys locked up.

The Goodwin interview was perfectly fascinating. Do more, and more, and more. And get Kline to do more work with washes (*a la* "Valley of the Worm"). The fiction, you don't have to be told, like the rest of the literary contents is magnitudes above fan-work. I'd like to remark on the stories in detail, but unfortunately I don't have time to re-read them now and I'm not much at skimming. Next time I'll write you while my memory's hot. My only negative note is about the Phillips illos, which seem comparatively substandard--the style and technique seem so undeveloped, and yet one can't help but sense a keen eye for the dramatic here--I'm looking forward to following his progress through future issues.

I really ought to take time out to drop a kind word for B. Pearson. You may know more about his career than I do, [I don't] which is almost inevitable since I've seen none of the work he put in *SATA*. But I know that Wood is not so unequivocally dismayed by the direction in which Pearson has taken *Witzend* -- Wood in fact hoped that Pearson could lure some variety to the zine which Wood himself couldn't pull in inasmuch as all of his acquaintances are in the comics field in the strictest sense, or perhaps I should say narrowest. Wood's admiration for underground art and semi-nonsense stories is rather considerable, however, and the feeling is apparently abroad in the comics industry that another upheaval is imminent, just like in the late 40's and late 50's. Everyone, commercial publishers most of all, is looking for a new direction, on the one hand; on the other, there is in fact an abundance of original talent, most of it not especially "directed" at all, doing really witty things in *Zap* (for instance--but not to deny by any means that there is also a lot of crap there that is banal or vulgar or pointless, to say the least). I for one welcome the experimentation, because the next decade or score of years simply cannot go on degenerating into the kind of banality that sells funny animals and teen romance, nor can it go on trying to squeeze the last drop of material out of the story-types and standards that *EC* set a decade and a half ago. Either there must be an infusion of new talent and whole new concepts of what a comics story should be, or else the entire comics industry must admit what no self-respecting adult intelligence can possibly admit; namely, that it exists solely to cater to the fantasies of pre-teenyboppers and the banalized imagination

of tv-addicted children. Something that serves such a merely psychological function -- and I use "psychological" pejoratively -- simply cannot claim to be art at all, whether commercial or popular or whatever. So much in behalf of experimentation in general.

To be more specific, although I found Pearson's story in *Witzend* 6 to be rather slight, I thought it made a perfect union with Jones' *tour de force* (some of his finest penwork). "QWAMB!" I enjoyed for its very keen ear for cliches -- itself a highly developed and subtle kind of wit ("Brad was that likable fella, sat just here, and spent the days working here working his work!") -- and for its mock-heroic satire ("A menial has contaminated the executive sewage system"), etc., etc. The rather exotic bits of extraneousness may seem like wasted space, but they do in fact help to flavor the absurdity of the story--which remains, however, rather slight, I think, whatever redeeming virtues may be found here and there in it. Wood's "Spawn of Venus" should be regarded as a service to the ages, one of his finest touches printed on lasting paper with extreme fidelity. No apology necessary. It is Ditko's rather rabid little diatribe that I find most completely out of place, but this is not because it is political but because it is almost completely undramatic, with the exception of pp. 7-8. Personally, I find his politics repulsive for their self-righteous posture in the face of a mass of self-contradictions; but this wouldn't keep him from developing them in a literarily legitimate story. It's their tendentious style and cheap irony that keep him from that.

Well--all this was going to be a word in vindication of B. Pearson. Of course it may be completely beside the point, since you may have meant something else altogether by *Witzend*'s loss of "personality." It may be true enough that under Wood's hand the mag had greater integrity and a much more serene atmosphere, but it also was much less engaging and substantial, just another kind of comic book--but under Pearson there have at least been breaths of fresh air, and I'm looking forward to more, because I know Pearson is the kind of fellow who is sensitive to past as well as present forms of originality. I'm all for the heterogenization of *Witzend*; homogenized, the mag is simply a lie in the face of its policy of "no policy." In that sense, it *shouldn't* have a personality.

Mmmm. As Kierkegaard says, the way to distinguish the philosophical from the popular approach to a subject is, when you've asked a question, if the answer is direct and comes forth in the form of an actual answer, it's popular; but if the answer comes forth in the form of a system and requires several years and volumes to propound, it's philosophical. But then, you didn't exactly ask a question. Just ask a question sometime. See what you get then.

Actually, I know I've gotten another letter from you since 17 July, but I can't -- ahah, here it is. Don't worry about losing the fine lines in the barbarian illo; I'm what is known as a printer-hater and I make life hard for them. In fact it was my intention to have the lines fade out, hence I teased them with a hard eraser. So there. I got my extra copies just fine, splendid condition, my thanks for your thoughtfulness.

All my best wishes for a continued ascent toward the Absolute!

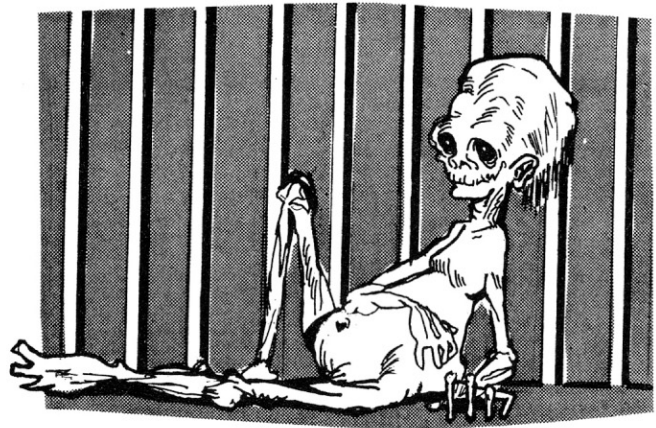
[After being so soundly reprimanded I can find little to say that would consume less than two or three pages. So I'll content myself with reader response to Kenneth's letter and opinions, hoping all the while that someone of intelligence agrees with me. For a change.]



THE GNOME

written by J.S. STRNAD

illustrated by KEN MEAUX



We swooped so low and fast over the Nevada Jungle the trees must have been made of mist not to crack us up permanently. Sayre nosed our ship through openings in the interlace of vines and branches that shouldn't have admitted a craft half our size. He swerved and twisted in a sinuous path around or over every limb, bough, and shoot that presented itself, running a jagged obstacle course only a god could design, and only a madman would tackle. And he did it with one hand, using the other to brush the exulting Sheila's long red hair from his eyes. Sheila laughed at the fear-etched looks on Marty's face and mine, and, locking her arms tighter around Sayre's neck, whispered something in his ear. He smiled up at her, and the ship accelerated.

A vine slapped noisily against Marty's window and she responded with a scream, then bit her lip in frightened shame. And Sheila laughed, again.

"Slow down, dammit!" I screamed at Sayre. A deaf man would have noticed the tinge of hate-mixed hysteria in my voice. Marty was now sobbing beside me, my arm curled around her shoulder, holding her tight.

"I didn't mean to scream," she said, "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to." I comforted her as best I could, but the sobbing persisted.

Sayre laughed and knifed the ship up between the young, mammoth jungle branches, fluttering leaves and hearts at the proximity of careening metal to unyielding wood. He soared straight up, circled, then dived at a clearing my mind wouldn't register for another half minute. All I could see was Sayre playing chicken with an entire planet, and I knew Sayre wouldn't be the one to back down. A kamikaze grin spread itself across his face, and I realized our lives were in the hands of a suicidal maniac. I hated him, as few men have hated. I hated him and his red-haired mistress both.

The trees appeared to spring at us as Sayre fired the ship ever faster toward the clearing. They swung their branches at us like heavy wooden clubs, warning us to turn around, to come no closer under penalty of our lives. They waved and seemed to shout at us to return to our man-made houses in our man-made cities, to our steel and concrete caves, to our cold sidewalks and hard streets, and to let them live and grow in peace. And well would I have liked to return to the cities and skyscrapers, had there been any such monuments left standing.

But Sayre had no such thoughts. He braked and spiraled the ship down, landing, somehow, intact. Marty was shaking but had conquered her fear and shame enough to stop crying. My muscles were tight and hard with anger, with a tangible hate that Sayre gorged himself on. Sheila relished in the malice of my looks at them both.

"Why?" I spat the words at him. "God damn you, Sayre, why?"

"Oh hell," he said. "She'll get over it, and it gave her a few thrills. Is Sheila complaining?" Sheila wrapped her arm around his waist. "See? And they're sisters--if one can take it why can't the other? Besides, I didn't want to bring her along in the first place. You're the one who said 'Come on, it won't hurt anything, she'll get along just fine', right? So we bring her along, and she doesn't like the way I fly a cruiser--that's your fault, fella. If it weren't that she was even *more* in the way on base I wouldn't have agreed at all."

I started toward him. Marty grabbed my arm.

"No," she whispered. "He's right. I'm just in the way, wherever I am. It was like that before the war, and nothing has changed now that the war's over. I'll be all right. Now." She smiled up at me, and no hate could bear up under that smile. That is, no *normal* hate. My hate for Sayre had long ago become the gnawing, restless, world-consuming kind

that would either destroy him, or poison myself if I refused to give it vent. But for now, the smile had postponed all acts of violence. For now.

"C'mon," he said. "We've got a lot of work to do."

The Nevada Jungle had sprung up in less than two years. The *Vasserot* crew had been gone for 18 months, gliding through the emptiness between stars, making history with the first faster-than-light voyage to Alpha Centauri. And back on Earth, back home, men were putting an end to *all* history. Their last world war was ravaging an entire planet with weaponry both nuclear and biological, and the Earth would not, *could* not, ever be the same. We spent half a year constructing a makeshift base of operations and adding to our number what survivors we could find. And then we discovered the jungle. Growing, thriving as if it had been firmly entrenched since the Ice Age, in the middle of Nevada--wet, extremely humid, and abounding with exotic wildlife.

The jungle assumed an almost surreal aspect in my mind as we penetrated it further. It was a wild collage of shadows of what might have been normal plant life, an echo of sounds that could have had earthly origins before being altered and repitched by their alien surroundings. The vines crawled with a sinister movement of their own that could almost, but not quite, be attributed to wind or gravity. I saw a snake break from its cocoon and air its wings in the breeze, and I caught a glimpse of a monkey surveying us through compound eyes. Either the entire jungle was mad, or I was.

Finally we came to the laboratory. Its sharply angled corners and straight sides contrasted vividly with the curves and lace-like patterns of the jungle greenery, and made our presence seem even more like an intrusion.

"You'll do most of your work in the animal lab," said Sayre. "I've already stocked it with several of the more typical specimens, and with one highly unusual one I think you'll be interested in."

Row after row of other-worldly eyes greeted me from behind the screen of their cages. The array of fantastic variations on nature's basic themes seemed infinite, but the strangest of all waited for me at the end of the chain.

His cage measured four feet wide by four long by four high. He sat there, his large, large head, malformed and pitted like a child's wad of clay, pressing on his spindly thin neck with a weight his naked, wrinkled, shriveled body seemed incapable of enduring. His limbs should have been age worn, gnarled wood instead of tissue and bone. And his eyes crouched deep inside dark pits where once, perhaps a thousand years ago, flesh had been. He lolled his massive head against the back of his cage and regarded us with a snake-like malevolence. Marty shuddered visibly.

"What is it?" she asked.

Sayre chuckled. "I call it the gnome. Looks just like one, doesn't it?"

"How'd you find it?" I inquired, more to stop his bleak metaphors than anything.

"Very strange case," he said. "I'd had a feeling for several days that something was following me around while I explored the jungle collecting specimens, but I supposed I was just imagining things. Until one day I caught a glimpse of something out the corner of my eye and ran after it. I saw this thing trying to run behind a tree and took a shot

at it with the tranquilizer. I missed on the first shot, but I came close enough to panic the thing and pegged it when it started running again. I brought it back here, made up this special cage, and now I'm giving it to you *pro gratis*. What you do with it now that you've got it is your business, but I'd advise you get it over with quick--the little freak hasn't eaten since I caught it."

Sayre reached into his pack and pulled out a wafer.

"Here fella--catch."

The wafer landed at the gnome's feet, but he never moved or gave the slightest indication that he wanted the food. Even though he was plainly starving to death, the only motion he would make was to slowly close his eyes, ignoring us completely.

"You see?" said Sayre. "It won't do anything but sit there, sometimes sleeping, the rest of the time just looking around like it's just waiting for you to make the mistake that'll let it out. And you know," he lowered his voice slightly, "I have a feeling that if you do, you might just as well bid farewell to the world forever. The thing never sleeps at night--I'll come back in here late, real late, or early in the morning, and I'll hear it shuffling around its cage, scratching at the bars, trying to pry them apart. And when it sees me it'll sit down in that far corner and close its eyes and not move all the time I'm here. It hates me, and now that you're here it hates you too; it won't rest until it sees each one of us dead. I can't prove it, no; but there are some things you can just *feel*, like the fact that you exist and aren't just somebody's pipe dream, and you know, you *know* they're true."

We had all been looking at Sayre as he spoke, and now our gazes returned to the grotesque creature sitting before us. His eyes were wide open again, and he was almost grinning. His mouth held the same slack, noncommittal position it always had; but an indefinable *something* had settled over his face and imbedded itself in his eyes, and betrayed his thoughts.

"It's as if he knows everything we say," said Marty.

"Oh, he knows, all right," agreed Sayre. "He knows."

It was with the greatest reluctance and distrust that we turned our backs on the misshapen creature and completed our tour of the base. Marty held onto my arm as we walked.

"I feel so sorry for him," she said. "Deformed the way he is, and then to be locked in a cage like an animal."

"Yes, but maybe Sayre is right, in this case," I replied. "I could feel the hate the thing has for us. He could never become one of us. And sooner or later something would happen that would cost a life. Maybe yours or mine. I don't know."

"Still, it just isn't right," she said. "You'd hate anyone who'd put you in a cage and then invite his friends over to come gawk at you, wouldn't you? And you yourself hate Sayre. For all the...the *gnome*...for all he knows, we're just like Sayre, or worse. No wonder he hates us. And I can't say I blame him."

I nodded. "I'll admit he has no reason to be particularly fond of any of us. And yet, I'm not certain anything could help. If he ever *was* human, he's certainly far from it now; and the psychological damage that would have to result from such a transformation...no, I don't think there's anything we can do for him. I think we're best off to leave him alone."

"Until he starves?"

"If he won't eat what we give him, then he's starving himself. Another sign of madness."

Marty let go of my arm.

"I'm going to go talk to him," she stated. She turned around and started walking briskly back toward the lab. I shouted after her. She stopped and waited for me to catch up.

"Marty, please, leave him alone. Maybe you *can* get him to open up, but is it worth the risk? You saw how he looked at us; do you think he cares about *your* welfare?"

"Is that what you're afraid of?" she asked. "Or are you afraid I'll be tricked into letting him go? Or maybe you don't want me to prove you wrong, for the first time to prove that maybe I *am* good for something?"

She must have seen the hurt on my face when she said it for she immediately put her arms around me and pressed her head against my chest.

"Oh, Greg, I'm sorry." I knew from the sound of her voice that she had tears in her eyes.

"It's all right, Marty," I said. "I didn't realize it meant so much to you." I pushed her gently away from me and

noticed that I had been right about the tears. "Go talk to him. Maybe it *will* help." She smiled at me, and I did my best to reply in kind. Then she slowly let go and walked quietly into the lab and over to the gnome.

I stared at him from across the room. *If you harm her, I thought, if you harm her in the least, I'll crush you with my bare hands.* And he stared back at me.

My days, and Sheila's and Sayre's, were spent in experimentation. We explored the jungle, taking samples and dozens of pages of notes, analyzing, speculating, and trying to categorize the incredible life forms we were discovering every day. The lab soon filled with specimens and most of Marty's time was taken with caring for them; what spare time she had she spent talking to the gnome.

Meanwhile, I was beginning to feel more and more like a prisoner in a nightmare, or like a figure in a Dali or Bok fantasia. The jungle, when each element was viewed separately, appeared to make no sense, and yet the pieces fit together into a feasible whole. But *why*, and *how*? What force could possibly produce an entire working ecology in only two years? Marty was certain the gnome could tell us if she could only break through his defenses and *trust* him to trust us. Sayre and Sheila scoffed at her, and I'll admit that my own hopes for the success of her project were stretched awfully thin, but she pursued it with the undying enthusiasm that marked all her ill-fated adventures. And, much as I hate to admit it, it kept her out of the way.

On the third day of her one-sided conversations with the gnome, the creature finally abandoned his hunger strike. He ate sparingly, but enough to keep him alive and to renew most of his original strength. Soon Marty had exhausted every topic she knew fully enough to handle as a monologue, and her desperation to save her project drove her to make a highly irregular request -- one that would soon prove disastrous to us all.

"I want to form a mind-link with the gnome," she said at dinner that night.

Sayre gagged on his food and went into a coughing fit. He pushed his chair back from the table and hunched over with his face buried in his hand, coughing loudly and being pounded on the back by Sheila until the half-chewed piece of meat found its way back up his trachea and he could draw in huge lungfuls of air again. I enjoyed it all immensely.

"You want to do what?" he shouted.

"I want to form a mind-link with the gnome," Marty repeated. "He evidently can't speak, so a mind-link is the only way to communicate with him."

"Impossible!" he snapped. "Mind-links are dangerous enough under ordinary circumstances. We'd be fooling with a mind that could be as deranged as the most homicidal garrotter ever known to history, and you want to hook it up with your own. It's the nearest thing to suicide you've ever proposed. It's crazy, and you'd have to be as insane as the gnome to even think of it. Harebrained schemes like that have ended the careers of more good men than I care to count though in your case I don't suppose we have much to lose. In fact I'm tempted to let you do it just to get you out of the way!"

Marty slammed her open palm on the table and leaped to her feet. The issue was settled. The arguing wouldn't be over for another half hour, but as soon as I heard those words--get you out of the way--I knew the outcome of the whole situation. Marty was determined to join her mind with the gnome's, and now nothing in the world was going to stop her.

The gnome lay anesthetized on the laboratory table. A dozen wires dangled from his head into a small computer bank, micro-miniaturized to proportions that fit easily on a table, and emerged on the other side, eventually finding their way up the nearby cot to the barren scalp of Marty. She had sat stoically through the shaving necessary to the operation and had barely winced at the sight of her long brown hair falling over her shoulders onto the floor. I can also remember the smile, much like a leer, that played over Sheila's

lips while she sat like a vulture observing the grim proceedings.

Marty turned her head to look at the machine that would join her mind with that of the gnome.

"It certainly looks simple enough," she said. And it did. The box housed one of the most delicate, elaborate systems of electronics known to the pre-war Western civilization, but the controls were deceptively simple. A rheostat, and a bank of gauges that appeared almost identical. The computer took care of everything else, quietly, with no wasted space or motion.

"Let's get it over with," said Sayre.

Marty reclined into the soft pillow provided for her on the cot and closed her eyes. Sayre placed his hand on the rheostat.

"I'll start very slowly," he said. "When you begin to receive an impression, anything at all, let me know and I'll stop. His brain will begin to feed energy into yours, and vice versa, a very little bit at a time. Take your time. Get used to receiving impressions from two minds at once as best you can before I step up the power and begin to reinforce the link. It will take time to adjust, if it's possible at all, so don't over-expect. It may take several sessions to get any sense whatsoever from the vague impressions you'll probably receive from him, providing he has enough reasoning capacity to transmit anything at all. I'm going to give it just enough power, here at first, to open the channel from his mind to yours; let me know as soon as anything begins to come through."

Marty nodded, and Sayre twisted the dial minutely, feeding only the most infinitesimal amount of electricity into the mind-link device, opening the door between minds only the barest fraction. And that fraction, that most immeasurably small of the smallest of openings, was far, far too much.

Marty's body went rigid and her hands clenched the sides of the cot with white-knuckled strength. Her arms stiffened and she bolted into a sitting position, her mouth opened wide in a soundless scream, her face became a contorted mass of straining muscle and wide-eyed pain. The dials on the machine beside her froze their pointers on the farthest marking until the overwhelming load of mental energy caused the front panel to shoot violently outward in a chaos of fire and smoke. Sayre was hurled backwards against the wall of cages and there was the sound of cracking, smashing wood as they fell against each other, breaking open, spilling their occupants and releasing them into the disorder that had struck the laboratory like Satan falling into Hell. Dozens of diminutive alien monsters pawed or slithered their way over Sayre's limp form and sought refuge in the unearthly jungle that had spawned them. Others scurried randomly across the floor in blind panic squealing and howling their own special cries of fear and desperation. I ripped the smouldering wires from Marty's skull and she collapsed into unconsciousness on the cot. Sheila ran to Sayre and raised his head from the floor, feeling his temples for some sign of life; her cry of relief told me Sayre still lived. I fixed a cold compress and laid it on Marty's forehead and began to apply salve to her burns, and within minutes Sayre was conscious and swearing. Then Sheila pointed to the table that had held the gnome.

"He's gone."

Sayre swore and vanished into his hut, emerging seconds later with a pair of guns.

"Come on!" he shouted. "We've got some hunting to do!"

"Sheila can shoot--let her go with you." I replied.

"Marty's hurt. I'm going to stay here with her."

"Okay, stay here and play nursemaid to that useless bitch; but just remember that if it wasn't for her we wouldn't be in this mess!" So saying, he and Sheila dashed into the jungle, guns in hand.

They had been gone only a few minutes when Marty regained consciousness. She looked around her and realized everything immediately.

"Where's Sayre?" she asked, almost hysterically. "Where'd he go?"

"It's all right," I said. "He and Sheila went after the gnome. He escaped during the confusion, but they'll get him. Now lay back down. You've had a grueling experience."

"No!" she cried. "They can't! They can't kill him!" I placed my finger to my lips. "Ssssh, lay down. You're in shock."

But she wouldn't be quieted so easily.

"No, you don't understand! The gnome--he isn't deformed at all, he *isn't* a mutant! And the jungle isn't an accident! He's an alien, and the jungle is *their* doing, *they* created it. He was in touch with them telepathically all the time, sending them everything he could find out about us. That's why the machine exploded--it touched thousands of minds at once!"

The possibilities were too tremendous, too far-reaching for me to view them coolly. I fast reached Marty's point of hysteria.

"What for, Marty? What was their purpose?"

She swallowed with difficulty and her voice quavered. "To...to see if we could co-exist, if they could live on our planet in peace, or if they'd have to take it--by force!"

The Earth's first contact with advanced alien life! And Sayre was hunting him with a gun!

I tore from the laboratory and headed in the direction I had seen Sayre take. I had to stop him, or the Earth could very well be doomed. At the very beginning of its reconstruction, it could be doomed.

"Sayre!" I yelled. "Wait! For God's sake Sayre, wait!"

I ripped through vines and undergrowth like a lunatic, shouting, screaming at the top of my voice. "Sayre! Don't do it! Sayre!"

The trees seemed to be trying to hold me back, to be opposing me as they would any intruder who challenged their rule. The vines dropped from their branches in an almost conscious effort to block my path or to trip me, grab me, anything to impede my progress through the jungle. This was *their* world, and the gnome fit in, had his place in it. I was the outsider. It was insane, I know, but by now, so was I, *oh God, so was I.*

Sayre! Wait!

I heard a shot break through my screams, then another, and four more. I located the direction, and ran.

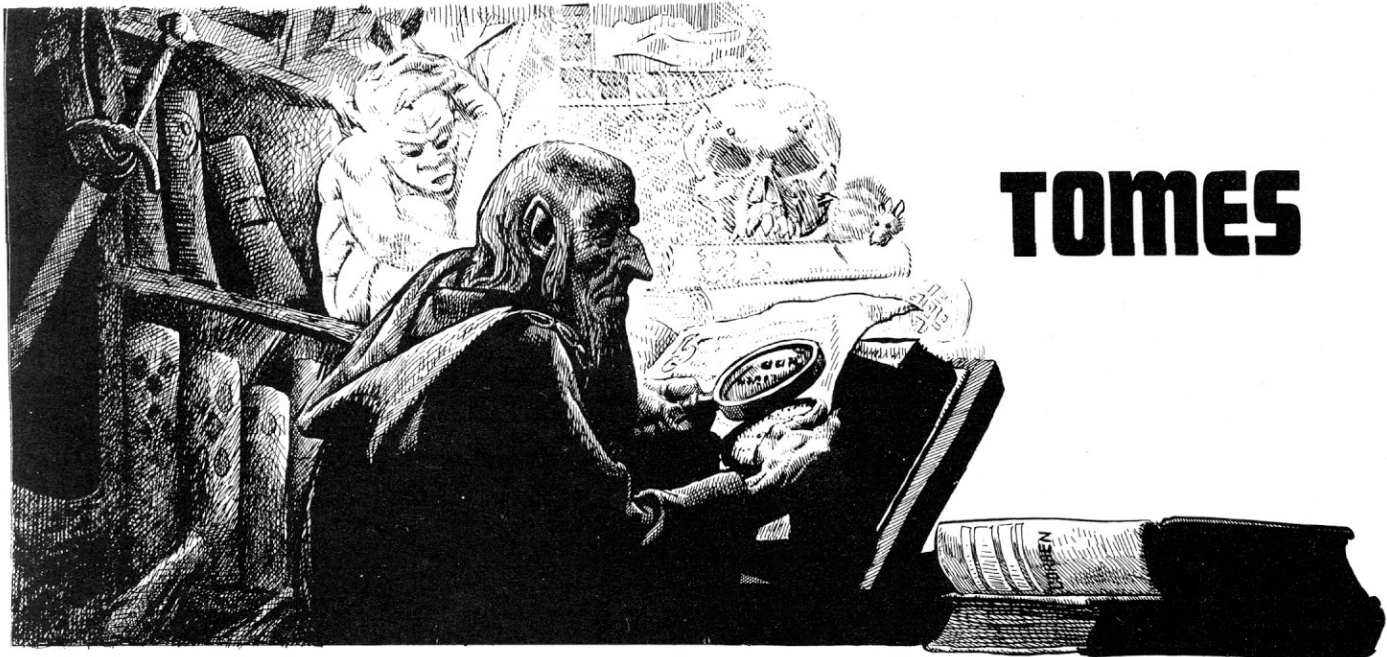
I broke through the bushes, still shouting, and then a vine caught my foot in its grasp and I fell headlong into a small clearing.

"Sayre," I whispered, the breath knocked from my body.

"The gnome--let him live. It's the only chance we've got. Now that we know who he is we can talk to him, reason with him, prove to him that we're not the savages he must think we are. They can help us rebuild, organize; so much they can show us, so much we can learn...." I raised my head, looking up over the red mass that lay before me. And there, towering triumphantly over the dead, bleeding body of the gnome, stood Sayre...grinning....

end





TOMES

a book review by J.S. Strnad

In the infantile escape fantasy trash department we have *The Sorcerer's Ship* by Hannes Bok. Being a great fan of infantile escape fantasy trash, and also a great fan of Hannes Bok as an artist, I couldn't pass it up. The story, according to Emil Petaja, was originally purchased by John Campbell "because Bok threw in the art virtually for nothing." Somehow, when Ballantine got around to buying it for their Adult Fantasy series, they managed to avoid purchasing a single illo, and wrapped the book in an irrelevant cover by Ray Cruz. The cover, one of mermaids and sea serpents, manages to capture the flavor of the book to some degree, but totally misses as far as accuracy is concerned. I doubt that Mr. Cruz had ever *heard* of the book, let alone read it, when he painted the cover illustration; if Ballantine is going to ignore the fact that *Bok* should illustrate *Bok*, they should at least have had Mr. Cruz do something appropriate.

But they didn't, so all we're left with is the story itself. It isn't much, as far as heavy, thought-provoking reading matter goes, and isn't intended to be. In fact, overall the book tends toward an ultra-simplistic style typical of budding authors: standard plot, little transition from one emotion to the next, and sexual naivete. Still, Hannes Bok was no ordinary person, and his writing sporadically demonstrates the creative vision evident in his art.

Plot: An office clerk from New York finds himself mysteriously transported to another world, one of warring cities and sorcery. Falling in love with a princess, he must conquer the opposing city, prove his manhood, etc. etc. Enlisting the aid of a sorcerer, he hopes to defeat the invading city and to settle down with his princess--a laudable ambition for us all.

Amid this tepidity, however, occur at random small snatches of description and outright cleverness that produce a scintillating feeling of wonder in me. For instance, remember the classic Korda movie *The Thief of Baghdad*? With the winged horse and imprisoned genie and all? Hannes Bok creates *this* kind of magic, as opposed to the rather morbid 7th *Voyage of Sinbad*, Robert E. Howard, Frank Frazetta sort of thing. Not that I necessarily prefer one or the other; it's just that there are so *many* REH/FF sorts now, and so few (if any) Hannes Bok/Korda sorts. I like Bok's conception of sorcery: small clay figures that are brought to life, paper birds that fly under their own power, mystic illusions, and the like. But all is not Pollyanna-ish romping with magic, for he also includes one of the most gruesome giant monsters (constructed from mangled corpses) yet described by an s&s author.

The ending is as ridiculous as the beginning and middle--deviating from the standard but no less naive. But the book is such a short, easy trip that I found it well worthwhile spending the moments to breathe air a little different from that found elsewhere.

and a couple by Mark Cole

The first book this time around is by a Welsh writer, I.P. Davies. The title is *Psychogeist* and it is going to be rather difficult to review since it is undoubtedly one of the best structured and developed books I have read. This is the first book that I have ever felt truly deserved to be said to "unfold", and the feeling can only be compared to that experienced when watching one of those old nature films showing a flower bloom. To try to explain the book without destroying this growth, I'll tell it this way: all the action in the book takes place in the present on Earth, but the reader is also made aware of events "on a faraway planet, a million lightyears away, somewhere on the dark lonely fringes of the galaxy, in a cavern deep in the heart of the Mountains of the Lost Moon." As for its appeal, ex- and present comic fans should be particularly drawn to this book since its story is, in a very real sense, influenced by comics. Admittedly, the old earthling sleeps / alien awakes style plot is overused, but it receives here a new twist that saves it and should be of special interest to any psychologists in the audience. After reading through chapter 11 you'll be hooked on this book and on the creative Mr. Davies.

The second book is one of those books we seldom find in modern science fiction--a good translation. Written in French by Robert Merle, *The Day of the Dolphins* was translated into English by Helen Weaver. To begin, let me say that any of you who are interested in dolphins and other cetaceans (look it up) because of *Flipper*, *Namu the Killer-Whale*, *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, and assorted Ivan Tors productions can forget the book right now; any of you interested *despite* the aforementioned will find this book perfect. It is a mature, believable story about research with dolphins, governmental intrigues and back-stabbing, the first dolphins to learn English, and the crisis that might cause World War III. Be warned before you begin though, if you are not the least political this may not be your bag of cetaceans, because there is nearly as much attention paid to hawks and doves as to dolphins. Perhaps the most fascinating part of the book is the section dealing with U.S. and world reaction to American scientists communicating with dolphins. Here, the author creates political, religious, and sociological persons and events as real as any in today's news magazines. He doesn't merely picture America's ethnocentric prides and prejudices, but its speed to adapt its culture to embrace new heroes as well. When one adds some stylistic devices too original to explain here (such as the use of commas instead of periods for whole paragraphs) the book becomes what is tritely called a "must". In conclusion, if after you finish this book you don't find yourself sitting and quietly contemplating what a botched-up world we have, you better get help quick.

Got a hidden classic by an obscure author that you think should be shared with the world? Let us know!

GORVAN THE ADVENTURER

in "THE MAGIC SPHERE"

GORVAN AND HIS BEAUTIFUL CONCUBINE, NEPHLEE, ARE REUNITED. AS THEY JOYOUSLY LENGTHEN THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND THE CITADEL OF THE NINE MOONS, ALL THEY CAN SEE IS A FUTURE OF HAPPINESS.



GORVAN, MY LOVE, YOU COULD NOT IMAGINE MY HAPPINESS WHEN YOU RAN THROUGH HIS BLACK HEART. THE TERRIBLE THINGS HE HAD PLANNED, I---

NEVER MIND, THAT IS BEHIND US. NONE CAN THREATEN YOU NOW, NEPHLEE.



RIDING THROUGH THE HILLS OF SOBRUS, GORVAN HEADS HIS STALLION TOWARDS THE WESTWARD SAILING SUN AND HIS HOMETLAND, PHLAGOON.



A SUDDEN FLASH OF BLINDING INCANDESCENCE PANICS GORVAN'S STEED UNHORSEING BOTH ITS RIDERS.



INSTANTLY NEPHLEE FINDS HERSELF IN THE CLUTCHES OF TWO GROTESQUE TROLLS.



IN THE SAME MOMENT GORVAN'S HAND IS UPON HIS SWORD HILT PREPARED FOR BATTLE WITH THE THREE CHARGING COMPANIONS OF NEPHLEE'S CAPTORS.



AS GORVAN BEGINS TO MAKE SHORT WORK OF HIS ASSAILANTS, A PERIPHERAL GLANCE SHOWS HIM HIS LOVELY MISTRESS BEING FLUNG ON THE BACK OF A GREAT WINGED THAGOT.



HIS MIND THUS OCCUPIED, GORVAN CANNOT BE AWARE OF THE FLABBY FIGURE THAT STEALS UPON HIM FROM BEHIND.



THEN IT IS TOO LATE!



THE UNCONSCIOUS GORVAN, LYING AS IF DEAD, IS FANNED BY THE WINGS OF THE DEPARTING MOUNTS OF NEPHLEE'S VICIOUS ABDUCTORS.



TWO HOURS LATER, SEVERAL PATIENT VULTURES ARE DISAPPOINTED TO SEE GORVAN RISE TO HIS KNEES AS HE STRUGGLES TO ENDURE THE THROBING IN HIS SKULL.



AS GORVAN SEARCHES FOR HIS HORSE, HE RECALLS A DISCUSSION BETWEEN TWO NOBLEMEN IN THE CITADEL OF THE NINE MOONS.

THORN SAID AGAMERE IS THE ONLY MAN TO HAVE TAMED THE THAGOT. IF THOSE WERE HIS MEN AND MOUNTS, THEN AGAMERE'S CASTLE WILL BE THE PLACE TO FIND NEPHLEE. NOW, WHERE'S THAT DAMN HORSE?



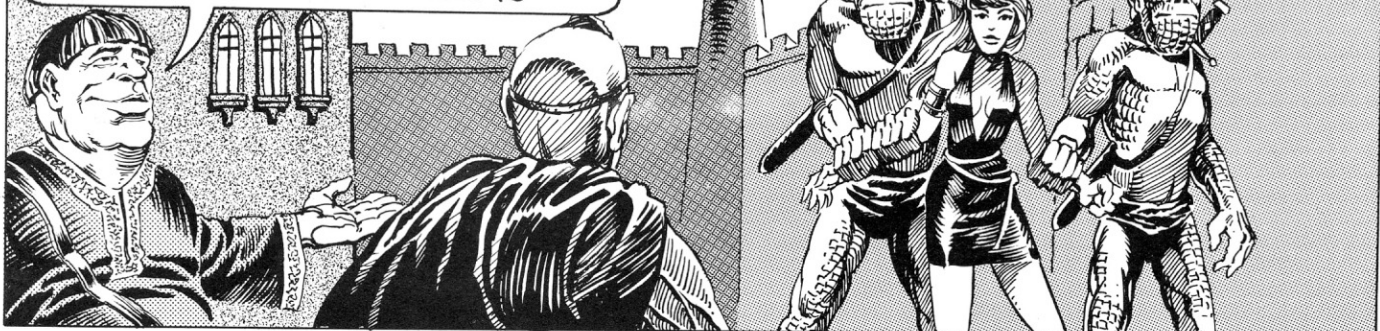
AND AT THE SAME MOMENT THE MAN, WHO GORVAN WILL SOON BE HUNTING, WATCHES THE SKIES AS GREAT LEATHERY WINGS BRING TO HIM THE PRIZE HE HAS SO LONG SOUGHT AFTER.



QUENTIRN, YOU MISERABLE EXCUSE FOR A MAGICIAN, IF A HAIR UPON THAT WOMAN HAS BEEN HARMED, YOU WILL WISH YOU HAD NEVER RETURNED.



BUT SIRE, AS YOU CAN SEE, SHE IS AS FRESH AS IF SHE HAD JUST STEPPED FROM HER BATH. YOUR MEN TREATED HER WITH NAUGHT BUT THE SOFTEST TOUCH. I ASSURE YOU THERE IS----



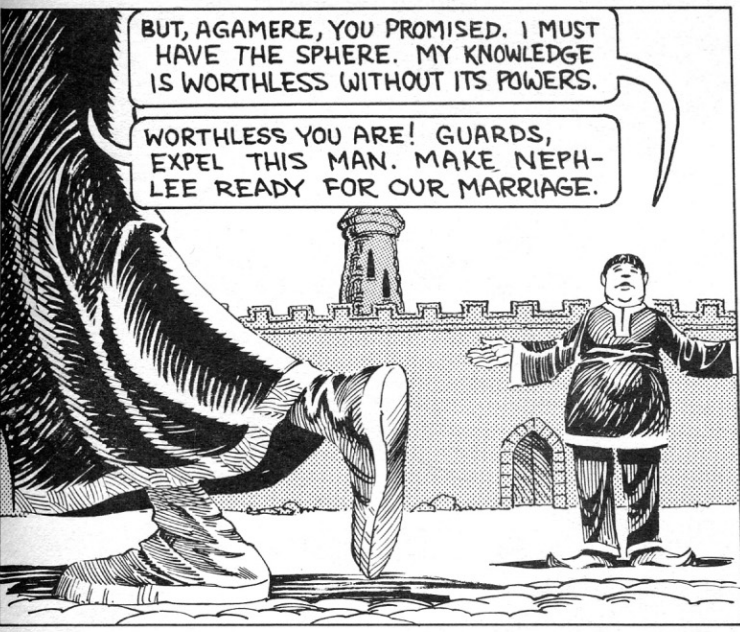
SHUT UP, YOU FOUL PIG! DO YOU THINK I DO NOT HAVE EYES? QUIT YOUR JABBERING AND BEGONE, THANKFUL THAT I HAVE SPARED YOUR WRETCHED LIFE!



BUT SIRE, DO YOU NOT RECALL OUR BARGAIN? YOU PROMISED TO RETURN TO ME THE MYSTIC SPHERE IF I BROUGHT NEPHLEE TO YOU UNHARMED. SHE IS HERE AND I---

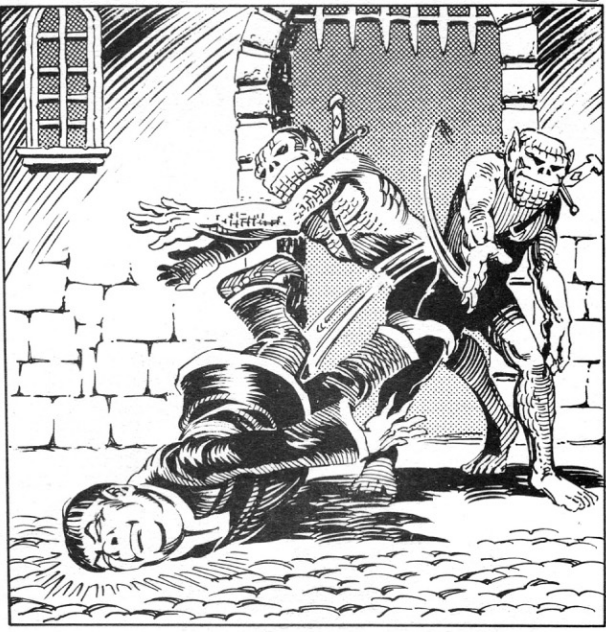
SILENCE! I RECALL NOTHING OF THE KIND. LEAVE HERE AND NEVER INSULT MY PRESENCE WITH YOUR OBESE FORM AGAIN.





BUT, AGAMERE, YOU PROMISED. I MUST HAVE THE SPHERE. MY KNOWLEDGE IS WORTHLESS WITHOUT ITS POWERS.

WORTHLESS YOU ARE! GUARDS, EXPEL THIS MAN. MAKE NEPHLEE READY FOR OUR MARRIAGE.



GORVAN, AFTER FINDING HIS HORSE AND OBTAINING DIRECTIONS, RIDES TOWARDS AGAMERE'S CASTLE.



GORVAN---

WHO CALLS TO GORVAN FROM THE COWARDICE OF HIDING?

'TIS I, QUENTIRN, THE MAGICIAN. IT WAS I WHO STOLE NEPHLEE AND DELIVERED HER TO AGAMERE.

IF THIS BE TRUE---



YOU HAVE BUT FEW MOMENTS TO GLORY IN YOUR MISDEEDS.

PLEASE, SIRE, DO NOT ACT WITH SUCH HASTE. I SEEK TO AID YOU IN RESTORING NEPHLEE TO YOUR SIDE.



AGAMERE HOPES TO WED NEPHLEE IN ONLY A FEW HOURS. THE MYSTIC SPHERE, THAT AGAMERE KEEPS FROM MY GRASP, IS HIDDEN NOT FAR FROM HERE. IF WE CAN SECURE IT, NEPHLEE WILL BE FREE.

WHAT, THEN, IS YOUR PLAN MAGICIAN?

THIS IS WHAT WE MUST DO---



SOON GORVAN AND QUENTIRN STAND BEFORE THE MOUTH OF A GREAT CAVE.



WITHIN DWELLS THE MONSTER OF THE KALLIGADES. IT GUARDS THE MYSTIC SPHERE AND MUST BE DESTROYED BEFORE WE CAN USE THE SPHERE'S POWERS.

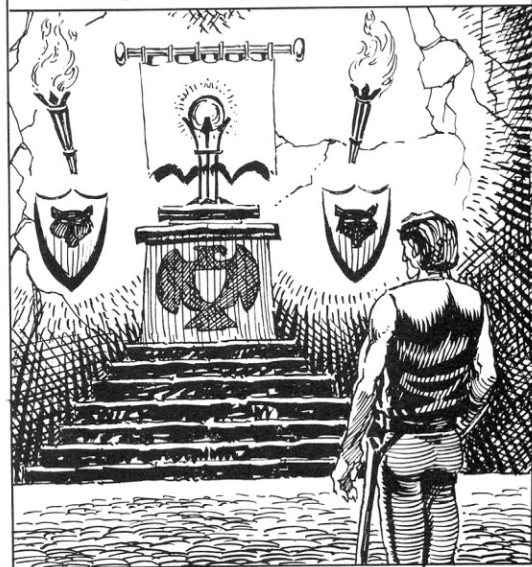
GORVAN ENTERS THE CAVE'S OPENING, SWORD IN HAND.



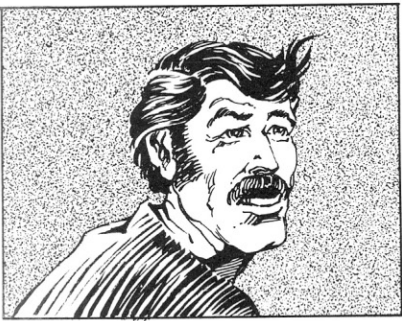
A HUNDRED PACES INTO THE GLOOM A SOFT GLOW IS DISCERNABLE DOWN A CORRIDOR TO HIS LEFT.

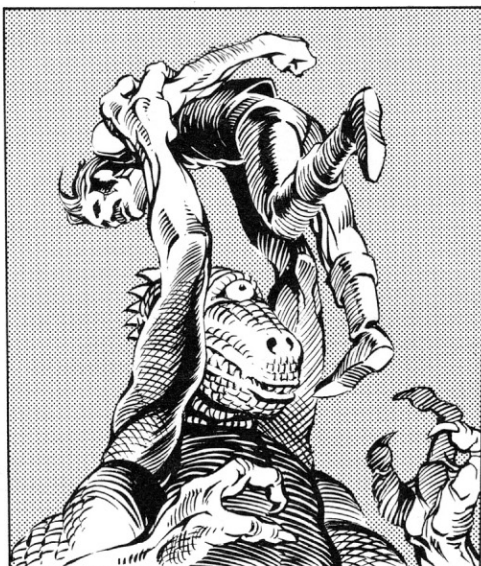


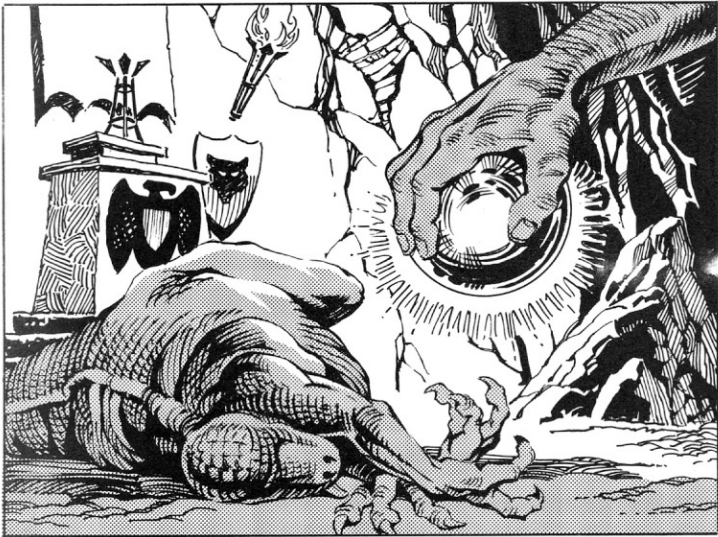
FOLLOWING THE LIGHT, GORVAN COMES UPON A TORCHLIT Dais, SEEMINGLY UNGUARDED, UPON WHICH THE MYSTIC SPHERE IS ENTHRONED.



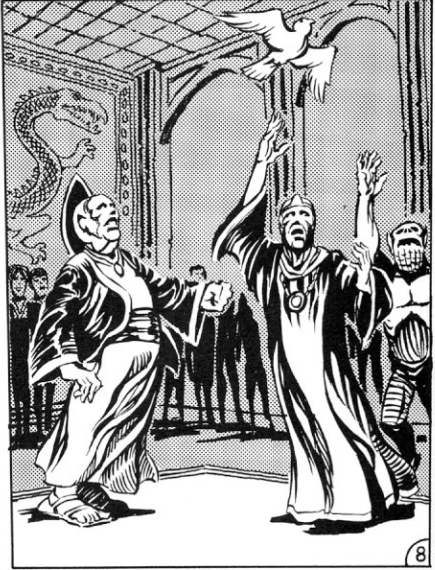
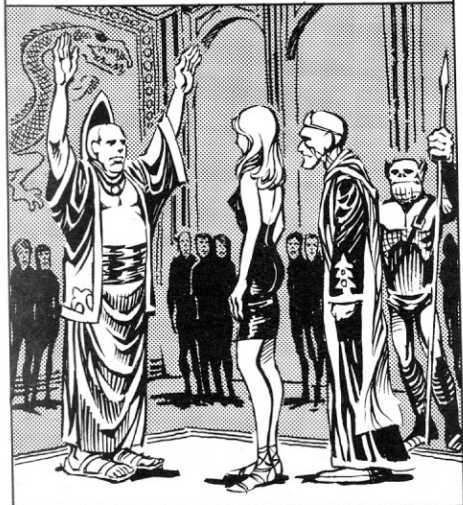
AND THEN SUDDENLY GORVAN DISCOVERS THE SPHERE IS WELL GUARDED.

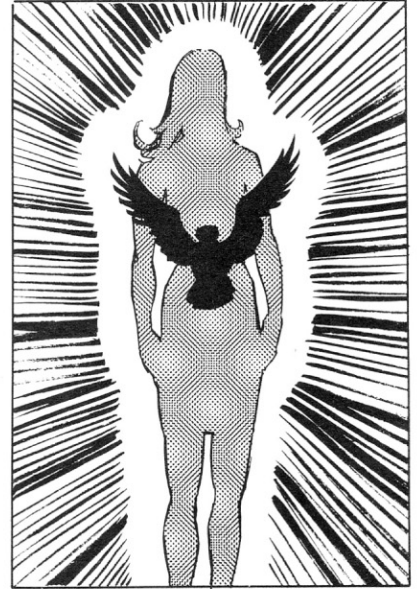




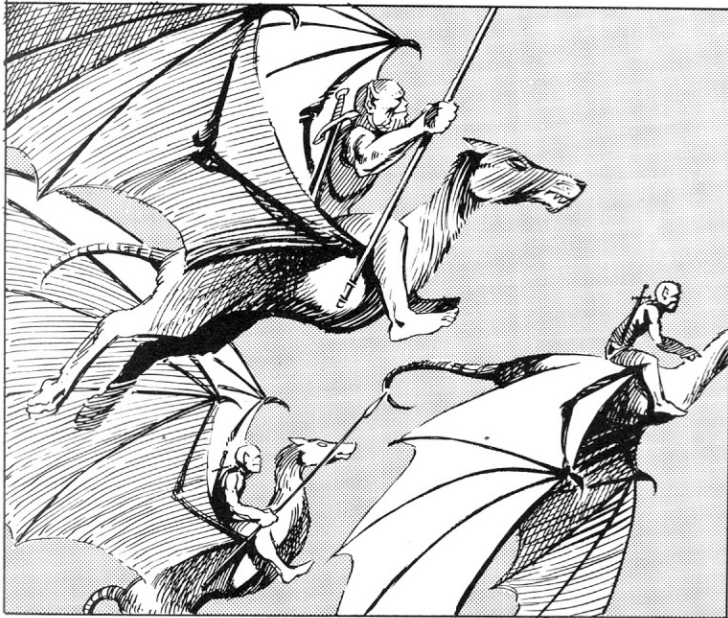


AND IN AGAMERE'S CASTLE THE WEDDING CEREMONIES HAVE BEGUN.

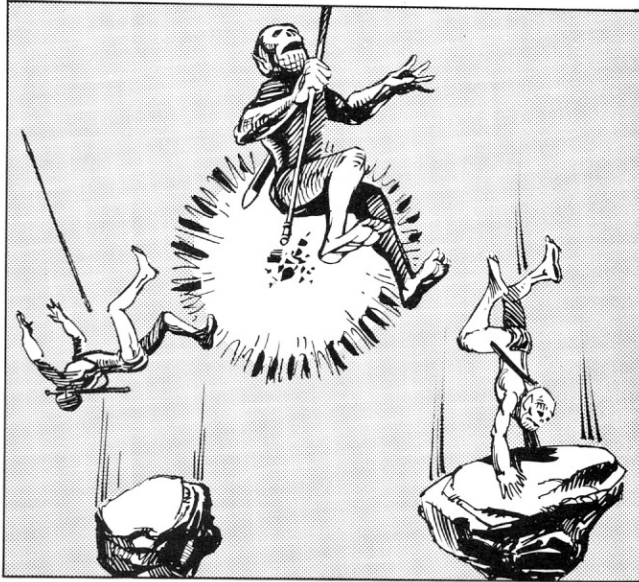




"BUT," QUESTIONS GORVAN, "WHAT OF THE THAGOTS? THEY CANNOT BE FAR BEHIND."



"DO NOT FEAR," REPLIES QUENTIRN, "THEY TOO HAVE FELT THE POWER OF THE MAGIC SPHERE."



BIDDING A SHORT FAREWELL TO QUENTIRN, GORVAN AND NEPHLEE, ONCE AGAIN, EMBARK TOWARD PHLAGON. THEY ARE NOT AWARE OF THE PLOT THAT IS HATCHING IN THE MAGICIAN'S DOUBLE-EDGED MIND.



WONDERFUL SPHERE! BALL OF ENCHANTMENT! YOUR POWERS WILL SOON BRING TO ME SHE WHO AGAMERE SOUGHT AND GORVAN BELIEVES TO BE HIS. QUENTIRN WILL BE THE FINAL VICTOR.



*They don't know where they're going,
And, my friend, neither do I*

Precisely what future issues will contain is impossible to predict with much accuracy, but I can with reasonable certainty state that next issue will feature a science fiction strip by Richard Corben and a fantasy/whimsy sort of something by Kenneth Smith. (This page's illo is of a fellow named Bog, star of said masterwork.) Robert Kline will be continuing the Howard portfolio, so we can all eagerly await Part III -- may be some collaborations between Bob and other artists, who knows? Another panoramic, wraparound cover lies in store for *Anomaly* people, Michael Kaluta and Steve Hickman will be with us in the future, and there's just no telling what else lies beyond the misty veil. Tune in and see!

*We can end your daily strife
At a reasonable price.
You've seen it advertised in...RB-CC?*

Yep, but don't depend heavily on it in the future. You see, Don & I haven't been overly pleased with what Mr. Love and/or his printer have been doing to our ads therein, so we're cutting them to a minimum. Meanwhile, we'll be alive and well within the pages of the *Dallascon Bulletin*. This ain't exactly fair to the comic fans since *DCB*'s circulation centers around the s-fers, so if you know anyone (yourself, maybe?) who isn't presently receiving the bulletin, tell him to write Tom Reamy/P.O. Box #523/Richardson, Texas/75080 and to request the zine. It's free! And there's no better way in the world to keep up on all the Anomalous happenings that are coming up, and to buck the Establishment at the same time!

*And the people bowed and prayed
To the neon god they made*

A trifling 75¢ will reserve you a factory-fresh copy of *Anomaly 3* and all the standard goodies. I don't mean to discriminate against our boys in Canada or you good chaps overseas, but Canadian orders require 1st class postage so I have to charge \$1 each on those; foreign postage is almost too ridiculous to mention, but if I donate the zine itself free, I can mail it to you for \$1.50, or the equivalent in shillings, lira, clam shells, or what-have-you. Everything is mailed on a first-

PREVUES AND SUCH



come, first-served basis (unless you're a pro, BNF, or bribe me) so I'd recommend that you order #3 now rather than wait for the ad to appear.

Also, I've lost a rather staggering amount of green paper material bringing out these last two issues of *Anomaly*, and at 75¢ each I ain't gonna make it back right away (if at all), so I can use all the cash that comes my way. As an incentive to your charitable instincts, I'm offering full-sized posters of our cover this issue (sans lettering, natch) and of the Robert E. Howard centerfold. These posters are on heavy stock and measure 11 x 17 inches plus borders. 80¢ each in a tube, or flat between cardboard, whichever I find is cheaper.

Another worthwhile project to keep your eyes open for is a book called "Five Dooms to Save Tomorrow". It's a story by Harlan Ellison (if you say, "Who's he?" you *can't* be an s-f fan! Where have you been

◆◆◆ MORE SUCH



the last four years?) that a leading comic book publisher rejected on the grounds that it was too complicated and adult a story for his adolescent readers to comprehend. Also, it may have run into a little trouble under the Comic Code Authority but that's a worry fanzine publishers don't have. It will be illustrated by Robert L. Kline, total 20-25 pages in length, and will be released sometime in the future. (Talking to Bob recently I found that he has improved so much lately that he can hardly stand the sight of the last two strips he's done for us. Says he's improved a *lot*. The guy's gonna be drawing in 3-D if he keeps *this* up!) Anyhow, the cost of the book is uncertain, pending decisions on color, number, exact length, etc., so don't send any money; but I would appreciate a card if you'd support such an endeavor, just to give me a rough idea as to the response I can expect. It stars a winged hero named "Falcon", and the story is a *gas*--spread the word!

*We'd like to know
A little bit about you
For our files*

The "Palaver" section belongs to you, people. Feel free to bring in any topic you want to hash over (as per Kenneth Smith's letter this issue) or to bring out new points about previous topics. LOCs of all kinds are needed to keep the editors in line and to prevent their egos from rising to intolerable levels.

This issue is heavily sword & sorcery oriented. Number three leans toward science fiction. In the future I'd like to offer more of a mixture of both, tossing in anything else you'd like to see. But how will I know what you want unless you tell me, right? The Silent Majority? Never heard of 'em. Stand up, speak out, or be satisfied with whatever you get!

*Yes, we speak the things that matter
With words that must be said*

Alas and alack there be another *Anomaly*. T'other one is a serious evaluation of UFO phenomena, and it's obtainable for a self-addressed 9 x 12 envelope and 12¢ in non-airmail stamps from John A. Keel/P.O. Box #351 Murray Hill Station/New York City/10016. If you'd like to know more about UFOs than what the newspapers hypothesize (swamp gas indeed!) and what the local housewives imagine, do it.

*Jesus loves you more than you will know.
(Wo wo wo)*

I would like to extend a very special thanks to Robert Kline, Richard Corben, and Kenneth Smith for their extra-special contributions this issue. De Syndicate will remember youse always.

Until *Anomaly 3* comes sailing to your doorsteps, best of stuff to you all.

*--Strnad (with a little
help from Paul Simon)*

Wrightson

