

WORST
CANADIAN STORIES



collected & edited by
CRAD KILODNEY

Vol. 1

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CHARNEL HOUSE

Toronto, Canada

Special thanks are owed to my unnamed contacts who helped me find these stories, to Arno Wolf Jr. for yet another brilliant front cover, and to my sister, Carol, who sells many of my books in her pizzeria in Westbury, New York. This book was designed by the editor. -- *C.K.*

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*Dedicated to
all failures
everywhere.*

PREFACE

Several years ago I was sitting in the apartment of a writer friend along with a number of mutual literary acquaintances. We were talking about the latest in the never-ending stream of Canadian story anthologies, which, predictably, was unremarkable -- neither terrible nor great -- and which had gotten a so-so review in *The Globe*. And, equally predictably it was destined to sell about 400 copies and then get remaindered.

"How do you get people to read a story anthology in this country?" moaned one of my compatriots in a drunken state.

Another friend (even drunker) replied, "Get the *best writers!* Demand their *best work!* Pay them *big bucks!* Put out a *huge, lavish f---ing book!* Take out *full-page ads* in the papers! Then nobody will be able to ignore it!" He put down his beer bottle with an emphatic *clunk* and promptly fell off his chair.

"I beg to differ," I replied calmly over my Dr. Pepper and rye. "I believe one should do the *exact opposite*. Dig up the most dreadful stories by the most untalented writers you can find -- if necessary, trick them into thinking you're doing a 'normal' anthology -- and publish the anthology as a book of humor. If it's truly dreadful, it'll sell, even without advertising, and I predict it would outsell most story anthologies published in this country."

This suggestion was greeted with appreciative laughter. My friends agreed the idea was brilliant, but perhaps *too* brilliant for Canada. They said I'd end up doing it myself and peddling it on the street. I said if it came to that, fine.

The next day, when I was sober, I still liked the idea. In fact, I liked it even more. It was either the most horribly tasteless idea or the most innovative brainstorm in the history of CanLit. I promptly called up D., an editor acquaintance of mine. I explained the idea to him. He said it sounded interesting and told me to go ahead and assemble such a collection. If it proved to be as funny as I made it out to be, he'd publish it under his imprint.

Now, don't ask me how I obtained these stories. By hook or by crook, as they say, and with the help of a few accom-

PREFACE

plices who don't want to be named. It took longer than I expected. Any writer who showed a bit of talent had to be ruled out. To qualify, a writer had to be completely rotten or at least deranged. Many months later, I was back to D. with a thick file, which I left with him. Three days later, he called me back. "I can't publish this. It's awful!"

"It's supposed to be awful," I said.

"But it's awful in ways that are just too offensive. I'm sorry, I've got to say no."

I wasn't discouraged. Humor, after all, is a matter of taste, and D. is a rather serious chap. So I showed the file to several other literary people. Here are their reactions:

"Hilarious, but any publisher who did such a book would be blacklisted by all the arts councils."

"Funny but too offensive."

"I'd love to do it, but I'd get killed. You can't get away with this in Canada."

"I hate the whole idea. You're making a mockery of Canadian literature."

"Unspeakably tasteless, not to mention cruel -- to hold up untalented writers to ridicule."

"Is this for a joke or what? I don't get it." (Managing Editor of a major publishing house.)

"It's *too* good, Kilodney. I laughed so hard I wet my pants. But to take such a collection to my publisher? Forget it. Why don't you publish it yourself?"

And so it's come to that. Here it is: a collection of some of the worst stories ever written in the English language, *and all of them by Canadians!* You've never heard of any of these writers, and I dare say you never will again. Unless, of course, some of them decide to sue me, which is highly unlikely because unknown writers only want to see themselves in print, *and they don't care where!*

One last comment: I haven't corrected any of the mistakes in the original manuscripts, because I didn't want to tamper with anyone's artistic integrity (*cough*). I only wish all the other editors in this country would take an equally noble attitude toward the writers they're supposed to serve. Then CanLit would start to get *really* interesting.

Crad Kilodney
Toronto, Canada

(This beats anything I ever read in The Enquirer. -- Ed.)

ELECTRIC FEET

by Ilyot Prabang

In my native town of Telukbajur, on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, there lived a most lovely and gentle young lady named Treela, a truly fine and sensitive person born of a good family and raised with most excellent manners and breeding. Her father was a prosperous rubber merchant. Treela had three older sisters, all of whom had married respectable young gentlemen. Treela, who was 23 years old, unlike most girls her own age, had not wanted to marry early in life but had chosen instead to complete her schooling and work in some capacity where she could learn more about the civilised world. For this purpose, she accepted a clerical post with the Ministry of Agriculture. Her father had been most useful in arranging this employment for her, although he had preferred to see her marry a particular young man whose family was socially connected to their own.

Treela worked in an office in a government building in the nearby town of Padang, which is larger than Telukbajur. For some months she performed her duties of filing and record-keeping and was most diligent. In addition, she was respectful toward her superiors, well-liked by her co-workers, and had an excellent attendance record.

One day Treela noticed a rash occurring on her left foot. She thought nothing of it except that it itched somewhat. The next day it itched somewhat more. It also appeared on her right foot. She tried putting a soothing lotion on it, but that did not alleviate her discomfort completely. This proved most upsetting to her. After several days, seeing her in evident discomfort, her superior inquired what was the matter. Treela explained to him about the rash on her feet but did not remove her shoes and stockings to show him lest he regard her as a girl of loose morals. The superior was sympathetic and speculated that the rash might be caused by an allergy. He suggested that she visit a doctor and gave her the name and address of a government doctor who provided medical services to the government employees in

Padang. Treela was reluctant to go to a doctor, for she had never been to one since early childhood and was afraid she would be asked to remove her clothing. Her family had a doctor, but she did not wish her family to know that she had a problem. At last she accepted her superior's suggestion to visit the government doctor.

The following morning she went to the doctor's office and was shown into the examining room by the nurse and left there alone. Before long, the doctor entered. He was in his sixties and had a rather frightening appearance to Treela because of his uncombed hair and dark, bushy eyebrows and beard. Treela was about to make an excuse to leave, but the doctor told her to sit down and explain what was the matter. With some hesitation, Treela explained about the rash on her feet. The doctor told her to remove her shoes and stockings. Treela obeyed. He then bent down and held each foot in turn, looking at them closely, touching the afflicted patches of skin, and making serious musing sounds with his voice, as if to suggest that there was a grave problem presenting itself. Treela was most alarmed.

The doctor looked Treela in the eye and said that she had a rare skin condition, which he described in complicated medical terms she did not understand. He concluded by saying that it was a grave and incurable disease and that both her feet would have to be amputated.

With this terrible news, Treela burst into tears, for she was most proud of her feet. Indeed, her entire family were reputed for having most excellent, pretty feet and were perhaps even vain on this account. As Treela continued to cry, the doctor assured her that she would still be able to walk as she would be fitted with electric feet. He took from his shelf a medical magazine in which there was an article describing experiments in Sweden to perfect prosthetic limbs powered by small but powerful electric motors. When he showed Treela the article and tried to explain in scientific terms exactly where and how the artificial feet would be attached to the stumps of her legs, the girl became hysterical, grabbed her shoes and stockings and ran out of the office, shouting that she would rather die the most agonising death than consent to such an operation. This was a most unfortunate turn of events, for in truth the doctor had played a very cruel joke on Treela, for he could see that she only had

a mild allergy but had nevertheless terrified the girl with a cruel story purely out of a perverted sense of humour.

After running out of the doctor's office, Treela was in such a state of emotion that she ran out of the town along the bank of the river that led to the jungle and was determined to drown herself. She knew that the young man her parents had picked out for her to marry would never consent to marry her with electric feet. Nor would any other man, for that matter. With this thought of hopeless despair, she jumped into the river, which was brown and muddy. Then a terrible thing happened, which can only be explained as an unexplainable act of God. She was beset upon by a crocodile, a creature which had almost never been seen that far down river. The crocodile closed its terrible jaws upon Treela's feet, severing them cleanly from her legs. Her screams of pain attracted the attention of two peasants, who ran to her aid. The crocodile, after biting off Treela's feet, swam away, contrary to its usual nature. Treela was pulled out of the river in a state of shock, and word was sent to fetch an ambulance. Eventually, Treela was taken to the hospital in Padang and, praise God, lived through her terrible ordeal, thanks to another doctor, who was kinder to her than the one before.

Yet, events proved to arrange themselves in the most extraordinary way, and I would challenge even the most astute reader to explain why it should be thus. For after her unfortunate accident, Treela was given the very prosthetic devices illustrated in the medical magazine the first doctor had shown her. The electric feet operated in exactly the manner described, and by means of them, Treela was able to walk without a cane or crutches. However, they were not at all flattering to her appearance, and so Treela chose to leave her job, return to her parents' home and remain in seclusion, away from society. Her sadness was shared by her parents and sisters. As Treela had predicted during her moments of suicidal hysteria, the young suitor who was hoping to marry her no longer visited her home once he learned of her new condition.

Treela still lives in her parents' home in Telukbajur and has sunk into a hermit-like existence. All attempts to find her a husband have failed, for she has changed in her personality and prefers to be left alone and become an "old

maid."

It could be said that there are two morals to this tragic story. The first is that doctors should not say anything untrue to frighten a patient, even as a joke, especially to a young woman. The second is that God works in mysterious ways which we can never hope to fully understand.

(This author's atrocious writing style is matched only by her inane plot. -- Ed.)

ONE LIFE TO GIVE

by Yolanda Earth-Queen Naswaca

Charles McCaffrey was a successful stockbroker. The best on Bay Street. He had made millions in the stock market. He knew how to sell stocks when they were high and buy them when they were low. He was the envy of the town. When walking down the street on his way to work, heads would turn in envy. Everyone knew he "had it." He was a big success in the world of High Finance.

Yes, Charles McCaffrey only cared about money and success, and as a result there was something missing in his life, a sense of failure and emptiness deep down in his heart. But he was not yet aware of this in a fully conscious way. Only part of his mind knew something was wrong. He had lost track of the meaning of Life. He was unable to see the birds or smell the spring air. And in his home life he was unable to achieve an erection.

It was a typical sunny day in June. It was 5:00, time to go home, but not before drowning his mind in booze at his favorite drinking spot, which was his daily ritual. A last look at the ticker tape enabled him to calculate the size of today's big "killing." Today it was in silver, tomorrow it might be in gold or copper or magnesium or some other valuable alloy. Now he was wondering what he could buy with today's profits, profits which had come out of the pockets of today's losers and out of the blood and sweat of the toiling classes of workers, about who he cared nothing except that they should produce more and ask for less, especially those in far-off lands laboring for pennies a day under the yolk of political tyranny. Yes, what could he buy that he did not already have? A car? A boat? A trip around the world? No, he had every possible luxury. Now he was accumulating money as a form of addiction, to avoid facing the fundamental emptiness of his life.

He went to the Velvet Room, a lounge located within one of the better hotels. He took a corner booth that was dimly

lit, for today he wanted to stew in his juices in peace and not be recognized. He drank several martinis and felt a temporary sense of solace, but it soon faded. It seemed he was drinking more and more these days. He would think about the past. He had been born into a poor family. He did not have expensive new toys like some of the other kids. His letters to Santa Claus were never answered in the form of the things he wanted. He felt ashamed of his poverty. His father wanted him to get an education and earn money the easy way, and he hammered this tune home over and over until he died suddenly of a stroke. Charles was now the man of the family. In addition to going to school he would shine shoes and deliver newspapers and later worked part-time in the drug store as a soda jerk. Then came his big chance -- a scholarship to the University. He decided to study business and economics. Upon his graduation he secured employment with a leading stock brokerage house. Once he got a taste of real money, he was like a tiger that had gotten its first taste of human blood. He became a "man-eater" in the figurative sense. Indeed, he was ruthless with all who stood in his way. He had clawed and bitten his way to the top. He was now the senior vice-president of the company. If he played his cards right, he would succeed to the title of president after old Curtis Chandler retired or died, which was likely to occur soon. It was indeed ironic that while at the top of his profession, he was at the bottom of his emotional life.

McCaffrey finished his fifth martini, paid his bill with his credit card, and headed for the underground car park, where his new, sleek Cadillac sat in the space reserved for him. He turned the ignition switch, and the powerful engine roared to life, demonstrating Man's power over the land. McCaffrey glanced over the fancy dials and gauges of his dashboard and tried to derive emotional comfort and satisfaction from their appearance. He had better drive carefully, he thought, or the beautiful car would be wrecked and him in it.

As he headed toward the highway that would carry him to his suburban home, he thought about his home and family. His house was beautiful, and so was his wife, although he had not been paying much attention to her. He wondered why so often he would come home to an empty house, a meal in the microwave

oven waiting to be heated, and a note on the table in his wife Margaret's handwriting, to such an effect as "Gone to art show. Back around eight. Heat food in microwave for two minutes. Margaret." Sometimes he wondered if she was having an affair. It was so common these days. The husband so concentrated on the pursuit of money that the wife's needs would go unadministered, to the result that she often sought affection in the arms of another man. How well did he really know her? Was he blind to what was going on? Was it because of his personal inability to give her all that his manhood had once offered? Did he have some psychological problem, or was he succumbing to the onslaught of age creeping up on him? So many doubts plagued his mind.

They had two children, Helen, age 24, and Peter, age 20. The boy was a rebellious young man who Charles could not seem to get through to. Peter seemed to resent his father's capitalistic lust, though Charles had tried to make him happy with a new stereo, TV, video games, and even a motorcycle. But this had not brought them closer. Peter had gotten into drugs and loose sex. He had been in trouble with the police on a number of occasions, and only the influence of his father had kept him from ending up in the "slammer." Peter was hardly ever around any more. In fact, he had moved out entirely, taking only one suitcase. He was living with what Charles would probably call "degenerate hippies" in a converted loft in a downtown warehouse. He was attempting to find himself and some meaning to his life and could not do so in a fragmented home environment. Charles thought, "I have failed to be a good father to my son. He doesn't love me." His fondest hope was that he could get his son to love him again. He couldn't buy his love with expensive gifts. Then how? He wondered about this all the time. If Peter was a confused youth, whose fault was it? He was highly intelligent, yet he was now living what seemed to Charles as an aimless life.

Helen was a volunteer in Africa, and Charles was very proud of her. Although they did not see eye to eye on some things, Helen still seemed to love him. He would have preferred that she took a good secretarial course at a highly recommended business college, but Helen wanted no part of the business world. When she announced last year that she was going as part of a foreign aid package to Africa, Charles

did not resist. He accepted it calmly. She was working as a teacher and community helper among a tribe known as the Ik of Uganda. This was a tribe that had made no progress at all under the cruel regime of the Fascist butcher Idi Amin and had in fact often ended up on the dinner plate of that infamous dictator with a yen for cannibalism. Thank God he had been deposed.

Helen was in fact due home that very evening. After an absence of nearly a year she had decided to come home for three weeks. It would be wonderful to see her again. He hoped she would have some interesting photos or slides of her new friends, the Ik, and their primitive way of life. He wondered if she had changed much and if she had been getting enough to eat, since there were no restaurants within a 50-mile radius. Her plane was due to land at Lester B. Pearson International Airport at 8:00. McCaffrey looked at the luminous dashboard clock. It was late. He would have to step on it to get home in time to collect Margaret and rush to the airport without delay.

He was missing the peak of the rush hour traffic thanks to his tenure in the bar and so sped along the highway unimpeded by the maniacal rats of the workaday world racing back to their suburban holes in the wall. It was before long that he reached the northern outskirts of the city, got off the highway, and drove down the tree-lined suburban street, whose pacific face hid the doubtless variety of domestic traumas contained within locked doors. He pulled the car into the driveway, got out, and let himself in the front door.

Margaret, his wife, was waiting for him in the kitchen, a cocktail in hand. "Have you forgotten we have to pick Helen up at the airport very soon?" she inquired, a slight smirk of aggression painted on her face.

"No, I haven't forgotten," came his reply.

"Well, you're cutting it pretty close. In fact, we will have to leave right now. There's no time to eat dinner. We'll have to eat late after returning from the airport," she said.

"Okay with me, and as for the time, we have plenty of it. It will take Helen some time to collect her baggage and get through Customs. Too, the traffic to the airport will not be too congested at this hour."

With this retort, they left the house, got back into the

car, and started it. "What airline is she flying on?" asked Charles.

"Trans East African Airways," said his wife.

"I would feel more secure if it were a more reputable airline such as Air Canada," he mused out loud.

"Let's get going, Charles. We don't want to be late."

They were soon back on the main highway, the 401 McDonald-Cartier Expressway, headed west toward Lester B. Pearson International Airport. They hardly said a word to each other because of late their communication systems had broken down. Charles kept saying to himself that soon they would have to have a serious talk and clear the air, but the right moment never came, or else he never had the courage when it did.

Margaret was also waiting for the right moment, but to announce that she had found another man and wanted a divorce. Deep down, her life lacked meaning, and she wanted out. She didn't know exactly what she wanted out of life but thought a change was necessary. Her secret lover was an anthropologist she had once met at an antique sale. His wife had been killed by an elephant in Rhodesia, leaving him without a woman to fulfill his needs. They had since met for intercourse on numerous occasions. Margaret admired him for his commitment to science and Mankind.

As they approached the airport, the sun was going down, filling the sky with golden purple clouds of shimmering beauty with stark sunbeams stabbing through. McCaffrey noted the time on the dashboard clock. It was 7:55.

Suddenly, a huge jumbo jet passed overhead and slightly to their right, on its pre-established approach pattern for a landing. They could see the insignia on the tail clearly and could read the name on the hull of the plane -- Trans East African Airways. "Why, that's Helen's plane, without a doubt," said Charles.

The mighty aircraft thundered through the air, its powerful hammering pistons and rotating turbines setting up a deafening, thrumming roar to proclaim Man's mastery over the air. The plane banked to port side, catching a reflection of the lowering sun. Suddenly, it happened! A burst of flame issued forth from one of the engines, and a thick plume of black smoke jetted out from behind!

"My God!" screamed Margaret.

"Good Heavens!" shouted Charles. Their worst fears came

true. The huge jet had had a mechanical failure of some sort. It was going to crash in a field several miles short of the airport. Charles immediately got off at the next exit, by means of which he hoped to drive closer to the crash site.

Margaret was crying and howling, but Charles drove the swift Cadillac like a madman possessed, deftly weaving through slower vehicles. He turned this way and that, keeping the rising column of smoke within sight.

The plane had crashed far from any help at the airport. Local police and firemen would be on the way within minutes, but in those precious minutes all might perish. The seconds ticked by like an eternity for Charles as he drove down a narrow road that led to the field of the crash site. He screeched the car to a stop by a fence, jumped out and hurled himself over the barbed-wire fence, oblivious to the huge rips being produced in his expensive grey business suit.

"Charles, come back!" screamed Margaret automatically, for she feared he would either be killed in the possible explosion or arrested for trespassing by the authorities.

A few police and firemen were just arriving. One or two of the emergency exits had been opened by the flight crew, and some passengers had escaped and were now milling about in a haze of shock. The rear third of the plane had practically cracked off completely and thick smoke was oozing out of it. Above the confusion there were sirens sounding everywhere. An authoritative voice barked over a megaphone to "Clear the area! This is an emergency!"

Unheeding of the danger, Charles ran toward the gaping fuselage, his only thought being, "Helen! My dear Helen!" Burning fuel, black, poisonous smoke, and a fierce heat hotter than any oven poured out and spread all over the place, mingled with the macabre screams of the horribly mangled victims, some of whom jumped or fell out of the plane. But many of those on board were trapped or unconscious, just seconds away from Death.

Charles looked for anyone resembling Helen and not finding any, he surmised that she was still aboard the ruined craft. He saw a crack in the hull and headed for it. A voice behind him warned, "Don't go in there! You'll get killed!" But Charles no longer cared about that. He clambered aboard the plane, the razor sharp edges of the torn

fuselage ripping more shreds out of his once handsome business suit. "Helen!" he screamed. "Helen! Where are you?"

"Do you mean Helen Smith?" a voice came back.

"No! Helen McCaffrey!"

"Here, Dad," came another voice, sounding feebly from a few feet away. His daughter lay trapped in her seat, her legs bent at unnatural angles. There was blood on her face. A piece of metal or something lay across her seat, making it impossible to extricate her.

"I'll get you out!" exclaimed Charles, tugging at the obstruction.

"No, Dad, it's hopeless. I'm trapped, and I'm sure both my legs are broken."

"No, dear God!" sobbed Charles. There was foul-smelling smoke all around them, and a curtain of flame was advancing toward them from the front part of the plane, smelling strongly of the hideous odor of charred human flesh.

"Listen to me, Dad," said Helen, coughing occasionally because of the smoke. "While I'm still conscious, I have to tell you a few things."

"Yes, Helen, I'm listening," her father told her, tears gushing like geysers out of his eyes.

"I've learned so much in the year spent among the Ik of Uganda. I now see life as it really is, without the encumbrances of materialism. I've learned that all men are created equal and that the same God looks down on them all. I've learned that the true meaning of Life comes from within, from the spiritual exploration of the self, from the individual's striving to understand his place in the Cosmos."

"Oh, Helen," sobbed Charles. The smoke and heat was getting worse at every moment.

"I know you and Mom and Peter have been having problems. Even though you didn't come right out and say it in your letters, I could read your true thoughts from half-way around the world. I'm not blaming it all on you, Dad, but I always thought the world of business was not conducive to the development of a Cosmic Consciousness. All of the great spiritual figures throughout history were men who were content to live simply. The materialistic rat race is like a poison to the soul."

"Oh, God, you're so right," sobbed Charles repentantly. All the while, the smoke and heat continued getting more

terrible. Passengers were getting burned alive.

"There is a little boy in the village of the Ik, named Mumbuto. He's eight years old. He lost a leg to a crocodile, he has beriberi, and a skin disease. Instead of toys, he has only rocks to play with. Yet, he is a happy child of Nature, carefree and lovable. To him, a grain of rice is joy, a handful of brown water is laughter, and watching his elders do their native dances is the ultimate ecstasy. Meanwhile, the spoiled youth of our own culture drive around in Corvettes, take drugs, get into trouble with the law, and stuff their bodies with unhealthy food. Tell me, Dad, who is more civilized, we or the Ik?"

"The Ik," agreed Charles, as deadly cyanide gas from burning plastic began to fill the compartment.

"We have much to learn from such a good and simple people. I have felt more fulfilled working among them than I ever could have in an office on Bay Street. We have taught them, and they have taught us, just as it should be among citizens of the planet Earth. The attainment of harmony requires the selfless love of one's fellow man and the alignment of one's consciousness with the collective Soul. The Eastern religions understood this best. You should undertake a systematic study of all of them, especially the Krishna Consciousness teachings of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta."

"I will," Charles promised, now realizing how much wiser his daughter was than he. A fatal scream pierced the air as a piece of metal fell on a hapless victim and cut him in two.

"Now, Dad, it appears that I am about to leave this world for a better one. But do not cry for me. I had one life to give, and I gave it to my fellow man. In my heart I am happy and fulfilled. I regret nothing. I only hope that you see the light in time to do justice to your own life and the lives of Mom and Peter."

"Yes! Yes! Believe me, I understand all that you've said! In fact, I know now what to do with my own life! I will--"

His words were interrupted by an explosion, which shot flames and black smoke around them and knocked Charles backwards. He screamed and instinctively retreated from the infernal holocaust. His last sight of his daughter was of her face, peacefully composed with a smile, her eyes closed. She

was dead.

Charles jumped from the plane, his clothes on fire and coughing, and was immediately smothered with a wet blanket by a rescue worker who just happened to be there. When he finally staggered to his feet, he saw his wife behind a police barricade, anxiously clutching her handkerchief. And in his mind, he completed the words he had wanted to speak to his daughter: *I will sell everything we own and take your mother and Peter to Africa to finish the work you have started.* He was sure that his daughter was reading his thoughts from the better world she was now in. Despite his pain and sorrow, he managed to smile, for Charles McCaffrey knew that he, too, had one life to give.

(I could swear I read practically the same story in a comic book around 1955. -- Ed.)

THE HANGMAN

by W. Beacon Sellar

Mansfield prison lay practically in the heart of the City. It had been built originally on the outskirts of a small town, but the town had grown into a city, and the prison remained. Its grey walls stood high and foreboding, towering over the nearby buildings all of which were built a respectful distance from the great block of darkness.

Tommy Blye sat in his cell and listened to the footsteps of the guard echoing in the hollow emptiness of the corridor. Faint and faraway, then nearer and heavier, until the guard stopped in front of Tommy's cell, turned and retraced his steps. The footfalls never stopped.

Tommy sat shoulders slumped, running his fingers through his cropped blond hair. He was still handsome despite the ill fitting prison clothes which he wore. His physical appearance was no different from that of hundreds of other young men. On the street he could have passed for a college student, or a young business man. But Tommy Blye was a murderer, and tonight at midnight he was to die.

It was snowing. Big, fluffy flakes drifted down from the dull February sky. They melted on the dark asphalt highway, making it wet and slippery. Darkness was rapidly falling as the big grey car sped toward the distant City.

"Switch the lights on now. The wipers will hardly keep the snow off the windshield. I wish there were more cars on the road, or more towns to pass through, or more farm houses to see, but there's only this desolate prairie, with nothing but snow. It makes me feel so lonely." The man behind the wheel of the grey car looked tired. He was tall and lean, his grey hair cut in a military style. A black brief case lay on the seat beside him. He was dressed as any average well to do business man, black alpaca coat, white scarf, an expensive grey hat lay beside the brief case.

He pressed the accelerator hard--50 -- 60 -- 70-- using

both hands to hold the car steady, as he thought, "Curve coming, take it fast you've always taken chances, why stop now? Keep your hands on the ten to four position it's best for high speeds. I'd like to turn the wheel just a bit too much. So help me God, I would. I sell my soul to-night." The car sped toward the City into the gathering dusk.

These thoughts were not those of an ordinary business man. The greyhaired driver was on business, yes; but weird gruesome business. He was Canada's official hangman.

"Capital punishment," he thought, "a left over from the medieval time. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life. Burning at the stake, impalement, hanging, they all belong to-gether. I never should have taken this job, but the pay was too damn good to refuse. I never thought I really cared about other people until now."

"It will have to be a painless job to-night, the rope the right length, the knot just right. If only I don't break down. Oh thank God Marianne decided not to come."

Then he remembered the blind panic that had seized him, when he had first heard what was to happen. The weeks of despair, he had even contemplated suicide to escape from to-night. His wife Marianne would be at home now, he wondered what she was thinking about. Thank heaven she would never know, what he was going to do to-night. It would kill her. He wondered again if he could go through with this terrible thing, and the familiar feeling of despair closed about him. He tramped the accelerator to the floor.

The guard stopped in front of Tommy's cell, and with a false sense of joviality said, "You make the menu tonite kid. You name it and old Curly'll bring it to you."

"No. No thanks," said Tommy. He felt an overwhelming nausea come over him at the mention of food.

"The warden says your old man's coming to see you to-nite."

"That's right, my mother wrote to me about it."

"You're sure ya don't want nothin to eat, kid?"

"I'm sure," said Tommy.

The clock on the dashboard read 7:30 as the grey car pulled up in front of the hotel. The hangman put on his hat,

and picked up his brief case. Leaving the car he entered the hotel. After showing the Clerk his reservation he turned and walked to the elevator. He imagined he could feel the eyes of the Clerk boring into his back. "They must have told him," he thought, as three bell boys appeared, each with the sole intent of carrying his brief case.

Inside his room he was again filled with terrors and doubts. The fear that he couldn't go through with it. The urge to run from the hotel, from the City. To lose himself forever.

A knock at the door. A blue clad bell boy with a menu. "You have your choice Sir, the compliments of the management." The thought of food repulsed him, his stomach tightened into a hard knot at the mention of the word. He remembered the authorities promising to make everything easy for him. The hotel only three blocks from the prison. They were trying to make it easy alright but damn their souls, they didn't have to be there at midnight.

"No. No food, thank you, I've already eaten," he lied. The boy left. It was time to go to the prison now. Everything had to be properly prepared. He had another job to do there. One he dreaded almost as much as the execution. He wondered if he could go through with either.

Leaving the hotel he walked through the snow, the few blocks to the prison. He showed his pass to the guard at the gate and walked up the long path to the main doors. The guards all looked curiously at him as he passed each check point inside the prison. At last he reached his destination, a long dimly lit corridor, with a single light burning at the end. He remembered his other visits here, and how differently he had felt then, so important -- so different.

As he walked down the long corridor, he was struck again by the overpowering urge to run, to flee from the building and the City. The nervous nausea welled up in him again. He stopped, gathering all his strength. His lips uttered a silent prayer to a God he no longer believed in. The nausea passed.

As he stopped in front of the end cell, the blond boy looked up at him.

"Hello Tommy."

"Hello Dad."

(This is an example of what the literary crowd calls Post-modernism. But you can call it whatever you like. -- Ed.)

DEADBRAINFUCKDESTRUCT

by Steve Erewhonian

NEEDLES STUCK INTO THE LIPS. SAFETY PINS STUCK INTO THE CHEEKS. METAL STUDS ON THE SKULL. DOG BITES ON THE HANDS. SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO FEEL A THING. SHE DOESN'T. SHE HELD SHIT IN HER HAND TO SHOW THEM SHE DIDN'T MIND. AFTER ALL, SHIT IS JUST A CONCEPT. CLOSE-UP ON ROTTEN TEETH WITH BLUE LIPS. REPETITION OF THE PHRASE "A STORY ABOUT MY FACE." SHE PUTS SNOT FROM A DOG ON HER BREASTS ON HER ABDOMEN AND SITS ON THE RADIATOR. SHE IS A PRODUCT OF SEMANTICS IN THE INSANE ASYLUM OF INTELLECT. NEXT THE ACTUAL BURNING OF NAKED ASS FLESH. THINK OF BIG MACS. REPETITION OF THE PHRASE DEADBRAINFUCKDESTRUCT. CONDITIONED REFLEX WORDS COMING OUT OF HER MOUTH. ALTERNATELY SUBORBITAL LABYRINTHECTOMY BY SCALPEL CUT INTO THE INNER EAR HENCE IT IS AN ILLUSION THAT THIS STORY IS NOT AN EXCUSE TO SPEW DEADBRAINGARBAGE INTO THE COLLECTIVE RAT BRAIN. IMAGINE THE SCALPEL GOING INTO THE EAR. WORDS BECOME REALITY. WORDS ARE NOT REALITY. OUR BRAINS ARE SICK. THE WORD SCALPEL PENETRATES THE CEREBELLUM TO A DEPTH OF THREE INCHES. HER INJURY IS NO MORE THAN A REPRESENTATION IN WORDS. IN HER BODILY ORIFICES CAN BE FOUND A BUTTON, A DILDO, A CARROT, A WRISTWATCH, A THIMBLE, AND PART OF A YOGI BERRA BASEBALL CARD. TO EXPLAIN EACH OF THEM WOULD BE TO ANALYZE ITS PLACEMENT IN A SYSTEM OF SIGNS. HENCE BASIC CEREBROLOGICAL REINFORCEMENT. HENCE SINUS HEADACHE. NOW SHE IS CHIEFLY AN ANUS. SELECTIVE INCISIONS. HENCE A DESIGN FOR HEMORRHOIDS. EROTIC PLEASURE IF IT EXISTS AT ALL IS NOW ANAL. HENCE THE TEXT NEGATES THE DENOTATION IT INFLAMES. HENCE SHE IS CAREFREE. REPETITION OF LIST OF OBJECTS SEQUENCE. MODIFICATION: CHANGE YOGI BERRA BASEBALL CARD TO ANAL VIBRATOR. HENCE SHE IS AN AESTHETE, ECSTATIC. REPETITION OF THE PHRASE "THE WORD SCALPEL PENETRATES THE CEREBELLUM ETC." NOW SHE FEELS BETTER. THE LIST OF HER ORIFICES INCLUDES HER VAGINA, ANUS, MOUTH AND EARS. SHE IS CAREFREE. READERS WHO UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE CONSPIRACY IN OPERATION ENJOY THIS STORY. REPETITION OF HER ANUS. SHE IS PASSIVE.

MORE NEEDLES IN HER LIPS. WE ARE EQUALLY BORING BENEATH OUR CLOTHING. THIS STORY IS A TEXT. THIS STORY WILL BECOME PART OF A TEXTBOOK. ITS MEANING ENLARGES AS IT IS REPRINTED. THE PROLIFERATION OF THE EMPTY DISTINCTION GIVES POTENTIAL MEANING TO THE TEXT AND MAKES OUR BRAINS HURT. REPETITION OF A MEMORY OF VOICE SAYING "NEEDLES STUCK INTO THE LIPS. SAFETY PINS STUCK INTO THE CHEEKS ETC." MEMORIZE THE PHRASE "ROMANCE IS DEAD. ALL IS SEMIOLOGY." THE TEXT OF HER SKULL CONTAINS A HOLE MADE BY THE TEXT OF THE SCALPEL. I SMOKE HASH OIL FOR BREAKFAST. I AM CAREFREE. IGNORE ALL PREVIOUS STATEMENTS. ERASE MEMORY. REPETITION OF THE PHRASE "I MET HIM ON A MOONLIT NIGHT BEHIND THE YORKDALE SHOPPING CENTRE." CHARACTER IS NOT THE PROGENITOR OF INCIDENT NOR DOES EVERY TEXT ILLUSTRATE THE CHARACTER. REPETITION OF THE ACTUAL CUTTING INTO THE SKULL WITH SCALPEL. MEMORIZATION OF THE PHRASE "WE ARE FIRE HYDRANTS TO BE PISSED ON BY SEMIOLOGICAL DOGS."

I woke up tied into a chair in the dental clinic of the damned (THE TEXTUAL HYPOTHESIS IS THAT THE LANGUAGE IS A MAP CORRESPONDING TO THE DEAD SEMIOLOGICAL BRAIN) and then the one on the right died screaming (RESPONDING TO THE STIMULI OF WORD SIGNALS IN CONTEXT) i saw the bloody body reflected in the overhead light (WITHIN WHICH CONNOTATION DISSOLVES INTO A RAIN OF WORD PUKE) his tongue sparkling in the fluorescent light (THE I OF SELF IS IN ME AND IN HER AND IN THE IT, LEAVING A SPACE FOR THE WORD TO TAKE PLACE) in the next fourteen days twelve others went the same way (THIS STORY IS BUT A TEXTUAL SYSTEM, THE READER BUT A HIGH-SPEED BRAIN COMPUTER) it was a dental clinic and i was naked (HOWEVER, THE HERMENEUTICAL TRANSFERENCE OF MEANING DOES NOT NECESSARILY COMPRISE THE TEXTUAL STORAGE JAR) the ones who died were infected tooth asphyxiation embolism heart attack and several heads chopped off -- all manner of freak murders (THAT THE TELEOLOGY OF "THIS STORY" DOES NOT DENOTE PER SE BUT APPROACHES THE TRANSMISSION OF BRAINDESTRUCT) i put my hand under her ass she isn't moving they draw the curtain around us my first experience with necrophilia (ACCORDINGLY THE NOWNESS OF SPACE-TIME EXISTS IN A CONVOLUTED DIMENSION) there is an audience i am awake they are farting loudly can anyone walk away alive from this and remain sane (WHICH IS NOT A TEXT BUT EXISTS ONLY IN SEMIOLOGICAL SPACE EVEN THOUGH THE MANIFESTATION IS EFFECTUATED TO SIGNAL THE DEADBRAINMACHINE)

but apart from a bit of gas i feel fine (THAT HENCE THIS PAGE OF WORDS IS A LIE BECAUSE THE MOVEMENT TOWARD SIGNIFICATION OCCURS ON A MAP OF TOPOGRAPHICAL BRAINSPACE) but i have lost my voice the nurse with the big tits comes in and beats me but she smells so nice and clean i like it my mental function is holding together give me gas give me a blow job whip me (THAT THE FUNCTION OF THE WORD IS TO SIGNAL THE BRAIN ACROSS THE SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM) i burst out laughing uncontrollably (SEX IS NOT A LANGUAGE BUT A LITERATURE) shove it up all the way ah (THAT WE SPEAK TO PENETRATE THE LISTENER'S EAR) they take me into the other room where the dogs are fucking the young girls (THAT THE THE IS THE THE OF THE IT) groans and squeals (DEADBRAIN FUCK DESTRUCT WARNING) beating their asses (THE SEMANTICISTS SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH) they're killing them ripping out their teeth but smiling (THE UNPOSED QUESTION HANGS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BRAIN) bring me a quarter-pounder and fries blow me (UNLITERACY) my nose and put her hand there i want a cigarette (THE TEXT BECOMES THE FACT) put lit end in my mouth it hurts i want to shit (OBSERVE PARADIGM HENCE PARALYSIS) i laugh to avoid thinking (FOOTNOTES) to spoon in june (THAT TO EXPLAIN EACH WORD IS TO DISSECT AN EARTHWORM) yet hot breath from her mouth (INSERTION) piss on my face to avoid the truth of your fleeting life passing (GRAMMAR OF SYNTAX) to be or not to be is a compound infinitive (THE INVENTION OF THE SYMBOL BECOMES THE ARTIFACT OF THE DEMENTED) in their words a condom (BIFURCATES) a lubricated lambskin to hold the sperm baby (REPEAT AS NECESSARY) you are not you but a word in my brainspace i get a violent urge (THAT WHAT UNITES MUST ALSO DIVIDE) to masturbate a purely symbolic act (WE ARE THE SAME YET DIFFERENT) hold still there on the sheets so i can stick it in (THAT THE COGNATES STRUCTURALLY OPPOSE THE MEANING) sodomy and the snoring turns to moaning (CROSS-REFERENCE) my hot little butter tart rubbing my face over you what DEATH AND PAIN AND GAS DON'T STOP I REPEAT THE LIE I PISS ON YOUR INSENSIBLE SMILE COME SUCK I PISS YOU LIE THE UNPOSED QUESTION I FUCK YOU IN MY BRAIN YES CLAW MY ASS AGAIN AND AGAIN I REACH FOR THE GRAMMAR BOOK A VIOLENT URGE TO SMASH YOUR FACE WITH A GRAMMAR BOOK BITING YOU LAUGHING A VIOLENT URGE THE GRAMMAR A HUMAN FORM

COCK

CUNT

YOURSELF

ELECTRIC

POTATO

DEADBRAIN FUCK DESTRUCT

"THE MIRROR" YES BUT TO WAKE UP FEELING YOURSELF AFTER THE
WET DREAM "WHERE THERE ARE LIES" (the conspiracy of the dead
brains presupposes the existence of readers who can read)
"WHERE IT IS." AND SO PAINED BY THE DESIRE THAT YOU WRITE
IT IN WORDS ANGER MOVING INTO SYNTAX ACCUSING ME OF BAD USAGE
THE IT OF MY IT CAN'T BE PUT INTO WORDS
REPEAT: SEX DEATH LANGUAGE IN OPERATION A SIGNAL ACROSS
SPACE-TIME*****DEADBRAIN FUCK DESTRUCT.

(Eat your heart out, Harlan Ellison! -- Ed.)

5-4-3-2-1

by T. M. Whale

5-4-3-2-1- I was off in a flash. Even when I volunteered for this job I knew it was dangerous but I still volunteered. This rocket was to carry me into orbit and back. Now I looked out the window all there was where the stars and darkness. Earth was a mere speck know. But down on that gloomy planet I knew I was important. It was 10:00 A.M. and at twelve I was to come down. I wanted to get back but I knew I liked being up here. I couldn't even see the Earth know but I didn't care. It was 12:00 I pulled the switch. NO! NO! NO! It couldn't be jammed! But It was. There I was trapped in space. Now I was in galatic space.

Then there was this glow and was it red. It started me in a spin and then I was on a strange planet. The people had no heads. I tryed to tell them that I was from earth. They didn't believe me they put me in this jail. A week later I knocked out the guard. I was running for the door then I fell falling falling when I landed I was on earth but this was impossible earth was nothing then I knew I was to.

THE END

(You have to be on drugs to really appreciate this one. -- Ed.)

"YOU WOULDN'T DO THIS...DRIVE WITHOUT TIRES?"

by Dr. Leo Corvadupa

Martin Doorway lives in Constant Adoration of the Magi, New York. He works at Carvel and has hallucinations and mental fits as he assembles cones for the Sunday strollers of his busy city. He mops the floor a lot, too. "There's a lot of fucking ice cream all over the floor, asshole," his manager often sez. The body twitches into overdrive. "How do I get the next information folder of amazing facts? Filling out, tearing off, mailing in the summary sheet next, amazing facts information folder will be sent to you at once...and your summary sheets will be returning to you too. That affects you, too, Frederick, yours is next. Don't miss a single one."

Martin Doorway read poetry that year he went to the State University of New York at Constant Adoration of the Magi. In a fit moment of emulation, he composed a verse entitled, "Catharsis in your Underwear." It is his only *Clean up the floor asshole* work of art and was even empty for him then:

Bob could just envision--
envision mr. raymond bauer cruising
his mint condition volare wagon
down the long and painful 25 mile stretch
of Doody Highway
on his way to pick up cat food

it was a heavily mystic vision
because here was mr. bauer now
coming into bob's store
his volare wagon parked out front
just as it was every saturday

Martin twice dipped his scoop into the chocolate can in order to create a double poop scoop--"the consummate entree"--for Mekas Detente, an obese ex-homosexual immigrant cab

driver whose asshole had long ceased to function in any capacity. Martin obsessively held his breath as he bent towards the can of ice cream. He vividly recalled the front page of Constant Adoration of the Magi Today. Beneath a picture of the nun who runs the local hardware store appeared the long and painful caption:

the workmen came in and removed our toilet bowl in order to perform some meaningless repairs (the floor was about to cave in). that night a gentle rain fell outside my window and I tried to understand the violence of the floral arrangements which occupy my thoughts.

She was a candidate in the upcoming mayoral elections. Yes, Martin would vote for her.

But, alas! who could stand this much longer? You, suspicious reader, are beginning to sense that this is indeed the story of Bert Convy, Canadian-born American game show host and multi-faceted entertainer. Right you are, fuck-breath, *I'm up to my ankles in goddamned chocolate ice cream.*

(This story proves that two bad writers collaborating can write a worse story than either one could write alone. You're not going to believe this turkey. -- Ed.)

SHOOT-OUT AT DEAD DOG GULCH

by Juliette Crabbe and Eunice Urge

The town of Dead Dog Gulch was a pretty little town in the year of 1890, a lot prettier than it is now in our era of permissiveness with all the pornography, drugs, and the breakdown of the family. The old West was still new with horses and buffaloes and Indians. There were also snakes and lizards in the desert, which were just a few of the wild dangers people had to watch out for when they went out there to build America.

A lot of things were normal then that we do not have today, such as big puddles of mud that wagons got stuck in, no sidewalks, no flushing toilets, and having a horse tied up in front of your house instead of a car. But the good things were that they worked with their hands and knew how to survive in the wilderness and did not eat junk foods. And they didn't have to buy a park permit to go and enjoy nature. Basically, people were good although maybe a little rough.

The women would dress up in old-style clothes and go shopping; and the men were busy being cowboys and sitting around campfires and riding horses and other things.

Cowboys had their entertainments in those days. They would go to the saloon, have a beer, watch some girl dance and lift her skirts a little, then they would go home. This was before the days of Mafia-controlled sex businesses that corrupted society. They also played poker, and if one player cheated, a gunfight would sometimes result, but this was normal in the Old West because you had to be honest for people to respect you.

Some of the characters in this drama that took place were:

Sheriff "Cool-Hand" Herominski, who had a real square jawbone and masculine attributes, and his bright blue eyes made all the girls want to marry him. But he had to keep single because he didn't want to get married and then get

shot.

Sagebrush Singer, a bit crazy but basically okay.

Solly Varmintski, who spent a lot of time learning folk tunes because he had been told they were not for writing down because they were just folk tunes. He helped preserve them and passed them on to his ancestors.

Moe Greenberg, the banker, who wore thick glasses and sat in his office counting money all day and was an authority on money and power.

Chico Klutz was a Mexican-Spanish fellow who was useful in dealing with the Mexicans who visited because he knew how to understand their language and talked it as good as any.

A few more characters should be mentioned, even though they were rather small and miscellaneous: First, there's Desperate Dan, a rancher raising horses. Then "Pesky" Jim, good old Pesky, he has a crush on Bonnie Belle, with t--s like hers, who wouldn't? There's Burt Erp, Erp's real sick, well we can't all be healthy, can we? And lastly, Whittle-Will, The Whittler, a good for nothing stick-chipper, he's for the birds.

When this story happened, it was a typical hot, dry, western-type day as they often had back in those days of the Old West. People were hot because there was no air conditioning, but it was okay because they were used to it.

The townspeople were amazed and surprised to see someone come riding into town on top of something they had never seen before. It rolled on wheels and was not a horse at all. The handsome gentleman riding on it drove right to the main part of town where everyone was. He tipped his hat in greeting as he stepped down.

"Good day," he said to them all. "Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Henry Ford, and this is my invention, the automobile. The automobile will someday replace the horse, but you can keep riding horses if you want, it's your choice. This is just the start of the Automobile Age, and I will help you adjust to it a little at a time, and you will have to practice to get a license anyway. I have just driven all the way from my home in Detroit, Michigan, which is also known as the Motor City because my men make the motors for the automobile there. I am going around the country looking for new places to set up automobile factories because I want the whole country to enjoy the benefits and stimulate more em-

ployment. This is a very nice little town you have here. I believe it would be a good place for me to build some automobiles."

The Sheriff stepped forward, and everyone was interested in what he would respond as he was their leader and had some education, too. "We might like to have an automobile factory here, Mr. Ford, but we want to make sure it is the right thing for us. We don't want to upset the ecology or cause a too-rapid change of values. We want Dead Dog Gulch to be a nice clean American town."

"I understand your concern," replied Mr. Ford. "I am prepared to install anti-pollution equipment on my machinery so there won't be a big pollution problem. Also, I will build the factory a little bit outside the town to reduce the noise. But most important, I want you to understand the big changes to come in America." He then proceeded to describe the many wonderful things to come, such as buses, electricity, airplanes, movies, TV, dishwashers, new sports, and new foods. "Do you want to be a part of this new, strong America?"

"Yes," they answered as one.

Mr. Ford paused to take a sip from the water fountain, then he went on. "There is one danger we must be wary of, however."

"What danger is that, Mr. Ford?" asked the Sheriff.

"The danger I'm speaking of is the Jews. The essence of the Jewish Idea *in its influence on the labor world* is the same as in all other departments -- the destruction of real values in favor of fictitious values. The Jewish philosophy of money is not to *make* money, but to *get* money. That explains Jews being 'financiers' instead of 'captains of industry.' As soon as a man or a class is inoculated with the strictly Jewish idea of *getting*, the very cement of human society loses its adhesiveness and begins to crumble. All over the United States, Communist colleges are maintained, officered and taught by Jews -- the whole intent being to put all American labor on a *get* basis, which must prove the economic damnation of the country. That is the end sought, as in Russia.

"Colleges are being constantly invaded by the Jewish Idea. The sons of the Anglo-Saxons are being attacked in their very heredity. The sons of the Builders, the Makers,

are being subverted to the philosophy of the destroyers. The central group of Red philosophers in every university is a Jewish group, with often enough a 'Gentile front' in the shape of a deluded professor. *Some of these professors are in the pay of outside Red organizations.*"

"Aren't Jews victims of persecution?" asked Purina Chow, from Rube's Washie & Dry Cleaning on Main Street.

Mr. Ford replied, "There is no religious persecution of the Jews in the United States, unless the agitation of the various humane societies for the abolition of 'kosher killing' may be considered as such -- the method of slaughtering animals for food which is needlessly cruel. The fact is that while there is no religious persecution *of* the Jews, there is very much real religious persecution *by* the Jews. It is the only well-organized, active and successful form of religious prejudice in the country because they have succeeded in pulling off the gigantic trick of making not their own attitude, but *any opposition to it*, bear the stigma of 'prejudice' and 'persecution.'"

"Tell us about Jewish supremacy in the theater," said Miss Fannie Tumble, dancing-girl from The Wild Wet Spittoon Saloon.

"It is not important that theater and music hall managers are now Jews whereas they were formerly Gentiles. The importance begins with the fact that with the change of managers there came also a decline in the art and morals of the stage. The appeal is frankly to a juvenile type of mind which can easily be moulded to the ideas of the Hebraic theatrical monopoly. Frivolity, sensuality, indecency, appalling illiteracy and endless platitude are the marks of the degenerate American Theater under Jewish control. The mark of the filthy tide has risen until it has engulfed the whole theater."

"What about Jewish jazz?" asked "Saddlebag-Lips" Hamstrung.

"Jazz is a Jewish creation," said Mr. Ford. "The mush, slush, the sly suggestion, the abandoned sensuousness of sliding notes, are of Jewish origin. The fluttering music sheets disclose expressions taken directly from the cesspools of modern capitals, to be made the daily slang, the thoughtlessly hummed remarks of school boys and girls. The Jew and the African period, being the entrance of the jungle motif,

the so-called 'Congo' stuff, and other compositions which swiftly degenerated into a rather more bestial type than the beasts themselves arrive at. Song topics became lower and lower until at last they are the dredges of the slimy bottom of the underworld. The people are fed from day to day on the moron suggestiveness that flows in a slimy flood out of 'Tin-Pan-Alley,' the head factory of filth in New York, which is populated by the 'Abies,' the 'Izzies,' and the 'Moes' who make up the composing staffs of the various institutions. There is something Satanic about it, something calculated with demonic shrewdness."

"What other bad things about the Jews can you tell us?" asked Boothill Clay, the local undertaker.

"The maintenance of *the idea of drink* in the minds of the people is due to Jewish propaganda. Widely sold brands of cheap, noxious gin and other liquors, made by and brazenly sold under Jewish names, caused newspaper and police comments upon the peculiar lawlessness among negroes. With reference to the Negro Question, 'nigger gin,' the product of Jewish poisoned liquor factories, was its most provocative element.

"If fans wish to know the trouble with American baseball, they have it in three words -- too much Jew. It is being killed as a sport, and those who value the game as a sport should wish its utter destruction rather than consent that it become the rendezvous for the gang that now fill the Jew-controlled burlesque houses.

"Wrestling is so tightly controlled by Jewish managers that a real wrestler is absolutely barred out. The rottenness of the ancient sport of clean wrestling has surfaced in such disgusting orgies as 'all in' and 'mud' wrestling and, lately, wrestling contests between screaming viragos of the female sex.

"The same is true of horse-racing. The whole atmosphere of the sport is dishonest. The horses remain the only well-bred creatures connected with it."

"It's the hamburger next!" shrieked Matt Paint, jumping into the watering trough.

"What say we drive the Jews out of town!" Pesky Jim hollered.

"Not in my car," retorted Ford.

"Let's hang 'em, let's hang 'em all!" howled Whittle Will the Whittler.

"Wait a minute!" screamed Ford, raising his hand to stop the tide of vengeance. "It's Moe Greenberg I want, you can do what you want with the other hymies, but Greenberg's mine."

"He's over at the bank. You want me to go get him, Mr. Ford?" said Burt Erp.

"No, tell him to meet me tomorrow at noon, at the Silverstein Crossroads. Tell him to wear his piece, 'cause I'm gonna blast his yehudis right out from between his black serge-trouser legs."

"Right away," barked Erp, hurrying off toward the town's business section.

Sheriff Herominski sat in his jail office munching salami sandwiches, the chewed-over morsels of which shot from the corners of his mouth as he addressed each and every wanted poster nailed to the walls of his coop, using mighty strong words and tough mean talk. He was lonesome.

The door opened. "Hi, Sheriff. My friend Matt's got himself in a whole heap of trouble again."

"What is it, Sagebrush?"

"Well, you see, Sheriff, it's like this," said Sagebrush as he sat him down at the Sheriff's desk. "Old Matt Paint went over to see his stepbrother Burt Erp last night and he's been gone since. He done told me before leaving that he figured on staying just a couple of hours, so where the hell is he? I'm worried, Sheriff. Do you think the Indians got him?"

"Hold your horses, Sagebrush," said the Sheriff in a firm but salami-driven voice. "Let me git ma gun and we'll ride out to take a look. Sounds like a job for Cool-Hand Herominski."

"Okay, Sheriff, but just one thing before we go."

"What's that, Sagebrush?"

"You dropped your Kraft Mayo sachet on the floor."

"God damn it," said the Sheriff, stooping down to take a look. As quick as lightning Sagebrush raised his gun and slammed the butt hard against the back of the Sheriff's neck. The Sheriff wobbled on his spurs and fell to the ground with a slump mingled with a sort of loose-change-falling-on-the-barroom-floor sound. Sagebrush grabbed "Cool-Hand" by the armpits and dragged him over to the cells. Taking up the keys, he unlocked an empty cage, then hauled the Sheriff in.

Sagebrush threw the Sheriff's body on a bunk, and leaving the cell, locked the door behind him. "That's where you belong, you dirty gun-toting Jew!" raved Sagebrush, his face the picture of extreme insanity.

Sagebrush chuckled as he gazed into the cell, then, half turning round, whistled the first five bars of "The Man From Laramie," the signal for Matt Paint to make his move. Matt flung open the door to the Sheriff's office and, grabbing Sagebrush by the arm, said in a desperate voice, "Come on, Singer, there's no time to lose." The two men rushed out on the street and disappeared.

Suddenly a cold air draft sighed across the mesa twisting and flattening the tall prairie grasses and rustling the tree tops as a flash of lightning, ribboned, jetsoned across a darkening sky to pewter plate the hills and the thunder struck and rolled to stun the valley and shake the world, squelching itself in defiant growls. Quickly the storm boiled in on Desperate Dan, a moving curtain of rain sheeting across the land and the rain pelted against his face. A moment more and the drenching deluge swept over him, soaking him to the skin. He ran for cover as the fury of the storm broke, snarling and roaring in all its wild and feral savagery.

Meanwhile, Paint and Singer, having sped down Main Street, crashed through the louvered swing doors of The Wild Wet Spittoon Saloon. "We've taken care of that Kosher Sheriff, he won't bother us now!" Paint & Singer screamed concertedly over the gathered throng.

Henry Ford sat at a poker table nursing a gin in a sling. Purina Chow sat astride his knees. Fannie Tumble, a well rounded gal, stood propping up the bar. Hamstrung stood swinging his shoulders and snapping his fingers as old black Coyote Sam sat hammering out a boogie on a beer-stained upright piano. Boothill Clay, dead drunk, lay slumped across a gaming table. Pesky Jim sat in a dark corner, his itchy fingers clamped around Bonnie Belle's cleavage. Whittle Will, "the Whittler," stood shaving down the leg of an old bar stool as Burt Erp lay in an epileptic trance at his feet.

"Well done, boys," muttered Ford, with a 3-cent cigar hanging hinged like a pocket-rule on the side of his face.

"Who's taking care of Klutz and Varmintski?" asked Sagebrush under a cloud of inner fear. Sagebrush knew he was Jewish, but what about Klutz & Varmintski, they could have figured him out. Their freedom was a threat to him.

"Don't worry about them, Singer," howled Fannie. "Annie and Lulu's got 'em upstairs. They can't get away. Their circumcised balconies are tied in a slip knot." A roar of laughter rose from the saloon.

Boothill Clay rose to his feet and stumbled into a seat. "I got two men over there watching him right now," said Clay.

"Watching who?" said Paint.

"Moe Greenberg, ya schmuck. He's climbing up his dining room wall, he's so scared his eyeballs are crawling with goose bumps."

"Just make sure your boys haul his ass over to Silverstein tomorrow noon, you hear, Clay?" ordered Ford.

"He'll be there," muttered Clay.

A scream rang out. Pesky Jim had let his fingers do the walking and Bonnie was having none of it. She tore up the spiral staircase and made for her room, Pesky Jim in hot pursuit, his peter half-packed and punchy. Ramming down the door with his shoulder, Pesky Jim sprang into Bonnie's room. Bonnie cringed with terror as she clutched the patchwork quilt. Pesky Jim snatched scissors from the table and with a dip into the bottom lacings of Bonnie Belle's corset, cut to the top. The lady gasped between her crying oaths. With a twisting jerk of the loosened garment, Jim rolled her over and his protuberant groins breathed but inches from her face. Bonnie screamed in horror. "Disgusting!" Her struggling for cover was in vain. Pesky Jim's big hands clutched Bonnie's ankles and her limbs fanned to a sector, as his heavy body plunged to smothering suppression. With one savage drive the sperm of humanity wriggled its natural course. Repercussive retaliation to the onslaught came with one spontaneous detonation, then a stifling silence created the usual pneumatic awe associated with the moribund of mortals.

The listeners downstairs in the bar-room strained their ears in the hope of catching a replay, but quietness had resumed, followed by Burt Erp snapping out of his trance. It did not take too long for the gist of Burt Erp's perusing to resurge incorrigibility. Burt Erp flinched as the mysterious name of his stepbrother loomed as an impending whirlwind of

disaster. This unknown figure haunted him. The post-epileptic self-control Burt had wished to project was shattered. Whittle Will the Whittler whittled as he watched intently. He saw the muscles of Burt's face tightened over rigid jaw bones and the dark blue streaks forming at the frontal temple areas bulged to bursting tendency. It seemed incredible to Whittle Will that so much epileptic perversiveness, moral instability and unsound functioning could prevail in one person, without a sign of any redeeming characteristics. If the thought occurred to Will that perhaps, with a reciprocating of ideas and feelings, a reformation in Burt's behavior might take place, the notion exploded as a spurted bolide, when a mass of thrust papers hit Will square in the face. "So you thought you got away," threatened Desperate Dan, "leave your old dappled grey out on the mesa, and hitch a ride back to town. Well, Whittler, what you gonna do now?" Will stuttered and cringed under the ugly weight of Desperate Dan's threats.

"Nothing, nothing," said Will sheepishly.

"Nothing huh! Hey fellas, you know what this critter did to me? He's ruined me, that's what."

"But, but..." Will muttered.

Ford and his friends sidled over to where Dan had Will gripped by the throat.

"Listen here, boys!" said Dan. "This here stick-picker snuck over to my place last night and whittled down my barn, corral, bunkhouse and log cabin. Don't believe me, do you, sounds crazy, huh? Just come out to what's left of my place sometime and I'll show ya who's crazy. This here Whittler's ruined me, put me out of business."

"I can't help it, I've tried kicking the habit, but..." A fistful of knuckles slammed across Will's jaw.

"Shut your chicken-shit, pole-picker!" screamed Dan.

"Wait a minute, boys," Ford interjected. "I have a neat and simple solution, one which requires a rope. Boys, tie him up, take him outside, throw him down on the street, and keep him there."

Minutes later a Model T Ford roared down the street, and that was the end of Will the Whittler.

The sun rose high over Dead Dog Gulch. If you were the sun, you too would want to get as far away as possible, espe-

cially on a day like this, a day which doesn't happen to most folks today or any day, for today Henry Ford and Moe Greenberg "face off" at noon at Silverstein Crossroads.

During the night, Moe Greenberg had hung on the parlor wall, an adult jellyfish, his toes and fingernails clamped in place six feet off the floor. Tidal waves of fright surged over him like so many shore-hugging breakers. Moe had signed all his cash and worldly goods over to his wife, Flossie, he knew he was done for, he knew his counting house days were over and Flossie knew it too for she rubbed her palms with invisible soap.

At 11:50 AM, as Henry Ford, packing an Edsel 45, stepped through the swing doors of The Wild Wet Spittoon Saloon, noses appeared at windows, mouths appeared under roller blinds, eyes appeared over drapes, and a cold deadly silence stopped all tumbleweed in its tracks.

Ford walked slowly like a mean wolf, headed for the Silverstein Crossroads. Meanwhile, after repeated attempts on the part of Flossie to get Moe off the wall, she had a brain-wave, a hot water wallpaper steamer, and, yep, it did the trick. Down came Moe looking more like a large sack of damp cotton than a human being. "Here, take this," said Flossie, handing Moe a ten-year-old Kosher sausage, an heirloom that smelt like all hell had farted. "Throw it in his face, it's deadly, no man can survive its aroma head-on." Moe strapped on his wife's gunbelt and holstered the sausage. "Remember," continued Flossie, "draw it fast and aim your throw at his mush." Moe whimpered a word of compliance, then made his way to the crossroads, his legs so loose he looked like a midget on a first pair of stilts. Flossie blew a kiss while pleasing sounds of cash register action rang through her brain.

Ford was the first to appear at the crossroads. He maneuvered himself cautiously in an attempt to avoid the blinding sun from getting in his eyes. "Come out where I can see ya, Hymie!" howled Ford, looking every which way for his adversary. Moe came into view, a shaking target. "How do you expect me to kill ya if you keep shaking like an aspen tree?" questioned Ford.

"Sorry, Mr. Ford," said Moe in a mouth-washy voice.

"Look, you Hymie, if you keep trembling like that I'll have to shoot myself to make it look like a fair fight."

"I'm terribly sorry," said Moe, "I can't help myself."

SHOOT-OUT AT DEAD DOG GULCH

All of a sudden Moe was struck with such a bone-shaking fit his hair fell out. Ford drew his gun in a flash and shot himself. A silver-plated Edsel-shaped bullet pierced his heart. Ford slumped to the ground stone dead. Moe cautiously walked to where Ford lay in a lake of blood and quickly drawing his Kosher sausage, flung it down on Ford's face.

To Moe's surprise, Ford came round, moaned, squinted, rubbed his eyes, then made an effort to get to his feet. Moe staggered back, his mouth a refuge for ten swarms of horse-flies. Suddenly a shot rang out. Ford had been killed for sure this time, but by whom? The Sheriff, of course! You're not going to believe that Herominski, after coming round in his cell, didn't call for help, and after a couple hours didn't get that help, didn't plan the killing the way he did, didn't creep up all sneaky-like behind Ford and squeeze off a well aimed slug in line with the back of Ford's neck? Well, what else do good, law abiding Sheriffs do but kill mean men when they figure the personal financial rewards for keeping a bad man alive are far less lucrative than to lay the guy out with a sneaky bullet.

However, the Sheriff didn't live long after the gunfight. His salami sandwiches had given him a serious bout of food poisoning. Moe Greenberg skipped town with his wife to avoid the scorn of townsfolk. Solly and Chico became homosexuals and moved to San Francisco. Purina Chow married a German shepherd dog breeder and went to live in Brooklyn. Fannie Tumble took over The Wild Wet Spittoon Saloon and later made a bundle out of slot machines. "Saddlebag-Lips" Hamstrung sang at night clubs all over the West and later joined the Mafia. Boothill Clay opened a crematorium in an old cattle slaughterhouse. Bonnie Belle made blue movies, Desperate Dan bought a brick mansion in Virginia, and good old Sagebrush Singer took over the entire town.

Yep, you won't find Dead Dog Gulch on the map today, but you will find Singerville. They have a monument right down at Union Square -- a solid brass Model T Ford atop a pillar of grey marble. You can see Will the Whittler, too, flattened out under the front wheels like a red carpet.

And in case you're wondering what happened to Burt Erp, forget it. One wrong word would be the spark to ignite this already inflamed illiteracy.

(Here's a story in which about forty characters are crammed into one long paragraph, and nothing happens. Remarkable. -- Ed.)

RETURN OF THE SLIME THING

by Bulwer Zetford

We were living in the slum area of a small city in eastern New Jersey. JoAnna was in her corner flipping through records, Billy was cleaning out the bird's cage, Roberta was trying to alter the converter on the cable so we could pick up the Disney Channel. It was about nine in the evening. The others lounged about on the floor, the sofa, the kitchen table. I was pouring myself a cup of decaf. A typical evening. Nothing to make us worried. No cause for premonitions, alarums, sleepless nights. True, I had not been sleeping well lately. Head lice made my head itch, but they were invisible head lice, I never found anything, would only scratch at my scalp for hours and come up with nothing. Psychosomatic, Jean said, but I didn't believe him. Mother Gokarmo took it for a sign that I would lose my wife, but I had already lost her to a Canadian dope dealer, and besides, Mother G. took everything for a sign. I wanted to devote my time to the existence of real things, and had been trying to do so for some time when Sylvia reminded me that the existence and non-existence of conditions of being constituted reality. I took my coffee into the living room and watched Lydia read Strindberg. Lydia always read Strindberg, it was the one thing in the house I could be sure of. When Lydia stops reading Strindberg, I thought, that will be a sign. Of what I didn't know. "The poles of light and darkness are made to rotate," Nicolas said, but Shelia ignored him. She kissed my hand, the one not holding the coffee cup. On the stereo -- Phillip Glass. On the tv -- wavering images of huge waves swallowing Little Toot. That was the setting. Marsha prepared Indian goulash in the kitchen. Joanie was crying in the back room because of something Albert had said. Horuka sat at his desk carving his block prints. I thought: Nikola Tesla the famous inventor believed in spiritualism, and so did the great novelist Maurus Tokai, and countless

others, yet I have still to see my first ghost. A vast ladder stretches to the sky and on this ladder are the firemen of spiritualism descended from the blazing circles of exteriorated protoplasm. Somewhere I had read that this was the case. I looked into my coffee cup but saw there only the reflection of my nose on the reflective brown surface. I dug into my thoughts for a new thought. Nothing. Sylvia licked my ear in passing. This was New Jersey. We had been here for eighteen months, a long time waiting for something to come to term. The cockatoo slept on its perch above the picture window. The curtains were closed but on them we had painted a village with green donkeys walking down the road followed by red swirls, a ghost, a fire engine, various objects from our childhoods, and a set of barbells with wings. Father Ratna reminded us again of why we had landed here -- to escape our sins -- but the journey had been such a long one (I had lost both of my mothers and forgotten several others) that I no longer could remember what my sins were. Ones of omission, remission, late payments? A helicopter buzzed us, then buzzed away. Maybe it wasn't even a helicopter. No one opened the curtains, Marcia opened the can of tomato paste, Julio opened the door. "I used to be a revolutionary," he said. "That is to say I used to believe certain things and then figure out what I should do because I believed these things and what I should do if I wanted everyone else to believe these things that I believed, then I would go out and do those things that I thought needed to be done if others were to believe the things I believed needed to be done were to be done. Now I don't believe the same things that I believed then." We thanked Julio for speaking to us for the first time and asked him to help Lorraine with the converter. Little Toot still hadn't come back up. Poor Little Toot, I thought, then I thought, Fuck Little Toot, then I felt guilty about thinking that. Return to your rooms and bandage Uucht. The night sky of New Jersey is not really how the night sky looks except in New Jersey. I was supposed to have finished my semiotic/entropic analysis of "Forbidden World" two months ago. We were also behind on our rent payments. As soon as Aileene plugged the phone back in it rang. "Hello," she said. "No," she said. "Thank you," she said, and hung up. Aileene refused to tell us what it was about. Fuck you, Aileene, we all thought. Is there a

time limit on this? Of course. We had been travelling too long, I couldn't tell the difference between an ectoplasm and a teleplasm. I must confess I was unusually tense which seems natural enough considering the situation, but what was our situation exactly? What was unusual in any of this? I couldn't think of a thing. The cockatoo fell from its perch with a thud. The thud set up on the lion's throne invoking the Bodhisattvas for assistance. And in the seance room? A copy of the *London Times*. Of course, even though the latter had never felt the hand of a medium, the blinding rays solidified, the bottle was recorked. Samber spread the cards across the table top and then waited as if for a guide to bring him a bank note. I myself had seen edelweiss, the pretty white flower that grows in almost inaccessible crags of the Alps, pop up when I least expected it. But not in New Jersey! "I was trying to remember where this had begun," remarked the Baron. Eva took his remaining hand in hers and tried to lead him to the bedroom, but Schrench-Notzny persisted in his experiments on the Davenport Brothers of Buffalo, New York, and even we at that point had to dismiss him. Our group clung like marmosets to what little integrity it had left. I felt there was more to come than what any of us could have possibly in our wildest dreams ever even begun to formulate in our nascent imaginations. That being beside the point, since my coffee cup had long been dredged for whatever remained at its bottom, and Carminelina was atrophying at my feet. Like a rose, I thought, like a beautiful rose I once plucked and watched turn to muck in the cup of water I placed it in. When I flipped through Wittgenstein and came across, in his *Tractatus*, such statements as *The sum total of reality is the world*, and, *Objects contain the possibility of all situations*, how was I to feel -- confused? Comforted? So this is the morass my forgotten study had led me to. *Here was the mutant created by man's infinite stupidity in an unholy alliance of a human gene with a Proto-B chromosome*. At which point my study had stopped, I had slammed into a dead end that no semiotician could lead me away from with the serenity of candles and crucifixes. Still another rather amazing apport was reported some years ago in Paris when a plant grew from a flower pot in plain sight of the participants. Yes, in a manner of speaking L.W. was right in saying that objects are colourless, but only in a manner of speak-

ing. None of us knew, not Wilhemina (least of all her!) or Alfred or Tom or Marmaduke or Richet or Linda or Susan or JoAnn or Tamara or Raymond or Dale -- none of us had the slightest idea what colourlessness was in actuality. "We are coming," Abe Shalom shouted but the old wheeze still never moved from his chair. In some instances pebbles, toads, shells and other objects have simply fallen from the ceiling though said objects were nowhere to be found within a radius of four miles from the house. I decided to go along with the joke and crawled closer to the boulder. Better that than let the self-predominating archetype appear in its usual state of unredeemedness which can only end in the words *consummatum est*. A path cut across the top slope and led into a chasm, then out of the by-way backwards onto the slope where I could give a cursory glance to my surroundings before descending again to the east New Jersey slum where we were at the moment dwelling. I heard a suppressed, provocative laugh, but a man like me does not allow himself to be led by the nose by a girl who is still to see the sunny side of sixteen, or so I liked to believe. I felt I knew the spot I had to find, but I couldn't find it. No one else could find it either. I elicited the aid of the others, of Billy and Trudy and Disney and Nicole and Aloysius and Little Toot and Erich and Robert and Renata and Susan and Horatio and Donald and Richard and Susan again but this time a different Susan and even Michael and JoAnna and Jane and Michelle and Zigzag and Ludwig and all the others, but they couldn't find it either. Where was it? We searched on our knees, Padma read to us from the *Bardos*. I looked at how dirty my nails were getting. Then Lydia set down her Strindberg. "What's that?" she asked. "What?" "That!" she screamed, pointing to the dark slimy thing with eyes that oozed up through the floor. "That's the slime thing," I said. "Oh," she said, relieved, as the slime thing descended through the floor with a slurp, thinking: I'll surprise them yet, those morpion rats, those idiot savants, those little fuckers!

(Here's a nice, simple story without any pretense of intellectuality or even intelligence. -- Ed.)

COFFIN

by Wanda Ann Clouter

There was a gossip that coffin was to high in values to pay and after the funeral the owner would dump the dead person in the grave and resell the coffin.

Mr. Brown own a funeral home and his brother-in-law was suppose to be dead. The day before the funeral Mr. Brown sent Mr. Young (his brother-in-law) body to Washington funeral home, and at the same time sent a man from the Brown's funeral home to work there. The day of the funeral they took Mr. Young to the grave and ask the family to leave. Mr. Washington let Mr. Young body up and dump him out into the grave, then Mr. Young stood up in the grave and said "don't run, but I am alive," and took Mr. Washington and another man picture with the coffin in there hand, they drop the coffin, jump into the grave to take the flim but was unable to, by that time the private detective was there and the Washington manager tryed to pay the private detective off and also tryed to pay Mr. Young off for the flim. Mr. Young said he had to thing about it. Mr. Brown found out about Mr. Washington trying to pay off Mr. Young for the flim, so everytime Mr. Washington would set his price Mr. Brown would go up a hundred dollars more because the private detective told Mr. Brown that he wood get his money back.

Mr. Washington then tryed to kill Mr. Young because everyone was thinking that he was dead, but he didn't success at that. Mr. Washington had Mr. Brown and Mr. Young follow not noing he was follow. Mr. Brown went to Mr. Young and talked to him about the charges and tryed to get Mr. Young to just give him the flims because if he sold them to Mr. Washington that he could get in trouble.

Mr. Young began to wounder about Mr. Brown may turn him in to the police if he sell him the flim and Mr. Washington was trying to kill him so then Mr. Young though the best thing for him to do was to destraw the flim, but the flim was gone, and Mr. Young didn't no where. He asked Mr. Brown did

COFFIN

he have the flim Mr. Brown told him no maybe Mr. Washington had them. Mr. Brown went on to tell Mr. Young about what if he had really been dead and who knew maybe dead people have feeling and there you would be in that cold and wet mud. it got next to Mr. Young, he said I will go to court but I don't have the flim, Mr. Washington have the flim. Mr. Brown said we have a eye witness, the detective and you can still go to court, but what Mr. Brown and his lawer had in mind that Mr. Washington may feel that the detective had a flim and try to kill him. Mr. Washington did try to buy the flim and the detective had them on tape. Later they went to court. Mr. Washington said they new Mr. Young was alive and they just went along with the game to see what they was up to but he couldn't put a live person in the grave and leave them. Mr. Brown lawer ask them if did they give the Young family there money back from the funeral, he said no he had to pay his men for working. A week later Mr. Young die the family gave the body to the Washington funeral home. Mr. Washington said make sure he is dead this time. They had the funeral and Mr. Young wife had Mr. Brown lawer to get a letter from court and have her husband dug up because she found out he was shot to. Then Mr. Brown and his lawer had to try to find out who gave him the shot, they was unable to get any one to say in court that Mr. Washington was with him (Mr. Young) the day he die. Mr. Washington then knew it was Mr. Brown trying to close his funeral home door. Mr. Washington said he knew he was doing wrong and beleave Mr. Brown was to.

The last funeral Mr. Brown had was Mr. J. Jones and Mr. Washington went to the Jones family and the family was very poor and Mr. Washington said to one of his men I beleave I can buy them. Mr. Washington ask the Jones did they would like to have some money from there son death, they said yes. Mr. Washington told them there son coffin was stal and they could suiet Mr. Brown for stealing the coffin and he wood pay them to do so because that was bad the way Mr. Brown did the family. Mr. Washington told the Jones family all they had to do was to go to court and say that you no your son didn't kill his self and you have proof. Mr. & Mrs. said no our son did kill his self, Mr. Washington said this is in order for you to see that your son is not in his coffin. Mr. Washington went and stal the coffin and took it back to Mr. Brown without Mr. Brown noing what was going on. When the polices

went there to Mr. Brown and told him that J. Jones was not in a coffin, and looked through Mr. Brown funeral home they found the coffin. Mr. Brown found out what happen, that Mr. Washington stoal the coffin, they went to court and Mr. Washington doors was close to his funeral home.

(This woman is talented enough to be writing children's programs for CTV. -- Ed.)

THE MOOSE AND THE BEAVER

by Mamie Tubbs

Once there was a Moose that live in a shoe. And a Beaver that live on a boat. The moose had so many kids she didn't no what to do. The Beaver had less kids than the Moose but enough that they have to sleep in some tubs. The Moose and the Beaver didnot get along to good.

They where always talking about who kids look the best and who stay the cleanest. Oneday the Moose and Beaver was talking and the Beaver said a few words and the Moose said a few words before you knew it they were fighting. The Beaver ran away from the Moose and told her that her kids would not be aloud to play with her kids and the Moose said the same thing.

The kids of the Moose and the Beaver was very sad, because no one live around where they live that had kids and they had no one to play with but each other.

But oneday the Moose came running out of her house crying my babies are gone. And at the same time the Beaver did to. They ran strait into each others arms crying. Than as they turn around their up the road came their children singing happy together. The Moose and Beaver look at each other and smile. And said at the same time I'll sorry and they never fought again.

(My "pre-market testing" of this story revealed that a) if read aloud in a serious tone, you could use it to get certain types of girls into bed, b) people at parties liked it, provided they were drunk enough, and c) it would get no worse than a B in any creative writing class at York or O.C.A. -- Ed.)

THE VACUUM CLEANER SALESMAN'S WIFE

by Orrie Hitt

When no one will buy his vacuum cleaners, he lies under the bed, observing the clots of dust, hoping to be whipped like a bad dog. Sometimes he whimpers. His wife is not one to push him out the door on his daily rounds, but she is not above denying him his nightly ration. She wants to know how the sales are progressing.

"Do you want to lay your head upon my bare legs?" she asks. She says this when he is not writing his novel, when he is not polishing the smooth metal nozzles of the vacuum cleaner attachments and plunging the male ends into the female ends, as if to practice new combinations for their marriage. The hoses and brushes often manifest themselves in his prose. His sales pitches make frequent mention of sweetness and strength, of the deep suction of the canister's mouth, of the secret filth of domesticity within the bag: obliquities he practices on his wife and then uses to confound and disturb the many housewives for whom he demonstrates the capabilities of his powerful instruments. In his sleep he speaks of his attachments and accessories and finds unthought-of uses for them.

"Where do you get your ideas?" she asks his sleeping body after midnight.

"In you," his subconscious replies, "in the lion's carcass, in the primeval tangles of my blood-red hair."

"Then why not prove them between my thighs?"

He sinks deeper and deeper into sleep. He loses track of all the nights he has spent with his head between her thighs, not writing, his mind preoccupied with hoses, bags, nozzles, brushes, and the suction of all that is evil and corrupt. He thinks of the first Neanderthal mouth that

sucked in the Stone Age. And when she probes him again, gets him to talk in his sleep, this is what he tells her: "Upholstery attachment," he says, "you were always the secret. Housekeeper," he says, "you have always been and will continue to be my favorite subject."

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ILYOT PRABANG was born in Telukbajur, Indonesia, in 1940 and was educated at the Boys' Technical University in Jakarta. He came to Canada in 1965. He lives in Montreal with his wife, Marlana, and works as a private teacher of the violin, viola, and zither.

YOLANDA EARTH-QUEEN NASWACA is 27 and lives on a commune near Bracebridge, Ont. In addition to doing her share of the domestic chores, she works part-time in a health food store and sells her own water color paintings. She is the author of *The Yeast Cookbook*, published by Tree Frog Press.

W. BEACON SELLAR is 40 years old, drives a truck, and lives with his wife and daughter in Vulcan, Alberta. He has written four novels and dozens of short stories, but this is his first appearance in print. He describes himself as a devout Mormon and attributes his writing talent to divine inspiration. His hobbies are "religion, social reform, and observing ants."

STEVE EREWHONIAN recently completed his Master's degree in semiology at York University and now works as a cashier in Mister Donut. His first novel, *Naked Beneath Her Dress*, was published by The Newt Press (Taos, New Mexico). The story in this collection is part of a 2,000 page novel in progress.

T. M. WHALE studied "creative writing" at the Univ. of Iowa and the Univ. of California (Berkeley) under the tutelages of John Irving and Leonard Michaels. He lives in Toronto and works as a bouncer in a topless bar. He is 39. He calls his story a "novel in miniature."

DR. LEO CORVADUPA tells us very little about himself except that he is 71 years old and divides his time between Montreal, where he lives, and Plattsburg, New York, where he operates a mail-order business called Climax Sales.

JULIETTE CRABBE and EUNICE URGE are appearing here under pen names. Their parents refused to allow them to use their real names. The authors attend the prestigious Elmwood School For Girls in Ottawa. Juliette enjoys winter sports and reading about the Old West. She would like to become an exotic

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

dancer and write novels on the side. Eunice collects books about Adolf Hitler but enjoys Harlequin Romances just as well. She would like to be the speech writer or private secretary of a Prime Minister.

BULWER ZETFORD lives in Montreal. He prefers to say nothing about himself, but he wrote to us from a mental institution.

WANDA ANN CLOUTER is 29 and works in a motel in Gander, Nfld. She began writing stories to kill time while manning the desk at night. She enjoys watching religious programs and game shows on TV and listening to country & western music. Her husband, Garth, is unemployed. They have two retarded children.

MAMIE TUBBS's story was almost rejected by mistake. We thought it was a juvenile story and told her we were only accepting adult stories. She insisted it *was* an adult story and that it was intended to teach Canadians an important lesson about racial harmony in terms they could understand. Mrs. Tubbs is 84. She lives in Niagara Falls, Ont., and has been writing ever since her brain operation in 1978.

ORRIE HITT is 20 years old and lives with his parents in Vancouver. He describes himself as a full-time writer and poet and intends to be Canada's first Nobel Prize winner in literature. His favorite authors are Alain Robbe-Grillet, Anaïs Nin, and the Marquis de Sade.

DREADFUL ROTTEN INCOMPETENT OBNOXIOUS DUMB
OFFENSIVE IDIOTIC CLUMSY EMBARRASSING SICK
HOPELESS MORONIC ABSURD HORRIBLE NAUSEATING
HILARIOUS!

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