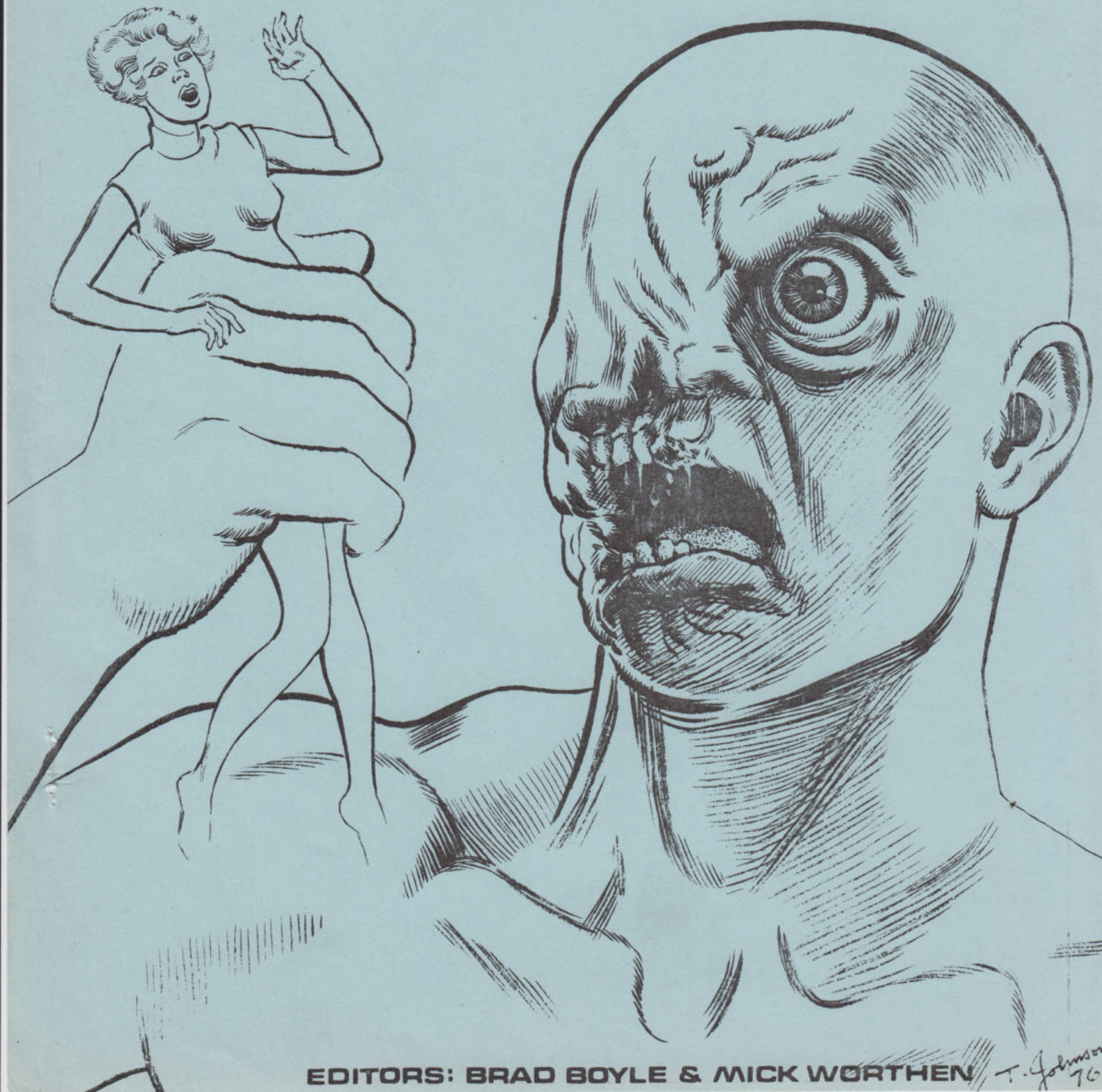


# INTERCON

## PROGRAM



EDITORS: BRAD BOYLE & MICK WORTHEN

T. Johnson  
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## CONQUEST OF THE POLES

(A la Conquete du Pole)

1912. French, Star Films. Silent, 650 feet (25 minutes).  
Producer: George Melies. Director: George Melies. Cast: George Melies.

A silent classic, made by George Melies (who also made A Trip to the Moon among other films- for more on him, see A Trip to the Moon) It concerns an early voyage to the pole. Upon reaching their destination, the explorers meet a snow giant. A very rare film.

"Melies as Engineer Mobouloff flying his Aerobus to battle the giant of the snows, an ogre articulated to the eyeballs and operated by a score of stagehands."-A Pictorial History of Horror Movies by Denis Gifford.

"His (Melies) last and best known film"-Budget Films.

## DESTINATION MOON

1950. Eagle Lion films. Color, animation sequences. 91 minutes.  
Producer: George Pal. Director: Irving Pichel. Screenplay: Rip Van Ronkel, Robert A. Heinlein & James O'Hanlon. Art Director: Ernst Fegte. Astronomical Art: Chesley Bonestell. Animation: Walter Lantz. Cinematography: Lionel Lindon. Editing: Duke Goldstone. Music: Leith Stevens. Cast: John Archer, Warner Anderson, Tom Powers, Dick Wesson, Erin O'Brien-Moore.

Scripted in part by noted science fiction author Robert Heinlein, this is one of the best "serious" science fiction films of the fifties. Great optical effects, it concerns the first "trip to the moon". One of Pal's best films.

"Destination Moon is the superior 50's space exploration film, & attempted, by 1950 standards at least, to present an accurate visualization of what the first flight to the moon would be like. While not altogether scientifically prophetic, producer George Pal & director Irving Pichel should receive credit for a good sf adventure story."-John R. Duvoli, Gore Creatures #24

## DEVIL BAT

(Killer Bats)

1940(1941). PRC pictures. 69 minutes, black and white. Exec Producer: Sigmund Neufeld. Producer: Jack Gallagher. Director: Jean Yarbrough. Story: George Bricker. Screenplay: John Thomas Neville. Art Director: Paul Palmentola. Cinematography: Arthur Martinelli. Editor: Holbrook N. Todd. Music: David Chudnow. Cast: Bela Lugosi, Suzanne Kaaren, David O'Brien, Hal Price, Guy Usher, Donald Kerr.

Acclaimed as one of the worst horror films made of all time. Made by PRC films, which are known for their bad movies, it stars Bela Lugosi in his worst film. (Next, of course, to Bride of the Monster.)

"One of his (Lugosi) worst films is Devil Bat, a PRC production."-Mike Dobbs, CineMonsters #2.

"Monstrous blood sucking bats hurl across the night sky, trained



## DEVIL BAT (continued)

by a mad genius to perform his mission of vengeance. Shrieks of horror fill the soundtrack as the creatures perform the reflex they have been taught-- to kill at the smell of perfume."- Film Program, Salt Lake City Library.

## THE FLY

1958. Fox, color, scope. 94 minutes. Producer and Director: Kurt Neumann. Screenplay: James Clavell. Art Directors: Lyle Wheeler and Theobald Holsopple. Make-up: Ben Nye. Cinematography: Karl Struss. Special Effects: L.B. Abbott. Editing: Merrill G. White. Music: Paul Sawtell. Cast: Al (David) Hedison, Patricia Owens, Vincent Price, Herbert Marshall, Kathleen Freeman, Charles Herbert, Betty Lou Gerson. Based on the story by George Langelaan.

This science fiction classic is about a man who has discovered how to transmit matter. But all goes wrong when he tries the experiment on himself. A fly, unnoticed by our scientist, gets into the transmitting device just as the scientist transmits himself across the room. The result is horrifying: A human body with a fly's head and arm, and a fly's body with a human head and arm.

"...this is a quiet, uncluttered and even unpretentious picture, building up an almost unbreakable tension by simple suggestion."- New York Times.

## FORBIDDEN PLANET

MGM, 1956. Color, 98 minutes. Producer: Nicholas Nayfack. Director: Fred McCloud Wilcox. Cinematography: George Folsey. Screenplay: Cyril Hume, based on a story by Irving Block and Allen Adler. Editing: Ferris Webster. Art Directors: Cedric Gibbons & Arthur Lonergan. Electronic tonalities: Louis/Bebe Barron. Recording supervisor: Dr. Wesley Miller. Special Effects: Arnold Gillespie, Warren Newcombe, Joshua Meador, and Irving Reis. Animation: Walt Disney Studios. Anne Francis' costumes: Helen Rose. Men's costumes: Walter Plunkett. Cast: Walter Pidgeon (Dr. Morbius), Anne Francis (Altaira), Leslie Nielsen (Commander Adams), Warren Stevens (Doc Ostrow), Jack Kelly (Lt. Farman), Richard Anderson (chief Quinn), Earl Holliman (Cook), George Wallace (Bosun), and Robby the Robot.

Not much can be said about this film that hasn't been said already. An interesting fact though, is the rumor that Star Trek was modeled after Forbidden Planet. Note the characterizations, set design, etc. (For more on the similarities between the two, see Movie Monsters #3.)

## GIGANTIS, THE FIRE MONSTER

(Gojira no Gyakushyu: Godzilla's Counterattack: Godzilla n Gyakushyu: Counter-Attack of the Monster: Godzilla Raids Again: The Volcano Monster.)



## GIGANTIS, THE FIRE MONSTER (continued)

1955. Released in 1959 by Warner Brothers. 82 minutes (78 in American version) produced by Toho. Producer: Tomoyuki Tanaka. Director: Motoyoshi Odo. Story: Shigeru Kayama. Screenplay: Takeo Murata & Sigeaki Hidaka. Art Director: Takeo Kita. Cinematography: Seiichi Endo. Special Effects: Eiji Tsuburaya, Akira Watanabe, Hirshi Mukoyama & Masao Shiota. Music: Masaru Sato. Cast: Yukio Kasana, Hirohi Koizumi, Setsuko Wakayama, Takashi Shimura, Mayuri Mokusho, Minuro Chiaki, Sonosake Sawamura, Masao Chimizu, Takeo Cikawa, Ninosuki Yamada. Gigantis played by Haruo Nakajima.

The first Japanese "monster vs. monster" movie. OK special effects highlight this film. Japanese monster fans: don't miss it, but if you are not into Jap monster movies, bring a pillow. "Gigantis followed Godzilla with continued high production qualities. And despite the monster vs. monster theme, the character development of the human actors was a major part of the scenario. In fact, one of the heroes of the film lost his life when the final attempt to destroy Gigantis was made. It all helped the film overcome its "monster meets monster" status."- Greg Shoemaker, CineFan #1

## INVADERS FROM MARS

1953. 20th Century Fox, color, 78 minutes. Most original prints reduced to black and white for some unknown reason. Producer: Edward Alperson. Director and design: William Cameron Menzies. Screenplay: Richard Blake. Art Director: Boris Leven. Makeup: Gene Hibbs & Anatole Robbins. Cinematography: John Seitz. Special Effects: Jack Cosgrove. Editing: Arthur Roberts. Music: Raoul Kraushaar. Cast: Helena Carter, Arthur Frantz, Jimmy Hunt, Leif Erickson, Hillary Brooke, Max Wagner, Morris Ankrum, Janine Ferreau, Milbern Stone.

An unsung science fiction movie, although not in the same class as Forbidden Planet or The Day the Earth Stood Still, it still holds its own. This is the color version, which is a rare treat.

"Invaders from Mars goes beyond the kiddie matinee sf film fare this seems to be aimed at, giving some incredible hypothesis of a child's dream fantasies. The film was originally shot in color, having been since dubbed to a black and white print...The film may come across with a schloky appearance (ie., noticeable zippers on the backs on the Martians outfits), but everything seems to have been intended by director Menzies to simulate the "realness" that often accompanies a nightmare."-Film Con 3 program book





## LAST MAN ON EARTH

(Vento di Monte: Wind of Death: The Night Creatures)

1963. Released 1964 by AIP. Produced by La Regina/Alta Vista. 86 minutes. Producer: Robert Liopert. Director: Sidney Salkow & Ubaldo Ragona. Screenplay: Logen Swanson & William P. Leicester. Air Director: Giorgio Giovannini. Makeup: Piero Mecacci. Cinematography: Franco Delli Colli. Editing: Gene Ruggiero. Music: Paul Sawtell & Bert Shefter. Cast: Vincent Price, Franca Bettoia, Emma Danieli, Giacomo Rossi Stuart, Umberto Rau.

A wind-borne plague turns everyone on the face of the Earth into vampires except for one man (Vincent Price). Based on Richard Matheson's novel, I am Legend, (which was also filmed again as the Omega Man with Charlton Heston) it is a fine adaptation. Much of the photography of Night of the Living Dead appears to be interchangeable with this film, because of the black and white photography, the lighting, and an almost identical plot.

"A scientist finds himself to be the sole survivor of some strange plague which has devastated the world. As a result of the strange plague, zombie-like creatures having the characteristics of vampires, forage in the night seeking his death. This chilling story tells how the last surviving man stalks the streets by day searching for the creatures to render them harmless by driving stakes through their hearts."-United Films

## THE LOST WORLD

1925. FE silent, 50 minutes (9700 feet). Producer: Earl Hudson & Watterson R. Rothacker. Director: Harry O. Hoyt. Scenario: Marion Fairfax. Chief Technician: Fred W. Jackman. Research & Special Effects: Willis O'Brien. Architecture: Milton Menasco. Animation models built by Marcel Delgado. Cinematography: Arthur Edeson. Editing: George McGuire. Cast: Wallace Beery, Lewis Stone, Bessie Love, Lloyd Hughes, Arthur Hoyt, Bull Montana (apeman).

The original 1925 classic. A scientific expedition finds a lost world inhabited by prehistoric monsters. A brontosaurus is captured and taken to London where it escapes. The monsters in this film were animated by the late Willis O'Brien, who later went on to do King Kong and Son of Kong, among other films. He is usually known as the father of animation. The models were built by Marcel Delgado, who also built the King Kong models.

"The star of the most sensational American silent film of them all was less than human, less even than animal. It was a toy, a thing of rubbery stuff moulded around a jointed wire skeleton, all of 12 inches high. But when shown on the cinema screen, it became a monstrous brontosaurus that made Tower Bridge come falling down."- Denis Gifford, A Pictorial History of Horror Movies.

## MARS ATTACKS THE WORLD

Feature version of Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars, a 15 part serial.

1938. Universal. Associate Producer: Barney Sarecky. Director: Ford Beebe & Robert F. Hill. Screenplay: Ray Trampe, Norman S. Hall,



## MARS ATTACKS THE WORLD (continued)

Wyndham Gittens & Herbert Dolmas. Art Director: Ralph DeLacy. Cinematography: Jerome Ash. Editing: Saul Goodking. Cast: Buster Crabbe, Jean Rogers, Frank Shannon, Charles Middleton, Beatrice Roberts, C. Montague Shaw, Wheeler Oakman, Kane Richmond, Kenneth Duncan, Eddie Parker. Based on the cartoon strip by Alex Raymond.

Emperor Ming teams up with Queen Azura of Mars to destroy the Earth with their deadly ray that takes the Nitrogen out of the atmosphere. To fight them, Flash teams up with Prince Baron and Dr. Zarkov. With the help of the Clay people, they prove once again good wins over evil every time.

"Ray gun battles, rocket ships and the Clay People are among the excitement."-Budget Films

## METROPOLIS

1926, silent, 139 minutes. Made by UFA. Producer: Erich Pommer. Director: Fritz Lang. Cinematography: Karl Freund/Gunther Rittau. Screenplay: Thea Von Harbou, based on the novel by Von Harbou. Art Director: Otto Hunte/Erich Kettelhut/Karl Vollbrecht. Sculpture: Walter Schultze-Mittendorf. Costumes: Aenne Wilnomm. Cast: Alfred Abel (Joh Frederson), Gustav Frolich (Freder), Brigitte Helm (Maria), Rudolf Klein-Rogge (Rotwang), Fritz Rasp (Slim), Theodor Loos (Josaphat), Erwin Biswanger (# 11811), Heinrich George (Foreman), Olaf Storm (Jan).

The original epic science fiction classic, directed by Fritz Lang. The cast included 1500 supporting actors and 36,000 crowd players. The film deals with the future, when men are the slaves of giant machines and leaders. A robot built to replace the workers rebels and causes the workers to revolt.

"Metropolis, a still staggering story of a machine city operated by subjugated workers for John Masterman and his idle upper class, took 310 days to film and 60 nights." Science Fiction Film, Denis Gifford  
"A horror tale of the future. Metropolis was also the last gasp of expressionism in Lang's work."-An Illustrated History of the Horror Film by Carlos Clarens.

## MONSTER FROM THE OCEAN FLOOR

(It Stalked the Ocean Floor: Monster Maker)

1954. Lippert Pictures, 64 minutes. Producer: Roger Corman. Director: Wyott Ordung. Screenplay: William Danch. Production design: Ben Hayne. Cinematography: Floyd Crosby. Editing: Ed Samson. Music: Andre Brumer.

An early Roger Corman movie about a giant amoeba from the ocean bottom. The monster doesn't show until the final minutes in this low-budgeted movie, so unless you are a real 50's freak, miss it.

"Slow, dull-grade B underwater s-f. Mexican fishing village is terrorized by sea monster which doesn't show up until last 5 minutes. One of Roger Corman's first efforts, directed by Wyott Ordung, not even recommended for the most fanatical Cormaniacs."-Castle of Frankenstein #19.



## NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD

(Night of the Flesh Eaters: Night of Anubis)  
1968. Image 10 Productions, 90 minutes. Producers: Russell Streiner and Karl Hardman. Director and Cinematography: George Romero. Screenplay: John A. Russo. Special Effects: Regis Survinski & Tony Pantanello. Cast: Duane Jones, Judith O'Dea, Russell Streiner, Karl Hardman, Keith Wayne.

I can't say much about this film that hasn't already been said. It is a classic film about the newly dead rising and eating the living. What started out to be a weekend project for producer George Romero is now a multi-million dollar a year grossing product. The superb lighting and photography can't help but make you to think of The Last Man on Earth.

## NOSFERATU

(Nosferatu, the Vampire: Nosferatu, eine Symphonie des Grauens: Nosferatu, a Symphony of Terror: The Terror of Dracula)  
1922. Released in 1929 in the United States. PranaFilms, silent, 80 minutes. Director: F.W. Murnau. Screenplay: Henrick Galeen. Art Director: Albin Grau. Cinematography: Fritz Wagner & Gunter Krampf. Editing: Symon Gould. Cast: Max Schreck, Alexander Granach, Gustav von Wangenheim, Grete Schroder, G.H. Schnell, Ruth Longshoff, John Gottowt, Gustav Botz, and Max Nemtz.

"Bram Stoker's Dracula has yet to be faithfully adapted to the screen; but few will deny this to be the eeriest and best version, not because of its brilliant, somber antique look, but. . . its looks like it was filmed about a hundred years ago in Transylvania! Those that are familiar with the far better known Lugosi Dracula will find Nosferatu's plot line almost the same; but that's where the resemblance ends. Max Schreck, as the infamous vampire, is far more terrifying and inhuman; and a dark, dreadful gothic quality is sustained throughout with greater success. Few horror films have ever recreated a nightmare so well on the screen. A definitive horror film and a acclaimed classic."-Castle of Frankenstein, #20

## PLANET OF THE APES

1969. Apjac Productions (20th Century Fox), color, scope, 112 minutes. Producer: Arthur P. Jacobs. Associate producer: Mort Abrahams. Director: Franklin J. Schaffner. Assistant director: William Kessel. Screenplay: Micheal Wilson and Rod Serling. Art Directors: Jack Martin Smith and William Creber. Makeup design: John Chambers. Makeup: Ben Nye & Dan Striepeke. Cinematography: Leon Shamroy. Special Effects: L.B. Abbott, Art Cruickshank and Emil Kosa Jr. Editing: Hugh S. Fowler. Music: Jerry Goldsmith. Cast: Charlton Heston (Taylor), Roddy McDowell (Cornelius), Kim Hunter (Zira), Maurice Evans (Dr. Zaius), Linda Harrison (Nova), James Whitmore, James Daly, Lou Warner, Woodrow Parfrey, Buck Kartalian, Robert Guener, Jeff Burton, Norman Burton, Wright King, and Paul Lambert.



## PLANET OF THE APES (continued)

"The year 1968 was a very good year. . .for science fiction, that is. MGM brought us 2001 and Fox gave us the Apes. It was the man Jacobs, whom with his Roddenberry-like drive and desire to put something on the screen, who persuaded 20th to put up the money so he could produce the first in the series of the most unusual concepts to hit the screen." -FilmCon 3 program book.

### ROCKETSHIP

(Feature version of Flash Gordon. Other titles: Spaceship to the unknown; Space Soldiers; Atomic Rocketship.)

1936. Universal serial, 13parts. Director: Frederick Stephani. Screenplay: F. Stephani, George Plympton, Basil Dickey, and Ella O' Neill. Cinematography: Jerry Ash and Richard Fryer. Cast: Buster Crabbe, Jean Rogers, Charles Middleton, Frank Shannon, Priscilla Lawson, Kane Richmond, Richard Alexander, James Pierce, Eddie Parker, and Carol Borland. Based on the comic strip by Alex Raymond.

This is the feature version of the original Flash Gordon serial, in which Flash teams up with Dale and Dr. Zarkov to fight the Merciless Ming of Mongo. They are menaced by Rock-men, Robot-men, The Hawk men of Mongo, and the Shark-men.

### SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE VOICE OF TERROR

1942. Universal, 65 minutes. Directed by John Rawlins. Cast: Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce, Evelyn Ankers, Reginald Denny, Henry Daniell, Thomas Gomez, Matague Love.

"This is the first in a series that placed Conan Doyle's master detective in modern times. As England battles for survival against Nazi onslaught, British Intelligence calls in Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson to stop a band of saboteurs led by the mysterious "Voice of Terror", who broadcast warnings of disasters before they occur. As terror grips the people of London, Holmes and Watson track down their quarry in the foggy alleyways of London and on the Moors of the English countryside. They succeed in bringing the mysterious "Voice" to justice and help uncover a secret Nazi invasion of England's coast."-Budget Films

### SPACE PATROL

(The Man who stole a City)

25 minutes. Stars Ed Kemmer, Lynn Osborne, Nina Bara, and Lee Van Cleef.

A early 50's science fiction show. Plot goes somewhat like this: Sometime in the future, Commader Buzz Corey of the Space Patrol and his sidekick, Cadet Happy, battle a-would-be space dictator. Using a weapon that shrinks material, the madman steals a whole city, including the Space Patrol Headquarters! Very Campy.



## THEM

1954. Warner Brothers, 93 minutes. Producer: David Weisbart. Director: Gordon Douglas. Story: George Worthing Yates. Adapt: Russell Hughes. Screenplay: Ted Sherdman. Art Director: Stanley Fleischer. Cinematography: Sid Hickox. Special Effects: Ralph Ayers. Editing: Thomas Reilly. Music: Bronisau Kaper. Cast: Edmund Gwenn, James Whitmore, James Arness, Joan Weldon, Onslow Stevens, Chris Drake, Sean McClory, Sandy Descher, William Schallert, Ann Doran, Fess Parker.

One of the first 'bug' movies, and the best as well. Atomic explosions caused mutated giant ants, some 20 feet tall. The scenes in the sewers searching for these ants are pretty scary.

"Them, along with Day the Earth Stood Still, was really one of the first films to whimper against the atomic bomb, over eight years before the Cuban missile crisis brought the world to the brink of judgement day. Yet, like Don Siegel's Invasion Of the Body Snatchers, Them is more a study in human reaction than glaring science fiction."-Steve Rubin, CineFantastique.

## THINGS TO COME

(THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME)

British, London Films/United Artists, 1936. 92 minutes. Producer: Alexander Korda. Director: William Cameron Menzies. Screenplay: H.G. Wells. Cinematography: George Perinal. Special Effects: Ned Mann. Music: Arthur Bliss. Cast: Raymond Massey, Ralph Richardson, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Edward Chapman, Maurice Braddell.

"Adapted by its original author from the H.G. Wells' novel 'The Shape of Things to Come,' this 1936 film shows a startlingly accurate vision of a future tome from pre-World War II perspective. Churning throughout the tale, just beneath the surface, is an ominous warning against the devastation of world-wide war-a threat inspired by the then swelling menace of Naziism. But Wells attains a certain ammount of aesthetic distance by delaying the global conflict until after the turn of the 21st century-a time when man's advanced technology leaves no doubt as to the outcome of a major war. The year is 2036; the last bomb has been dropped, wiping out the last remnants of civilization, and the few thousand that exist find themselves on a parched, uninhabitable Earth. Forced underground to avoid the toxic atmosphere, the citizens construct a wonderous subterranean metropolis... The architects of the city-those same scientists whose experimentation devastated the planet ...learn that other city-states exist, and renew the chain of war and peace by devolping the first ray gun."-United Films

## A TRIP TO THE MOON

1902. French, silent. 10 minutes. Made by: George Melies. Cinematography: Lucien Tainguy. Cast: George Melies, Ballerines of the Theatre du Chatelet & acrobats of the Folies-Bergere.

The first science fiction movie ever made. The first expedition to the moon's rocket lands in the man in the moon's eye. The explorers then meet the moon creatures, who explode on contact. A true classic!



SCHEDULED NASA FILMS FOR INTER-CON.

Total showing time 5hrs. 5 mins.

13 Films.

ELECTRIC PROPULSION: 24 mins. CANCELLED

This film introduces the concept of electric propulsion; a process which gives a low but continuous thrust. Electric Propulsion permits spacecraft to travel faster than chemical propulsion will permit. This film should depict how electric propulsion could be used in a manned mission to Mars. Such a mission could benefit mankind greatly, just as the Apollo program has. However increased government support is presently needed.

NUCLEAR PROPULSION IN SPACE: 24 mins.

This film introduces the concept of nuclear propulsion, which promises to increase rocket thrust beyond present chemical systems. (Chemical and electric propulsion can be used in conjunction with nuclear propulsion). Depicts a manned mission to Mars using nuclear propulsion. At present nuclear rocket research has been suspended, but could be reactivated. The last tests were in 1971. Increased government support is needed.

DEBRIEF: APOLLO 8, 28 mins. CANCELLED

The Apollo 8 mission was man's first trip around the Moon. On Christmas Eve, the astronauts read the creation story from the Bible, as millions saw man's first view of the Earth from lunar orbit. Isaac Asimov, and other space philosophers express their views on man's first steps into his Universe.

APOLLO 11: THE EAGLE HAS LANDED, 28 mins.

In the period of July 16th-24th, 1969 man took his first steps on the surface of the Moon. The Apollo 11 mission came in peace, and for the benefit of all Mankind.

LUNAR SAMPLES OF APOLLO 11 and 12: 9 mins.

This film depicts the scientific study of the lunar samples.

SEEDS OF DISCOVERY: 28 mins.

Actor Jim Francis narrates this award winning film about the need for man to advance in Space. The history of space science and the benefits are uniquely portrayed. This film expresses the view that man will go to the Planets and beyond. (Despite the current skepticism of today's scientific and political community.)

This film was made in 1970 and depicts space probe missions of the 70's. We have successfully studied the Sun with the Skylab telescope, and sent probes to Mercury, Venus, Mars, and Jupiter. The Russians gave us our first view of the surface of Venus. Grand Tour of the Planets was cancelled due to cutbacks. However Pioneer 11 made a partial grand tour, and should arrive at Saturn in 1979.

WHO'S OUT THERE? 28 mins.

Orson Welles narrates this film about the possibilities of extra-terrestrial life. As the NASA film catalog puts it: "Orson Welles takes us through science fiction to science fact...The film is a fascinating portrayal of a contemporary scientific conclusion that there exists intelligent civilizations in the universe."



APOLLO 17: ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS, 28 mins.

Depicts the last scheduled manned Moon mission. (Skylab, Apollo-Soyuz, and Space Shuttle are briefly introduced.) The promise is given that man will return to the Moon and beyond.

SMALL STEPS-GIANT STRIDES: 28 mins.

Isaac Asimov narrates this film on the history of the Space Program, and its benefits to mankind.

MARS-THE SEARCH BEGINS: 27 mins.

Mars has shown unique Earth like characteristics of active geological activity, large water channels, a grand canyon, and more recently we've discovered some atmosphere and soil similarities. This film is based on the findings of the Mariner 9 orbiter.

SKYLAB-WINGS OF DISCOVERY: 9 mins.

Basically depicts the Skylab mission with special emphasis on the industrial applications of space. Larger more perfect crystals, rounder ball bearings, and smaller more efficient micro-miniaturization can be accomplished in space.

THE MISSION OF APOLLO-SOYUZ: 27 mins.

Depicts the first joint manned space mission, and its impact on diplomatic relations.

ZERO "G": 15 mins. CANCELLED

This film depicts the properties of zero gravity, and some of the Skylab experiments done in Zero G.



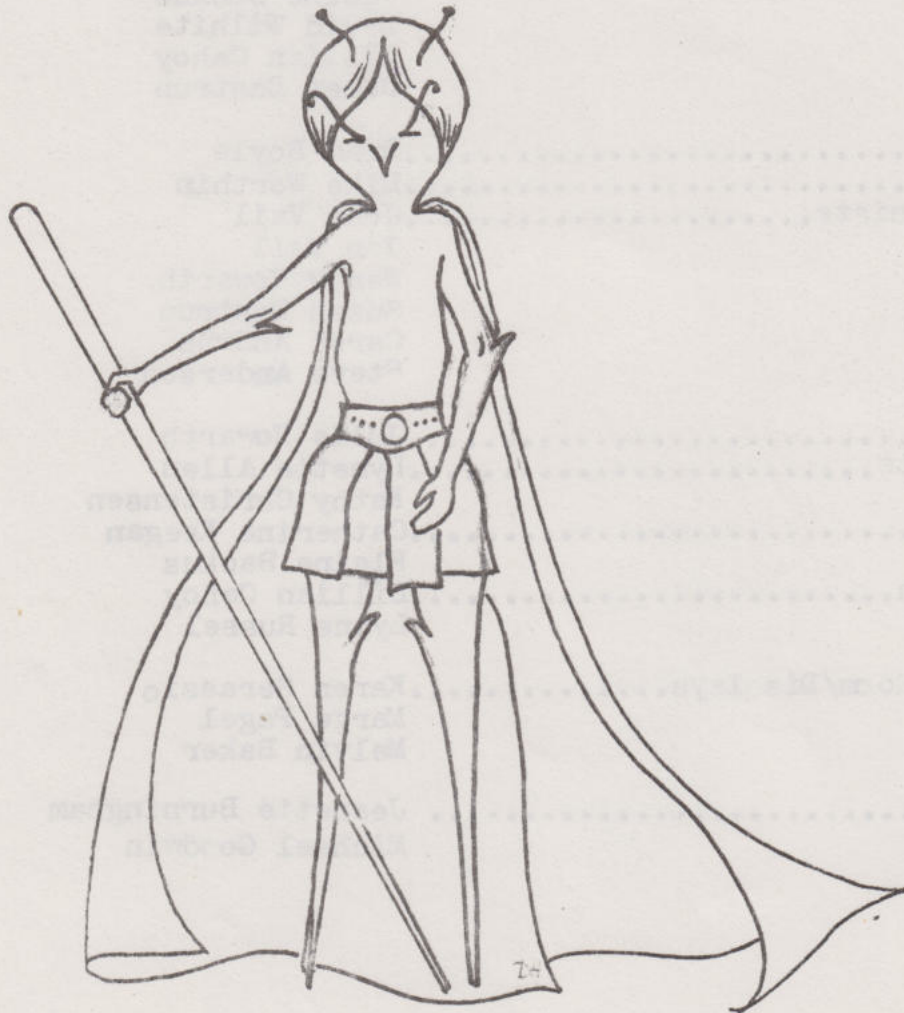
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Carol Andrus  
160 First Avenue #404  
Salt Lake City 84103

There is a central information center to answer fans' questions about STAR TREK and provide new fans with complete information about STAR TREK and STAR TREK fandom. Write to:

STAR TREK WELCOMMITTEE  
c/o Shirley Majewski  
481 Main St.  
Hatfield, MA 01038

STAR TREK WELCOMMITTEE is a non-profit SERVICE organization (NOT a club to join) with 150 volunteer workers in 35 states who devote their time and efforts to answering questions about STAR TREK at no charge.

Few fans realize all that is really available in the world of STAR TREK: about 250 clubs, about 200 fan magazines, over 25 books, many conventions, and many sales items. That's where STW comes in--we can give you information on all of this, plus much more: ST technology, ST actors, details of the making of ST (live action or animation), details of the various episodes, trivia, penpals, fans in your area, revival efforts, aid in forming clubs or publishing zines.....whatever your question on STAR TREK or STAR TREK fandom, chances are we've got the answer--or can get it for you. Write us.

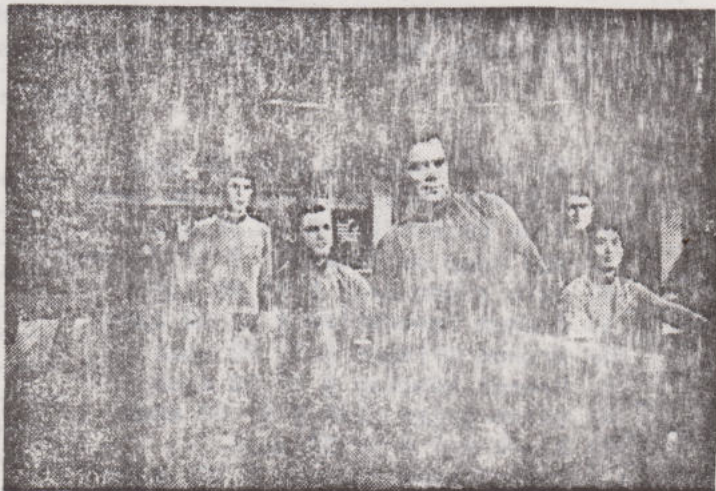
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STW Monthly Report  
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P.O. Box 19413  
Denver, CO 80219

STW's 22-page DIRECTORY OF STAR TREK ORGANIZATIONS (listing clubs, zines, books, sales items, and conventions) is available for \$1.00 from:

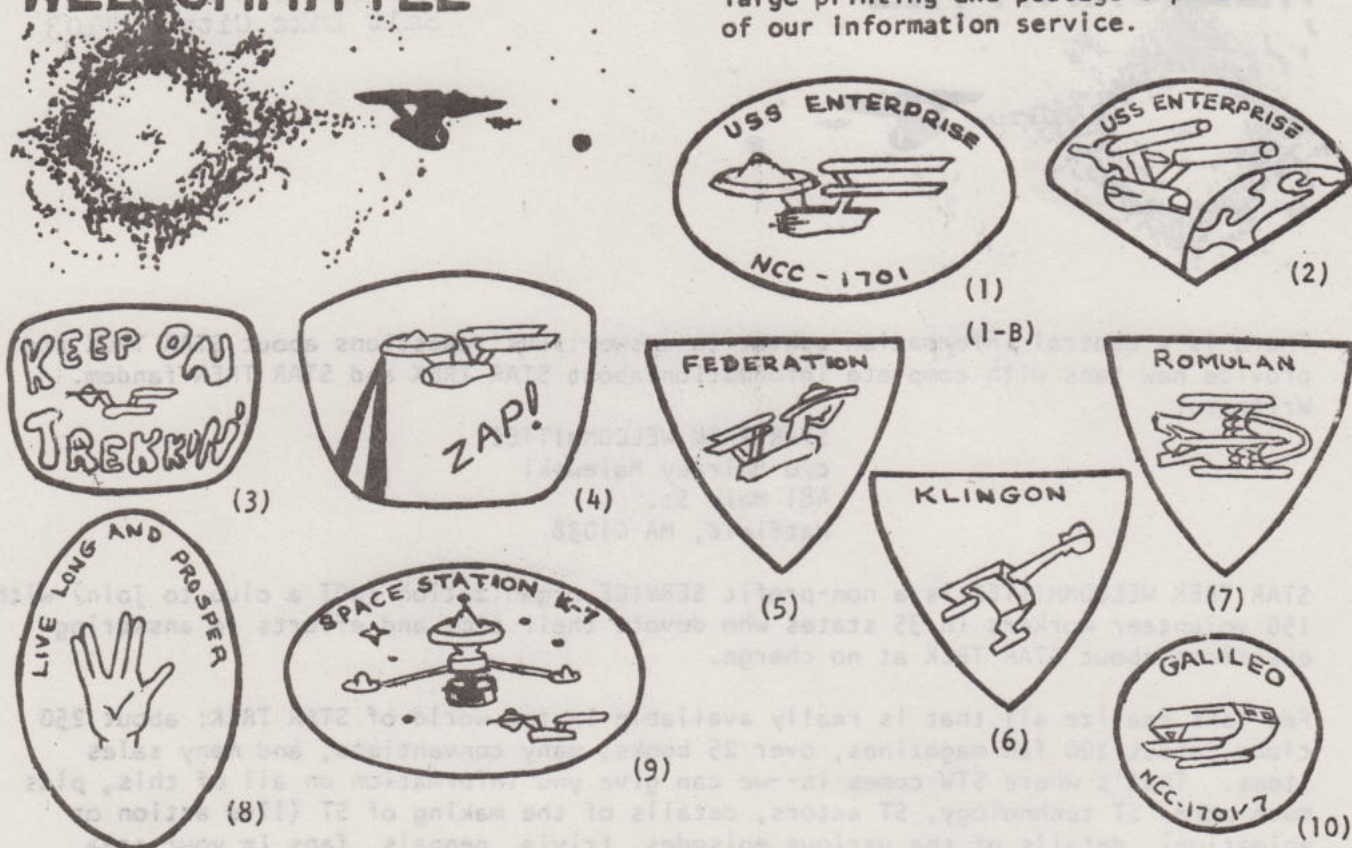
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- (1) 3" x 4" oval, white background, embroidered in 5 colors. \$1.00 each.  
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 (8) 3" x 4" oval, olive green background, embroidered in 3 colors. \$1.00 each.  
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# THE STIFF AFFAIR

don wanner

## CHAPTER ONE

### A QUESTION OF DANGER

Captain's Log, Stardate 714.21. The Enterprise has been ordered back to Starbase 7. In a private communication with Commodore James La Barrin I was told it was a matter of life and death--mine. A professional assassin, David Graves--known as "the Stiff"--has been contracted to kill me. Three new officers brought aboard at Starbase 7 are the prime suspects. Agents from Starfleet Intelligence have been brought in to assist. We are now returning to Starbase 7 to pick them up.

Kirk made a quick survey of the bridge. Lieutenants Sulu and Arex sat at their combined console making final adjustments as the Enterprise slipped into standard orbit around Starbase 7. Lieutenant M'Ress was assisting them at the assistant navigation console, her tail twitching nervously. Yeoman Adams stood by the captain's chair, a clipboard in one hand. Mr. Scott was busy at the engineering console. Uhura was in the midst of contacting the starbase. Spock was gazing into the viewer of the library computer. Both environmental officer Appadacca and weapons and defense officer Monroe were trying to look busy.

Appadacca, Monroe, and Security Chief Earl Hokes were the three officers brought aboard at Starbase 7. They were not watched, but each one knew their captain was keeping more than an interested eye on them. None of the three men had said or done anything to warrant throwing them in the brig--a step the Commodore had vehemently advocated. Without more indication that it could be one of these men Kirk rejected this idea.

Ensign Juan Appadacca was of Spanish descent--short, stout and darkskinned. His physical appearance was average, with the exception of a long handlebar mustache which enhanced his features.

The lively little ensigne had become quite popular for singing Spanish ballads and playing guitar. Lieutenant Uhura, noted for her own musical ability, was one of his most devoted fans.

Weapons and Defense officer Francis Monroe was a native of the planet Funon. Funon was peculiar because it was inhabited by both Earth men and aliens. The two factions did not get along--in fact, they were in a constant state of war.

The Earth colony had developed a strict code of conduct for its people. Breaking the code meant persecution and hatred from the community. When Monroe broke the code he was persecuted by his own people and turned to Starfleet.

The experience left Monroe embittered and morose. Since joining the Enterprise Monroe had kept strictly to himself, only speaking when spoken to. This was distressing to the female population on board, as Monroe was quite handsome--average in height, lean and wiry.

Lieutenant Earl Hokes, the new Security Chief, was a space oddity. Born in



the hills of Tennessee, he was the perfect country bumpkin. At the same time he made the perfect security officer. Standing six feet six inches tall, big in the shoulder and long legged, Hokes easily towered over everyone on board. Hokes had leadership abilities that gave him the respect and loyalty of his personnel in just a few days.

Hokes was not a young man. His hair was white and his skin was wrinkled. He joined Starfleet late in life, after having served in many law enforcement positions on Earth. One of the oldest men ever to graduate from the academy, he had served six years aboard several Federation ships. His last assignment had been the Starship Hood.

The elevator door opened and Chief Medical Officer Leonard McCoy strode in, hands clasped behind his back.

"Good morning, Bones," Kirk said, "You're just in time."

"So I see," McCoy said in a tense voice.

"Sensors indicate no vessels of any kind--in orbit or in the vicinity of the Starbase, Captain," Spock reported.

This was odd, because a starbase is the hub of all Federation activity in a given quadrant. Ships of all shapes and sizes were usually in orbit around a starbase. Now, however, there wasn't even a shuttlecraft.

"What the devil's going on?" growled a suspicious McCoy.

"The Commodore has probably ordered all ships to stay clear until I'm out of the area," Kirk said.

McCoy had taken the threat on Kirk's life seriously. The fact that Kirk did not anger McCoy. "Fine," he said. "But if this joker is as good as all that, he's probably already there, or on board."

"Let's hope you're wrong on both counts, Bones."

"Captain," said Uhura, "I have Commodore La Barrin on H frequency."

"All right, put him on."

"Captain Kirk," the Commodore's voice boomed over the loudspeaker.

"Kirk here, Commodore."

"Captain, prepare to beam up three persons."

"Three!" Kirk said, startled. "I thought there were only two."

"Two plus myself. I'm coming as well."

\* \* \*

The reception committee consisted of Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Scott, Security Chief Hokes and Transporter Chief Kyle. Three forms began to appear on the transporter platform. They glistened and sparkled as they materialized.



The first man to step down from the platform wore the uniform of a Federation officer--the insignia of a Commodore on his chest. The man was in his late forties, tall and well built. He was handsome, with iron black hair.

Kirk saluted. "Captain James T. Kirk at your service, sir. Welcome aboard."

"Thank you, Captain. May I present Mr. Victor Graftin and his wife Ventura."

"Pleased to meet you, Captain," said Graftin, shaking hands.

Kirk saw a stout man with a short gray beard and receding hairline. Graftin wore a patch over his left eye.

"So you're the Captain Kirk we've heard so much about," Ventura Graftin said in a low sexy voice.

Ventura was a middle-aged woman whose exotic beauty was still intact. Her cheekbones were high and her skin dark. Her long black hair was wrapped becomingly about her head. She stood erect and walked with pride and dignity.

Kirk introduced his officers and greetings were exchanged. The Graftins seemed warm and friendly but the Commodore's attitude was perfunctory. "I think we would like to go to our quarters now, Captain," La Barrin hinted.

"Yes, I'm sure you want to settle in before we get down to business," Kirk said. "I'll show you to your quarters myself."

\* \* \*

Kirk and La Barrin left the Graftins at their quarters. Upon reaching the Commodore's cabin La Barrin asked Kirk to remain a moment. "What do you think of the Graftins?" he asked.

"They seem to be who they are supposed to be."

"I have no doubt about their identities, Captain. You should put a guard on them--they're old friends of David Graves."

"You mean they were also assassins?" Kirk said, stunned.

"Yes. Victor Graftin was his partner and Ventura was his girlfriend. Apparently Ventura decided to marry Graftin instead. Graves left them shortly after that. A year later, Graftin and his wife were captured. They were given their choice--life imprisonment or serve in the anti-assassination branch of Starfleet Intelligence. They have helped Starfleet a great deal. I don't want them to stop now."

"I understand," Kirk said. "May I ask why you decided to come along?"

"Two reasons, Captain. First to keep you alive if I can. Second, I've been transferred to Starbase 9. Your assignment is to take me there."

\* \* \*

The Enterprise slipped out of orbit and began the journey to Starbase 9. Kirk went to his cabin and ordered several record tapes from the library computer's



personnel files of Starfleet officers. The files were of the three suspect officers and Commodore La Barrin.

Kirk did not for a moment suspect the Commodore, but he knew very little of La Barrin.

From the tapes Kirk learned that the Commodore had had a fairly distinguished career in Starfleet. For twenty-five years La Barrin had served aboard various ships. His last ship assignment had been the Constellation. During the past six years La Barrin had commanded Starbase 7. Now suddenly La Barrin was being transferred. The timing of Starfleet was certainly a coincidence.

Checking these files occupied Kirk's time until the meeting he had scheduled with La Barrin and the Graftins. On Kirk's arrival in the briefing room he found Spock, McCoy, Scott and Yeoman Adams. The Yeoman had been placed in charge of the library computer. The three suspect officers sat uneasily at the far end of the table. As La Barrin entered, all in the room rose and saluted. "At ease, everyone." The Graftins entered and sat down.

"This meeting is called to order," La Barrin said stiffly. "Yeoman, is the computer ready?"

"Yes, sir."

La Barrin outlined the meeting's agenda. "First we must determine whether or not one of these three men is David Graves. If not we must decide how to find Graves. Also we must keep Captain Kirk alive until Graves is found. Is everyone agreed?"

"Not quite, Commodore."

"Why not, Captain?"

"I believe we still have to determine whether or not Graves is actually on board."

"Seriously, Captain," the Commodore began.

"Gentlemen," Victor Graftin interrupted, "I can put your minds at rest on this score." Graftin handed a small piece of paper to Kirk. "My wife found this note in our cabin just before coming here. With it we found a basket of flowers."

Kirk opened the note and read its contents:

TO VENTURA, WHO IS STILL THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE GALAXY.

DAVID

\* \* \*

## CHAPTER TWO

### DIVERSION

Kirk handed the note back to Graftin. "Can you identify Graves as the writer?"

"Yes, Captain, I'm certain this is Graves' handwriting."

"I, too, am certain, Captain," Ventura added.



"Question is, where did he get the flowers?" mused the Commodore. "A botanist may be able to help us."

But it proved to be a dead end. Lieutenant Sulu and the Botany Chief were sent for. The botanist's inventory of foreign and exotic plants was complete. Sulu, however, reported that someone had broken into his cabin and taken a bunch of Red Taras, flowers similar to roses. The helmsman was mad enough to kill, but he softened when he learned where the Taras had gone. "He may be a thief, madam," he said, "but he couldn't have put them in a better place."

"Thank you, Lieutenant," Ventura replied.

Failing to make headway on the flowers, Kirk now tried another angle. He asked Graftin where Starfleet had learned of his impending assassination.

"Starfleet has infiltrated the Klingon government," Graftin began. "Especially in their Subversion Department. We learned plans were being made to execute several persons in the Federation, whose opposition has impeded the goals of the Klingon Empire. You, Captain, were on that list."

Graftin paused a moment to let his statement sink in, then he continued. "Graves is but one of many assassins hired by the Klingons to carry out their objectives. Starfleet has sent agents to protect those the Klingons want killed. So far no one has been hurt, and two of the assassins have been captured."

"What is Mr. Graves' mode of operation, Mr. Graftin?" asked Spock.

"As you know, David and I worked together. He is intelligent and resourceful. He is sly like the fox and quick as a cat. He strikes without warning and is gone like the wind. Graves uses a lot of disguises. But above all else he likes to use diversionary tactics. He disorganizes and confuses his victim, then he strikes!"

"Just how many people has this Graves managed to kill?" McCoy asked.

"I was associated with David--a--Graves for five years," Graftin said. "In that time we--a--eliminated twenty. The gods know how many since then."

"What, then, can we do to protect the Captain?" Spock asked, cutting off an emotional outburst from McCoy.

"There are three things we can do. First, guards must be placed at all areas important to the running of the ship. Graves may try to divert your attention by disabling your ship in some manner.

"Second, a safe place must be made for the Captain. Preferably this should be the Captain's cabin. This must be a place thoroughly scanned and fortified against Graves.

"Finally, a guard must be placed on the Captain--two would be best."

"Gentlemen, you seem to forget that we have three men here," La Barrin chided. "One of them could be Graves. Mr. Graftin, could any of these gentlemen be David Graves?"

"Well, Commodore," Graftin began. "Graves was five feet ten inches tall. It's



obvious that Ensign Appadacca is far too short and Mr. Hokes here is much too tall. Six feet six, isn't it, Lieutenant?"

"Yes, sir."

"That leaves you, Mr. Monroe," drawled the Commodore.

"I'm as innocent as the others," Monroe said, his face pale.

"We'll see," La Barrin said icily. "Computer?"

"Computer acknowledged."

"Does the voice you just heard match that of the voice in Lieutenant Monroe's file."

"Affirmative."

Monroe's face brightened.

"May I question the computer, Commodore?"

"Be my guest, Mr. Spock."

"Computer, is it possible that the voice included in Lieutenant Monroe's file could be erased and the present voice put in its place?"

"Affirmative."

Monroe stiffened, the paleness returned to his face.

"You're speaking in conjecture only," Graftin said. "There is only one way to make sure of Mr. Monroe's identity."

"Then please show us, Mr. Graftin," the Commodore growled.

"Graves makes good use of disguise. I can examine Mr. Monroe and determine his true identity."

"All right, Graftin, if Mr. Monroe will submit."

"I'll submit, sir, if it will clear this up."

Graftin began his examination. With a magnifying glass he took his time, checking every freckle and every eyelash. When he finished, he straightened up.

"Well?" snapped the Commodore.

Graftin looked straight at La Barrin. "This man is what Mr. Spock would call-- authentic."

The meeting continued. Discussion of Graftin's three point plan to protect the ship and its captain went on. Kirk agreed with the first two points of the plan, but he flatly refused a bodyguard. "The crew," he said, "would lose faith in me."



McCoy said it was better to have morale damaged--Kirk's death would not just damage morale, it would destroy it completely.

"No bodyguard, and that's final!" Kirk snapped.

"Kirk, this is your ship," La Barrin said, rising to full height. "I don't want to pull rank on you. But if you don't put a guard on yourself I'll order it done."

"All right," Kirk said. "One guard, just one!"

This was agreeable and on that note the meeting adjourned.

Monroe was on his way to the turbolift when someone called his name. He turned to see the Captain's Yeoman coming out of the briefing room. It was she who had called to him. What was her name--oh yes, Adams, that was it. He had seen her on the bridge many times, but this was the first time they had spoken to each other. She flashed him a smile as she joined him. "Hey, you really had a scare in there," she said.

"Yes, I guess so." What does she want? Monroe wondered.

"I'm glad it turned out all right."

"That makes two of us, Yeoman!"

"Listen," she said, "we're having a little sing-along in rec room 3 tonight. You're welcome to join us, sir."

"Thanks, Yeoman," Monroe said. "But Mr. Scott and I planned on checking out the phaser banks this evening."

The Yeoman looked disappointed. She's even pretty when she frowns, Monroe thought.

"Well, when you get done come on up."

"Thank you, Yeoman, I may do that."

"All right, we'll see you later then," she smiled again as she turned to go.

Unconsciously Monroe sized her up as she walked down the corridor. She had a pretty smile and a dimple on her right cheek. Her good looks offset her thin body and rather flat chest.

He shook his head as though to clear it. Since leaving Funon Monroe had kept aloof from those he dealt with. He aimed to keep it that way. Besides, she probably had her eye on the Captain or Mr. Spock. Most of the women on board did.

\* \* \*

One had to answer questions carefully at dinner. The Commodore was sizing up everyone at the table, the Graftins in particular.

La Barrin was striving to answer a very important question of his own. Where did the Graftins' loyalty lie--with Starfleet or their friend? Starfleet must



have a lot of confidence in them, thought Kirk. But Starfleet might have decided to gamble on their loyalty. If that were the case they were putting a lot on the line. The death of a Starfleet captain by assassination would hurt Starfleet prestige. Civilizations considering entering the Federation would have second thoughts. They might decide against entering at all. Present members might be intimidated into leaving the Federation.

Then there was Ventura Graftin. Being David Graves' old flame, her presence increased Starfleet's gamble. It would be very difficult to stop Graves were she to side with him.

Looking at her Kirk believed she was one of the most beautiful women to ever walk the decks of the Enterprise. The radiance of her beauty seemed to light up the room. She watched the Commodore coldly yet thoughtfully, answering his questions with care.

"Mr. Scott," La Barrin was saying, "I understand that you like good brandy."

"Aye, sir, that I do."

"What is your favorite brandy?"

"Blackberry, sir, fruit of the gods for sure."

The Commodore turned to Spock with a mischievous gleam in his eye and asked, "Do they indulge in the bubbly brew on Vulcan, Mr. Spock?"

"We have our beverages, Commodore," Spock said, raising both eyebrows.

La Barrin rose, glass in hand, to propose a toast. Everyone rose in accordance. "Long life the Federation and all she stands for," he said. They clinked their glasses and drank.

The room seemed to shiver. Brandy splashed out of glasses and spilled over faces and clothing. Several inhaled or swallowed too much of the liquid. Fits of coughing and gagging could be heard. Kirk's reflexes were as quick as ever. He realized something was wrong and started for the intercom.

The red alert sounded through the ship. Sulu's voice boomed over the speaker. "Bridge to damage control, send a damage control party and a medical team to the bridge immediately."

"Kirk to bridge. What happened up there, Sulu?"

"Explosion, Captain, in communications."

"Hold on, I'll be right up. Kirk out."

With Kirk in the lead the little group ran down the corridor to the turbolift.

\* \* \*

They entered a devastated bridge. The smoke had been dissipated by the ventilating system, so everyone had a good view of the terrible sight.



Charred ruins were all that remained of the communications console. Lieutenant Arex stood guard over it, fire extinguishing canisters in two of his three hands. Sulu sat slumped in the captain's chair, nursing an injured arm. Others of the bridge watch were spraying chemicals on bits of smoldering wreckage lying about the bridge.

But the most terrible sight of all lay behind the captain's chair, where the burned and broken body of the night communications officer had been thrown by the blast.

Kirk turned to his officers. Scott was already surveying the damage with Arex. Spock was checking out the library computer. McCoy quickly looked at the body behind the captain's chair. Finding it lifeless he then attended to Sulu.

Kirk realized there was nothing to do at the moment but clean up the mess. Graves would have to wait. He asked Sulu for a report.

Sulu was dazed but alert. He sensed the Captain's black mood. "Well, sir," he began, "everything was just fine and the next thing I knew I was lying against the navigation console. When I got up I saw the damage. I told Arex and the others to do what they could to put out the fire. I then called for a damage control unit and a medical team."

At that point both the damage control party and medical team arrived. Scott immediately took charge of damage and repair procedures. McCoy ordered the removal of the dead communications officer from the bridge. He then helped Nurse Chapel put a splint on Sulu's arm.

"Your arm is broken, Sulu," he said. "We'll get you down to sickbay and use the bone-knitting laser. You'll be back on duty tomorrow night."

"But doctor, I need rest," Sulu said with a wry smile.

"What," said McCoy, "and have you miss your fencing lesson? And who's going to water your plants?"

The body was placed on a stretcher. Before it was taken away Kirk removed the cover from the face and glanced at it. Kirk could not put a name to the face, what was left of it. He replaced the cover and the stretcher was removed.

"Who was she?" he asked Sulu as the helmsman was being taken from the bridge.

"Lieutenant Odry Mayler, Captain."

Kirk stepped to the right arm of the captain's chair and pushed a button.

"Kirk to security."

"Security. Aye, Cap'n."

"Mr. Hokes, I want all guards doubled. If you need more personnel get them from the science department."

"Aye, sir."

"It will not do you any good, Captain," Graftin said. "You'd better calm yourself."

A brief glance told him the Graftins were shocked at what had happened. The



Commodore's face was drawn and mask-like.

"Mr. Graftin," Kirk said angrily, "I am calm, but one of my people is dead. I am just as determined to get Graves now as he is to get me."

Kirk now turned to his Engineering officer for a damage report. The library computer had suffered minimum damage. Repairs could wait until the communications console was repaired. Scott estimated that repairs on the communications would take two solar days to complete.

Kirk had Scotty get to work on the repairs. He then told Spock to play back the visual bridge log for the day. The bridge cameras might have caught Graves in the act of placing his bomb.

Kirk gave command of the bridge to Arex. He was about to leave the bridge when Graftin stopped him.

"Captain, earlier today I told you of David's habit of diverting his victims."

"Yes."

"No doubt while you were here David was preparing your death. Possibly in your quarters."

\* \* \*

Fifteen minutes later Kirk's cabin was looking worse than the bridge. Security men were looking for a bomb. In doing so they found it necessary to take the place apart, piece by piece.

Graftin had brought some equipment from his cabin. He was now setting it up at the cabin entrance.

"Its obvious purpose, Captain, is to keep out intruders," he told Kirk. "Anyone trying to enter will be pushed back. It will also sound an alarm."

"Mind if I see a demonstration?"

"Be my guest, Captain."

It was simple matter to set up the device. It consisted of two rods that were placed on either side of the entrance. A small control box was attached to the left rod. The controls consisted of a single on-off switch.

Lieutenant Hokes was unhappily commandeered to test the Gate, as Graftin had named his device. The Gate was but one of his many innovations.

Graftin switched on the machine and on Kirk's signal Hokes advanced. He reached the entrance and extended his hands. A sharp crack was heard. Hokes was suddenly thrown against the far wall of the corridor. Stunned, he fell to the floor as though unconscious. Two security men raced to his aid. "I'm okay, boys," Hokes muttered, getting shakily to his feet.

"It works, Mr. Graftin," he said. "Mercy, that thing's got a hell of a kick."

A security guard rushed in from Kirk's inner quarters. "Sir, we found the bomb,"



he said.

Commodore La Barrin stood by the air vent looking at something in his hand. Graftin crossed the room and snatched the object from the Commodore.

"Don't you know you could set it off?" Graftin growled, holding the bomb up to the light.

"Sorry, Graftin, I didn't realize."

Graftin turned to Kirk. "It's plastic explosive with a detonator in the center."

"How is it disarmed?" Kirk asked.

"Easily done, Captain." Graftin placed the marble-shaped object on the floor and smashed it with the toe of his shoe.

"What a way to disarm a bomb," said a surprised Hokes.

"Yes," Graftin said. "It's small but effective. I have no doubts that a similar device was used on the bridge, Captain."

Kirk looked at the security men. "Where did you find this?"

"In your bed, sir," one said.

"Thank you, gentlemen, you saved me from having some rather explosive dreams."

The search completed, the security team was dismissed. Two sentries were left outside Kirk's door, however. The Commodore and Graftin said their goodnights and left soon after. Kirk cleaned up the mess in his inner quarters. He took a look at the disarray in the outer office, and decided that could wait until morning. So closing the Gate he went to bed.

\* \* \*

Kirk's dreams were filled with death. In his dreams he saw once again the charred and broken body of Lieutenant Mayler. Then he saw his own body mangled in the same horrible way. Fortunately Kirk woke at that point.

He tried to take a deep breath—and realized he could not breathe. Gasping for breath Kirk staggered from the bed. He tried to open the air vent. It was jammed. He was ready to collapse by the time he reached the intercom. "Kirk—to-bridge--Kirk--to-bridge."

Up on the bridge Lieutenant Arex heard his commanding officer and was immediately concerned. "Bridge. Aye, Captain," he said.

"Em--emer--gency. No--no--air." A dull thud was heard through the speaker. Arex got the message. He lost no time in pushing the red alert button.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### CHESS GAME

The Graftins, like everyone else, were awakened by the alert. They were now



hurriedly getting dressed.

"Bridge to Mr. Graftin," Arex said. His voice came tinnily over the intercom.

"This is Graftin. Go ahead."

"Sir, you're to report immediately to the Captain's quarters."

They quickly made their way to Kirk's quarters. They found Commodore La Barrin, Mr. Spock, Scotty and McCoy along with Lieutenant Hokes and a Security team.

The four senior officers stood in a group to the side. The security team lined up, preparing to blast open the Gate with their phasers.

"Hold on!" Graftin said, stepping in front of the entrance.

"Out of the way, Graftin, or we'll cut you down with your force field," La Barrin snapped.

"The Gate reflects phaser fire," Graftin yelled. "Your men will be killed by their own weapons."

"You have a better idea?" growled McCoy.

"Yes, I do," Graftin said. From a belt pouch he brought out a glove with a long sleeve that reached clear to the arm pit.

Graftin put on the glove and without the slightest hesitation put his hand through the force field. He reached around the left rod of the Gate and switched off the machine.

With McCoy at their head the officers rushed into Kirk's quarters. They found him lying spreadeagled on the floor. McCoy knelt down and searched for a pulse.

"Is he alive, Doctor?" Spock asked.

McCoy looked at the Vulcan with relief. "Yes, I think we made it in time."

\* \* \*

Kirk's eyelids fluttered, then opened. McCoy smiled down at him. "Welcome back, Jim," he said.

Kirk started to get out of bed. "What happened?" he asked.

"You passed out," McCoy said, pushing Kirk back gently. "Graves somehow removed all the air from your cabin."

"Yes," Kirk said, remembering. "I should have tried to reach Graftin's machine instead of the intercom."

"You wouldn't have made it, Jim," soothed McCoy. "You did the right thing." Kirk again tried to sit up. "You'll be staying the night, Jim," McCoy commanded. "Your vital signs are still a little low."



Kirk did not complain, he couldn't. For the good Doctor had slipped him a sedative.

\* \* \*

Kirk woke early, restless and uneasy. McCoy insisted on a final checkup. It was obvious he didn't want Kirk to leave.

"Well Jim," he said, "you're fine. I'll release you if you want. But I really think you should stay here until. . ."

"Until what?" Kirk snapped. "I'm not safe anywhere on this ship, Bones, and I'm not going to hide. How the devil did you get into my quarters, anyway?"

"Graftin let us in," McCoy began. "According to him, chemicals and materials that can not be repelled by a reflector shield are few. But there are a few such materials available. It's like two opposite poles of a magnet coming together; the materials are thus absorbed by the reflector. Graftin had a glove made of the material. He simply put his gloved hand through the Gate reflector and turned off the machine.

"I see," Kirk said slowly. "Spock--or Graftin--have any idea what happened to the air in my quarters?"

"They and a security team went through your cabin again but I don't know if they found anything."

\* \* \*

Graftin lay in bed, his eyes closed. He was thinking of the recent confrontation with Ventura. She had left the cabin and now he thought he heard her returning. He opened his eyes, then sat up quickly. For Graftin found himself staring at the disguised face of David Graves.

"I knew it was you," said Graftin, "I just couldn't bring myself to the point of exposing you."

A green tube held by Graves emitted an equally green liquid into Graftin's face. Graftin coughed violently and fell over, unconscious.

\* \* \*

Kirk returned to his quarters with two security men in tow. His quarters were once more in a shambles. Papers and tape cartridges lay about the floor of Kirk's outer office. The inner room was also in a state of disarray. Kirk stepped gingerly over the mess to the intercom.

He asked Scotty for a report on communications. "It's disappointing to say the least, Captain," muttered the engineer. "So many circuits and relays are damaged that it'll take 36 hours to effect repairs. And the auxiliary control room communications are ruined."

Kirk was surprised. "How did that happen?" he asked.

"The sentry was knocked unconscious. When he came to he checked the room and



found nothing. By the time we made a more complete investigation it was too late. Graves had put some acid-like chemical into the circuitry. Much of it was corroded away to nothing."

After recovering from this shock Kirk said, "Is it possible to repair one of the nailing frequencies and leave the rest till later?"

"I don't know why not."

"Try it, Scotty--I want communications as soon as possible."

"Aye, sir."

Kirk then talked with Lieutenant Hokes about the last search of his quarters. A piece of material with a slippery surface had been found. "It was lying on your desk, sir," Hokes said. "I picked it up and smelt of it, and mercy, I like to have passed out!"

"Where is it now?"

"Mr. Spock's got it down in the Biopsy Lab."

Kirk now contacted Spock and asked if the bridge cameras had picked up anyone planting the bomb. Spock's answer was negative.

"Mr. Spock, do you have any information on that material found in my cabin?"

"Yes, Captain. It is a rather interesting material called Talite. It is used in airtight containers. Oxygen penetrating the container is absorbed by the Talite. The sample I have here is more potent than is normally used."

So all Graves had to do, Kirk thought, was walk into my office and lay the Talite cloth on my desk. Then he makes sure all the air vents are jammed shut. The victim would do the rest.

Kirk began to feel like a frustrated chess player. A player whose moves were countered in advance by his opponent.

For the second time in a solar day, Kirk straightened up his inner quarters. With the help of Yeoman Adams he began to clean his outer office. They had almost completed this task when McCoy's voice came urgently over the intercom.

"Jim, you better get down here," he said.

"What is it, Bones?"

"It's Graftin. He's unconscious."

\* \* \*

Ventura Graftin had been taking a walk. On her return she found Victor Graftin unconscious. He was brought to sickbay and given emergency treatment.

The patient's vital signs were good with the exception of his blood pressure, which was low. It appeared that Graftin had been given a sedative. How long this condition would last was anyone's guess.



This was McCoy's report to Kirk upon his arrival in sickbay. This could mean two things, Kirk thought. First, Graves was going to make a new move, and soon. Second, Graves' reputation for cunning and daring were well-founded. He had tried to bypass all of Kirk's defenses. He had failed, but just barely. Kirk was again reminded of the chess game. Since Graves had not been able to bypass the Knight and the Bishop, he had obviously decided to remove them and anything else that got in the way. In removing Graftin, Graves had removed one of Kirk's most important defenses.

At this point Kirk realized that he still hated Graves, but he had gained new respect for his adversary. Despite Graves' abilities Kirk had survived. This gave Kirk hope that this particular chess game could still be won.

He asked McCoy how Graftin had been knocked unconscious.

"We know it was gas, Jim," said McCoy. "There were still some traces of it in the air. Some oxygen samples were taken in the cabin. Spock has them in the Biopsy Lab."

"Any idea how long Graftin will be unconscious?"

"I really don't know, Jim. It could be an hour, a couple or days, or it could be permanent. Our best bet is an antidote. With that poor sample we gave Spock an antidote is unlikely."

Kirk went to the bed where Graftin lay. Ventura Graftin stood by it, one hand clutching one of Graftin's. She gazed down at the unconscious man.

"Mrs. Graftin."

"Captain."

Ventura's face was tear-stained but still very beautiful. One look at it told Kirk more about her loyalties than any of La Barrin's questions ever could.

"Ventura," he said, "you realize that you are the only one that can help us find Graves."

"I am afraid that my husband and I have failed you."

"Why do you say that?"

"Victor knew who David is but he could not decide whether to tell you or let David kill you. He told me this morning. I tried to convince him to tell you but he would not decide. I left our cabin in a rage and took a walk to calm myself. When I returned I found him like this."

Her gaze returned to her husband. She was fighting desperately to keep her emotions under control.

"Don't blame yourself. You would also be unconscious if you had stayed."

"I don't. What bothers me is the fact that both Victor and I have made an agreement with Starfleet. We did not keep our part of it."

"Yes, that is true, but you can still help us find David. When Starfleet



learns of your assistance they will take it into consideration. But the final decision, however, will rest with Starfleet."

She turned her hope-filled eyes to Kirk. "Very well, Captain," she said, "What must I do?"

"Wait one hour," Kirk said in a low voice. "Then call the Security officer, Lieutenant Hokes. Advise him to get down to Dr. McCoy's quarters on the double."

\* \* \*

A few minutes later Kirk, McCoy and a security guard went to the doctor's quarters. The second guard had been dismissed, but not without some argument from Hokes.

On their arrival Kirk turned to Wilson, the sentry. "You're relieved, Wilson," he said. "Make yourself scarce for the next hour. Then get back here on the double."

"Yes, sir, but--"

"I'll be all right, Ensign, just be back here in an hour."

The doors closed, leaving Wilson alone in the hallway. Had Wilson trusted his captain and followed his orders the young officer would have lived. But he was fresh out of Starfleet Academy, eager and inexperienced.

Like most of the crew, he idolized the captain. He knew that if anything were to happen to Kirk he would be responsible. Not only that, but Wilson himself would feel responsible and would hate himself for the rest of his life. So, Wilson took station by the entrance.

Outside McCoy's cabin all was quiet for some 45 minutes. Then a figure came down the corridor and stopped in front of the sentry.

"If I may, I would like to see the captain."

"Yes, sir," said Wilson. He stepped aside to let the officer pass. Instead, the officer placed a hand on Wilson's shoulder. The sentry gave a startled cry, then stiffened. Graves removed the device, letting the guard fall to the floor.

The device used to kill the sentry was called a Spar by the owner. It was small and oval in shape. The upper half was metallic and could be held in the hand. The lower half, however, was deadly to the touch. This part consisted of a solid whitish substance. The material could draw all of the electrons from the body if attached long enough.

Graves placed the Spar in a special pouch on his belt, then dragged Wilson's body into a vacant cabin nearby. He then stepped once more to the entrance to McCoy's cabin.

\* \* \*

McCoy didn't like being shanghaied into Kirk's plans. And Kirk's explanation had not helped much.



"How do you know Graves will act?" McCoy demanded.

"I don't, but I believe Graftin will wake up in a few hours. Graves must act before that time."

"What makes you think Graftin will come to?"

"Graftin was given a sedative, you said. How long does a sedative last?"

"Depends on the dose."

"All right, let's say this sedative is a stronger dose than usual. The longest it could last is a day, two days at the outside. Also Graves would not hamper his escape by having to give Graftin an antidote before he leaves."

"So you left yourself open. That's quite a gamble, Jim."

"Not necessarily, Bones. Even if Graftin stays unconscious I'm hoping Graves may take advantage of the situation."

"We're the bait then, where's the trap?"

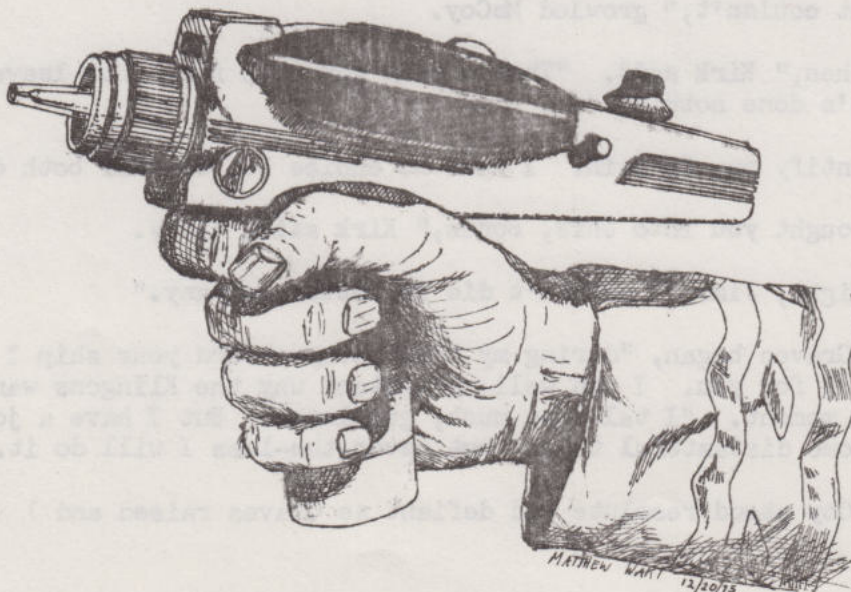
"She's outside watching for Graves."

"She. You mean Ventura?"

"Yes. I told her to wait an hour before alerting security. She won't wait that long, however."

"But she'll try to stop Graves."

"Yes, and I hope she does. Because if she can't we certainly won't be able to."





## CHAPTER FOUR

### CHECKMATE

They passed the time playing checkers, a favorite game of McCoy's. "I'm no chess player," he said, "but at checkers I'm a master--ask Spock. It's the first time I've gotten the upper hand on him in a long while."

Kirk slowly moved a checker. McCoy then mercilessly jumped several of his captain's checkers.

"You're not paying attention," McCoy observed.

"Sorry, Bones, I'm not very interested."

"Some brandy will fix you up." McCoy rose and walked to the cabinet where the liquor was stored.

At that moment the doors opened. In the entrance stood David Graves, fully disguised as Commodore James La Barrin. The phaser in his hand left no doubt of it.

"Good afternoon, Gentlemen," he said. "Captain, kindly step away from the table, if you please. Thank you." Graves entered the room, the doors closing behind him.

"Why, you son of. . ." McCoy began.

"Silence, doctor," Graves snapped. "I am sure my real identity is quite a shock to both of you. Against that wall, gentlemen."

"One question," said Kirk. "What happened to the real Commodore?"

"Dead, I'm afraid. When the Starbase found him I'm sure they raised hell."

"That's why you destroyed communications," Kirk muttered.

"Yes, I'm sorry about the woman but it really couldn't be helped."

"I'm sure it couldn't," growled McCoy.

"Kill me, then," Kirk said. "That's what you came for. But leave my medical officer, he's done nothing."

"He can identify me, Captain. I have no choice but to kill both of you."

"Sorry I brought you into this, Bones," Kirk said, sadly.

"It's all right, Jim. I couldn't die in better company."

"Captain," Graves began, "during my brief stay aboard your ship I have gained great respect for you. I can well understand why the Klingons want you killed." He paused a moment. "I talk too much, gentlemen. But I have a job to do. The job has become distasteful to me, but never-the-less I will do it."

Kirk and McCoy stood resolute and defiant as Graves raised and leveled his phaser.



"NO!!"

Graves whirled and jumped to one side. He now aimed his phaser at the entrance where Ventura, phaser in one hand, stood. The phaser was aimed in Graves' direction.

"These men must not die!" she cried.

"They must, it is my business."

Ventura and Graves gazed at each other for a long moment. It was a gaze of two lovers who meet for the first time in many years. It was a gaze of defiance and confrontation. It was a gaze of questions and answers. Finally, it was a gaze of hello and goodbye.

"You are still the most beautiful woman in the galaxy," Graves said with a sad smile.

"What will you do?" she asked.

"I will not surrender. So I must take my leave. Tell Victor I wish him well." Graves turned slightly toward Kirk and McCoy. "Captain, your life has been spared because of this woman," he said, removing the Spar from its pouch with his free hand. "I ask that you take care of her and her husband."

Kirk nodded.

Graves turned again to Ventura. "Goodbye, my love," he said. Then with a faint smile, he slapped the Spar down upon his wrist.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### AFTERMATH

Lieutenant Francis Monroe sat in front of his weapons and defense console deep in thought. It had been a long hard day aboard the Enterprise. First there had been that attempt on the captain's life. Graftin was then found unconscious in his quarters. But these incidents had been just the preliminaries for what had happened in McCoy's cabin.

The ship hummed with the news of Graves' death. Monroe was sorry Graves had chosen death but he was glad the whole affair was over.

After Graves died Ventura had fainted. She was revived and taken to her cabin, Nurse Chapel in attendance. Late in the afternoon Graftin had regained consciousness. The grief-stricken Ventura's condition was improved by this news.

Monroe was brought out of his reverie by the arrival of Kirk and McCoy on the bridge. Neither man was showing any ill effects of their recent brush with death.

Kirk took the con from Spock and asked Scotty for a report on communications.

"We should be ready in a few minutes, Captain," Scotty said. "We're running some final tests."



"Very well, Mr. Scott, inform me when you're ready," Kirk said, settling down in his chair.

Everyone on the bridge was watching as Scott, Uhura and three men from engineering worked on the battered console. Among the watchers was Sulu, his arm healed by the bone-knitting laser.

The console was still a mess. Scotty had been able to make the essential repairs, most of which were makeshift and temporary. Final repairs could only be completed at a starbase.

Scotty rose. We now have communications on hailing frequency one, Captain," he said.

"Thanks, Scotty. Lieutenant Uhura, contact Starbase 7."

She got an immediate answer from the starbase. "Acting Commodore Johnson wishes to speak to you, Captain."

"All right, Lieutenant."

The Acting Commodore's voice sounded hollow and tinny over the speaker. "Where have you been, Captain?" he asked. "We've been trying to contact you for almost a solar day. We have ships out looking for you."

"Our communications have been out of commission, Commodore. What is your traffic for this vessel?"

"Captain, your life is in the gravest danger. The man posing as Commodore James La Barrin is an imposter; apprehend him immediately. The real Commodore La Barrin was found dead in his quarters late yesterday."

"Yes, we know, Commodore. We have the situation under control. We are returning to Starbase 7 for repairs. Kirk out." Kirk turned to the helmsman. "Mr. Sulu, set course for Starbase 7, warp factor two."

"Aye aye, sir."

\* \* \*

Lieutenant Monroe had completed his duties on the bridge. He stepped from the turbolift, intent on going to his quarters. On the way he met Yeoman Adams walking down the corridor and they exchanged greetings.

"I understand your get-together was postponed," he said.

"Yes. We've decided to try it again tonight."

Monroe didn't know whether it was her smile or her warm personality that moved him. He only knew that despite his bitterness, he had found a friend. A friend he'd better hold on to. "Would you like an escort tonight?" he asked.

"Yes," she said with a soft smile. "I think I'd like that."



"NO!!"

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# THE DOLOMAI BEAST

Gary Phillips

I have food here, and water, and booze. I am quite comfortable, actually, save for unbearable fear and loathing.

I refuse to quit this subterranean stronghold until that fear-some beast I came to know at Dolomai has finished its ravages of the earth.

And it will come soon, now. This week.

Most probably, this night.

The evidence is there for any man to see, indeed to touch or feel. Or even to taste, if any are so disposed. The Dolomai mounds lie, as they have lain since long before they made their first somber appearance in the writings of antiquity, less than 300 kilometers west by northwest of Khartoum, in the upper Sudan. Those hundreds of strange low mounds form a great ellipse of weird terrain among the otherwise ordinary desert between Wadi el Melik and the Sixth Cataract of the Nile.

I had scarcely more than heard of them until I received a transatlantic telephone call from my old friend and colleague, Alvord Ainsworthy, the noted anthropologist. The call came in the dead of night at my residence, which did nothing to turn my disposition in favor of the then unknown caller.

I stumbled through the darkened house to reach my study. "Whatever can warrant disturbing a man's sleep at such an hour?" was my first utterance upon reaching the insistently ringing contraption.

"Dr. Nostralamo, it's Ainsworthy here. In Africa, you know. Sorry to disturb you at such an ungodly hour, but we've just now come upon something so ominous that I know you'll want to look into right away. Only the world's foremost coprolitologists, can possibly unravel this portentous mystery we have unearthed."

"Well, come on, what is it?" I confess to being slightly short of temper when awakened in the middle of my rest, no matter the reason.

"We've found a coprolite of absolutely unprecedented size. Several in fact. Most likely several hundred of them, although that needs verifying by more digging."



7

"And just how large might this unprecedented coprolite be?" I might explain that much of my irony about this purported find stemmed from the large number of times I personally and members of my specialization as a group have been the nub of pranks in the poorest of taste, at the hands of both the coarse public and even some obscene reference in regard to the coprolitologist's purely scholarly interest in the droppings of animals, particularly in fossil form, is irresistible to such blackguards. If only Sigmund Freud had known to what vile ends his lectures on feces obsessions would someday be put. But no matter.

Ainsworthy was not put off by my reticence. "We haven't uncovered even a goodly fraction of one yet, but to all appearances we are dealing with a roughly circular specimen over a kilometer in diameter and many meters thick."

I was amused by what I considered to be the man's ignorance of even the most basic coprolitology. "What you've got is an aggregate of many individual droppings, although it is rather larger than any known to date."

"Smythe is on the scene, and believes it to be a single...ah,... remains."

Smythe, ah." I took on a sharper interest. If that dilettante Smythe had gone on record with that ridiculous opinion, I at last had my chance to show him up for what he was. Oh, his training was sound enough, but he's just not solid, if you get my meaning. "Well, that's something else again. I'll be over tomorrow. Just out of Khartoum, isn't it?"

"Rather more than just. Take the boat north to the sixth cataract and my man will be there to escort you on into the digs. You'll bring your equipment?"

"Yes, of course."

The next morning I turned my graduate seminar in microscopic coprolitology over to associate professor who I felt could probably manage to keep it alive until I returned, and arranged my air passage to Khartoum.

\*\*\*\*\*

It was a pity not to be able to tarry in that exotic and historic city on the Nile, with its ancient shrines and busy markets. But Ainsworthy's man would be waiting, so I boarded the first boat bound down the Nile. I didn't know this section of the mysterious Nile very well at all, having traveled it only three or four times before enroute to various diggings, so the scenery provided some diversion on the four hour trip.



Ainsworthy's man, an ugly brute with one eye hideously infected, was at the landing as promised. He sat atop a mangy, decrepit camel and offered me the reins to another leprous looking beast. I mounted carefully, taking great pains to avoid touching the diseased thing. We set out immediately for the Dolomai mounds. I had seen the mounds several times from the air, but never actually visited them. I recalled having heard that some of the most primitive nomads of the area held a superstitious awe of the place. They styled it 'the place of death', and would add a week to their journey rather than cross it. Perhaps some light could be shed on the origin of their superstition through the digging. All superstition, after all, has its basis in fact!

Ainsworth's man said never a word for the whole trip to the mounds. The eerie silence of the Sahara put me into a dark mood, aggravated by the heat which strained the eyes and mind by causing everything to shimmer and change form.

When at last we arrived at the first mound, I should have felt a profound relief. Yet there was something about the place that set my nerves on edge. A crew was busily removing sand and soil from oddly textured underlying hard material. It had a peculiar greenish color and an unnatural sheen. Possibly it was the coprolite mass that charlatan Smythe tool for a single giant coprolite. No creature that ever haunted the earth could have rendered such a dropping, or one a thousandth as large. Poor Smythe, he must have gone unbalanced. The gruesome heat of the Sahara does have a way of bringing latent madness to the fore.

After an eternity of waiting, feeling the dark, forboding atmosphere of this unholy place eating at my already dismal mood, Ainsworthy arrived to greet me. He was miraculously fresh and prom in his white safari suit and pith helmet in spite of the oppressive heat.

"Quite large, don't you think!" he said.

"Yes, remardable," I admitted. I did my best to shake off the baleful influence of the place. "But hardly likely to be a single dropping. No creature that ever lived or even could have lived on this place could have produced such a pile. Smythe has bugged out."

"I shall be quite interested to learn your opinion once you have examined it in detail. As it so happens, Smythe has shown me the basis for his belief that it is a single object, and I am rather inclined to agree. Pending your own examination, of course."

"Of course. Shall we have dinner, then get right at the thing?"

"Splendid."

\*\*\*\*\*



4

The dinner was quite adequate for mid-Sahara, and did something to restore my spirits. Afterwards, he gave me a brief tour of the dig and assigned some of the workmen to assist me. With sunset, the mounds took on an eerie, foreboding aspect. I noticed that Ainsworthy also began to look nervously about, and cut short our tour.

"Where is Smythe keeping himself?" I asked, as we returned to the reassuring glow of the camp's electric lights.

"He is boring cores into some of the other mounds, and taking some X-ray reflection photos. He'll be back in a few days."

"That might prove a constructive move. Well, I will see you this evening."

"No, I am going over to get a new mound started, and won't be back until the group with Smythe picks me up. We should have grounds for a good discussion then."

"Right," I said as he left for the new mound.

For the next three dismal, sweat-drenched days I studied the Coprolitic material which made up the bulk of the mound. It was completely unlike any I had examined anywhere in the world. I took numerous samples deep in to the mass with Ainsworthy's power drilling equipment. The picture that began gradually to unfold was fantastic and darkly foreboding in the extreme.

With the most powerful techniques of modern coprolitic science at my disposal, I could find no evidence that the huge mass composing the mound was an aggregate of many small droppings concreted together through the ravages of time. On the contrary every evidence pointed to the essential correctness of Smythe's outrageous and terrifying hypothesis.

Of course it seemed impossible, as anyone with sound judgment can appreciate. The baffling problem was that I could find no flaws in the evidence, no error in the procedure which could have caused the erroneous appearance that the thing was a single gigantic coprolite. I found myself increasingly loath to extinguish my lamp each evening in this eerie place. A nervous tremor appeared in the usually neat hand of my notebooks.

I found several whole bones of large mammals in the mass, which allowed me to date it to the Miocene, about 12 million years ago. As more and more bones were recovered from the mass, a disturbing picture emerged. Only the primitive mammals of the Miocene were represented. Not a single bone from the reptiles, birds, or fishes flourishing at the same time was present. Evidently whatever creature had produced this composite dunghheap (for I still believed



it was a composite, in spite of the evidence to the contrary), had a strong preference for gorging itself on the warm flesh of mammals.

On one table in the camp I kept the largest intact bone found in the mass to date. Each day a new and larger bone would appear, forcing me to revise my estimate of the minimum size of the Dolomai creatures to ever more frightening figures. When Ainsworthy and Smythe returned, the largest bone was nearly three meters long. This proved that the Dolomai Creatures, if their head and neck arrangement was anything similar to that found in any creature save whales, must be more massive by a factor of two than any previously known creature.

I started off our conference. "We are dealing here with the droppings of colossal creatures, perhaps as much as 50 meters long, bigger than the largest dinosaurs, and on a par with the Great Blue Whale."

"Rubbish!" Smythe said. "The Dolomai beast has a length of ten Kilometers at the least. That's easy to see by simple extrapolation based on the one kilometer size of its droppings."

"Ridiculous," I said. "No creature standing over six miles high could support even a fraction of its weight."

"No earthly creature," Smythe said. "Haven't you realized that we are dealing with the droppings of a monster the likes of which was never spawned on earth."

"Fantasy, pure and simple. What evidence have you?"

With an exaggerated flourish he produced an X-ray reflection photograph of the skeleton of a Great Blue Whale. The bones were in perfect arrangement, clearly indicating that the creature had not been swallowed piecemeal. I trembled to think of the implications. If this were truly in one of the mounds, then I would have to come to believe, as Smythe did, that the earth had once been plagued by a beast beyond the grasp of the imagination.

I turned to Ainsworthy. "Can you vouch for the authenticity of this exposure?"

"Absolutely. I supervised it myself."

I felt the blood drain from my face. "But whales did not appear until well after the extinction of the giant reptiles. What hellish creatures, with what findish maw, could have gulped and digested this Great Blue Whale in one piece?"

"Let me outline what I have found out, if you are now disposed



to believe" said Smythe.

"I am somewhat so disposed," I said.

"Fine. These mounds, and there are about two thousand of them, are the droppings of a terrible creature which molests the earth periodically for what purpose we do not know. While here it stuffs its behemoth belly with mammalian flesh. Its size is not comprehensible on the scale of earthly creatures--if it ever stands its head must protrude into the vacuum of space. If it has a head. We must refrain from thinking of it in earthly terms if we are to ever come to understand it."

At last I was convinced that this seeming fantasy was in fact bitterest reality. In the following days we made many additional discoveries which were more ghastly even than the monstrous size of this horrible beast of prey.

Chief among these was the discovery that some of the giant coprolites were quite recent.

At last we found what we are now certain was the last one. It is only one hundred thousand years old. And the bones of only one type of animal are present.

Homo Sapiens.

Man!

\*\*\*\*\*

At last the appalling picture is crystal clear. The ages of the various coprolites are spaced quite exactly at one hundred thousand year intervals. The mass spectrographic radioisotope dating is accurate to within a day over the whole range of the periodic ranges of this dark beast.

And for all of the ones that fall within the age of man, the only creature the horrid beast has preyed upon is man.

Man is his favorite delicacy; his staple!

We wrote up our portentous findings, endorsed by all of the scientists who have visited the diggings, and took them in person to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

He laughed at us.

We took them to the Science Advisor of the President of the United States.



He added our names to a list of unreliable crackpot scientists.

Our colleagues abroad have met with similar treatment from their governments.

And so matters stand. Whenever I think of this dreadful beast I picture it as a titanic winged anteater, black as night with eyes of hellfire. I know full-well that there is no reason to suppose that it resembles any earthly creature. Yet the mind cannot grasp a formless abstraction, and supplies morbid detail to fill any vacuum.

I see it as winged because I know that it somehow crosses those unthinkable gaps that separate the planets or even the stars. And while I know there is no air there to support its flight, I can not picture any other means for its travels.

I see it as an anteater because that is the only predator I know which feeds upon creatures a thousandth its size, taking its prey in great numbers to sate its voracious appetite.

And in just such fashion, the Dolomai beast must swoop up ant-speck humans in prodigious numbers to nourish its stupendous bulk.

\*\*\*\*\*

In spite of his stupidity, mankind may perhaps survive the return of that unimaginable creature whose droppings have made the Dolomai mounds. Not because that thing whose form I cannot divine will be deterred by any efforts of this feeble race, but rather because it has no purpose to destroy mankind but to fill its belly for whatever dark wanderings among the stars and planets draw it away from our earth and then back again.

And so I wait here in my shelter. If the Dolomai beast remains true to its schedule--and it has for some millions of years--it will appear here again one hundred thousand years from its last visit.

Which is say this year. This month.

Tonight.

\*\*\*\*\*



# DOUBLEDAY

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# The Cannibals

An original story by  
Susan Dastrup

Based upon characters  
created by  
Jeff Rice

## ONE

Saturday -- 10:45 pm. "It was a hot July night in the windy city of Chicago, but for one man, it was his funeral hour. Fred Taylor, a local bum on 43rd Avenue, wasn't feeling any heat or pain as he guzzled down a bottle of cheap whiskey. Little did he know how fortunate he was, not being able to feel pain."

They moved with cat-like silence, searching for something. The dark Chicago alley offered plenty of protection, and their eyes were already accustomed to the dark. A noise brought their attention to the back of the adjoining alley. They caught sight of a man stumbling towards them and their mouths dripped saliva as they caught the scent of human flesh.

The drunk didn't notice them until they were upon him. He felt a long thin blade being drawn across his neck and he screamed as his blood poured out. Fred Taylor didn't even have time to notice the teeth tearing at his flesh.

Carl Kolchak, a reporter for the INS newspaper, was just coming through the door of his three-room apartment. He tossed his camera and tape recorder on the faded, sagging couch, walked over to the kitchen, set his well-worn hat carefully on the counter, opened the refrigerator door, and searched its almost empty insides for something to eat. Spying a left-over "Big Mac", he took it out and closed the door.

Just as he prepared to enjoy his meal, Kolchak heard a police call come over his police scanner radio: "Units 24 and 32 in the vicinity of 43rd Avenue. Screams heard in back alley. Use code 2."

Kolchak stayed in his apartment long enough to grab his camera,



tane recorder, and hat, then dashed out, slamming the door behind him.

The yellow convertible Mustang pulled up just outside the nearest police car as the scream of distant ambulance sirens were heard. Kolchak, armed with his equipment, jumped out of the car and hurried over to where the cops were standing, beside the remains of a man in a pool of blood.

"Kolchack, INS Press," he said while the camera's flash cubes lit the area. Kolchak paused from photographing to inquire, "What do you think happened to... him?"

"Isn't it obvious, Kolchak?" the cop said disgustedly. "It was a dog attack."

"A dog?! Sure, a big dog came, killed a man, and from the looks of it, carved him up like a Thanksgiving turkey! Come on, officer, that story won't hold water in a storm."

"Listen, Kolchak," the other cop threatened, "don't go saying any of your loony accusations..."

"Ok, ok. Calm down." Kolchak sighed, then tried a new approach as the ambulance pulled up. "Who was he?" Kolchak asked as he watched the attendants prepare to take the "body" to the mortuary.

"His name was Fred Taylor, age 53. He's a local bum."

"Anybody see what happened?"

"None. Just a few people heard screams and some growls. Like I said, a big dog."

Kolchak just recorded what was said, then after a quick survey prepared to leave the alley. "Well," he muttered, "looks more like a..."

"Kolchak! Get the hell outta here!"

"All right. Ok." Kolchak turned, walked over to his car, got into it, and pulled out just as Detective Martin's white Chevy arrived. Martin caught a brief glimpse of the Mustang as it sped off into the darkness.

"What did that creep want?" Martin asked the two cops.

"Just a story, sir. It looks like the job of a psychopath. The body's been literally slashed to pieces with some sort of sharp object."

"Unsatisfied with the patrolman's answer to his first question,



Martin continued to stare into the darkness where the Mustang had vanished. Then he turned to face the grim sight ahead.

## TWO

Sunday -- 9:55 pm. "William Benet, a college boxer for the University of Chicago, had had such a good day in the fighting ring, he just had to stay a couple of hours more to work out for tomorrow's match. Little did Benet know that those few more hours of practice would cost him more than the match."

When the call came in over the police scanner installed in Kolchak's car, he was only a few blocks away from the University. Kolchak drove through the campus gates and around to the area of the exercise room.

As he parked and got out of his car, Kolchak was startled by a voice from behind him. "Are you a cop?" he was asked.

Kolchak turned around to find himself face to face with one of the college's janitors.

"The screams came from over there," the janitor informed him while pointing at the gymnasium.

"Thanks...uh..." Kolchak muttered.

"Call me Ernie."

"Thanks, Ernie... Go down by the gate and wait for...my men."

The janitor gave Kolchak a suspicious look. "You sure don't look like a cop."

"Uh....I work...undercover."

Kolchak made sure the man started down towards the gate. Straining, he heard the sirens of the approaching police cars and Kolchak ran quickly off to the gym.

The room was dark and Kolchak felt nervous without knowing who, or what, might be in there. Faintly he could hear growls and muffled movements. Kolchak felt near the door and his hand came to the light switch.

He turned as the lights came on and backed away in horror. His eyes fell upon two shapes, saturated in blood, cutting up a body and stuffing the pieces into a bag. Surprised by the light, the two figures snarled in anger and started to run for the door. Kolchak, blocking their way, had time for one quick picture before one of the things, smelling of oil and death, was upon him. Kolchak



lost consciousness as the creature slammed his head against a wall.

Slowly, Kolchak became aware of people bending over him. He got up quickly, struggling to push them away as the thought of the two creatures over the body returned to his mind.

"Easy, Kolchak," a voice said, "that'll teach you to wait for the police. What happened in there?"

Kolchak grunted in pain as he regained clearer vision and found himself looking at Detective Martin.

"I tripped," he said sarcastically while rubbing the back of his head.

"Listen, Kolchak, now I can get you for impersonating an officer, interfering with a police case, and I can think up lots more, so be nice and cooperative and tell me what you saw."

"All right. A big dog..." Kolchak began.

"I'm gonna break you..." Martin threatened.

"You want the truth, ok. Two...things were cutting up a body and stuffing the pieces into a bag."

Martin drew back in disgust and gave up, finding that harder to believe than the "big dog" story. He turned and called for a police officer. "See Mr. Kolchak home..." he began.

"No thanks," Kolchak interrupted, "I'll see myself home...if you don't mind."

Martin watched as Kolchak got up, stumbled over to his car, got in it, and drove out of the college.

### THREE

At 7:30 in the morning, Kolchak was patiently waiting for his chance to slip past the front police desk and head down the stairs to the morgue. His chance came when a raid on a local strip joint brought in a dozen or so drunk, angry, barely-dressed "Kitten Girls" and one very upset manager. They gathered around the desk, yelling and complaining about invasion of privacy and police brutality.

While they were keeping the front desk, and most of the other officers, occupied, Kolchak walked quickly through the crowd and over to the stairs. There, he paused to make sure no-one had noticed him, then started down. A few minutes later and two flights down, Kolchak came to the level on which the morgue was located. He found the door easily since the trip was a familiar one. He waited to make sure only the attendant was there, then opened the door and



strolled casually in.

The attendant, a fat, stubby little man, was busy working on a crossword puzzle. He said his greeting without bothering to look up.

"Yes, may I help you?"

Kolchak grinned at his good fortune. Simon Parker, the attendant, was notorious in the press world for his ease at being bribed, and the price wasn't even high.

"Hi, Simon," he said to let the attendant know who had just walked in.

"Kolchak! You're not supposed to be here. Get out before... I call the police!"

"Ah come on, Simon. Is that any way to greet an old friend?"

"Some friend, Kolchak. Every time you come here, I get in trouble," Simon said while opening the door, indicating that Kolchak should leave.

Kolchak reached in his wallet and pulled out a twenty dollar bill. "Would this help get you out of trouble?" He grinned as Simon's hand released the door and reached for the bill.

"Well...mmm...yes...it might. What do you want?" Simon said, his eyes still on the money.

"Do you remember the two 'dog' attack victims, a drunk and a boxer?"

"Ah yes, numbers 18 and 27," Simon said thoughtfully and walked over to the freezer. Kolchak followed him and waited patiently as Simon fumbled with the door, then slid the body of Fred Taylor out.

"Could a dog do all that?" Kolchak said, amazed at the thought that a dog could do that much damage.

"Well," Simon said, "there are teeth marks on the body, but the majority of the damage was done by a knife. As you can see, most of the flesh is gone, along with several organs."

"Organs? Which organs?"

"Oh, the heart and the liver."

"What about...uh..."

"William Benet?" Simon closed number 18 and moved over to open door 27. "Same type of mutilations, though not as great an



extent as number 18's."

"And the heart and liver?"

"They're gone too."

"Thanks, Simon. Here." Kolchak handed him a ten along with the twenty. "You're great."

At 8 o'clock sharp the doors of the INS opened and the "early birds" of the newspaper staff wandered in to start putting together the afternoon edition. Kolchak made it by 8:30 and for the next two hours sat frantically all the information he had gathered so far. He was oblivious to his two colleagues, Miss Emily and Ron Updike, entering the office at 9:30. At 10:30, when he had finished typing, Kolchak shot out of the chair and into the darkroom, camera in hand, to start developing the pictures he taken.

Tony Vincenzo, editor for the INS, had just finished a fantastic lunch at Herald's Cafe and was returning to work. He walked into his office on the second floor of the INS building. Looking around, he noticed Ron and Emily seated at their desks, putting articles and pictures together. Tony also spied the one empty desk at the back of the room and stormed through the door, breaking the sound of typewriters and rustling papers.

"It's one o'clock! Where's Kolchak?" he hollered.

"Oh!" Miss Emily said, startled. "Well, I believe he's in there." She pointed to the darkroom.

Tony stared briefly at the elderly lady, then turned and started toward the developing room. Just before he reached it, the door flew open and Kolchak appeared with a photograph, still dripping a smelly solution.

"Hello, Carl, have you decided to join the newspaper, or is this just a social visit?" Tony inquired casually.

"Oh, hi, Tony, hey, I think I'm really on to something. Look at this." Kolchak shoved the picture into Tony's hands.

"Wha...what's this?" Tony asked disgustedly as the solution dripped off his fingers and onto the floor.

"Tony!" Kolchak said, slightly hurt. "It's a picture of Fred Taylor and William Benet's murderers."

"Who are Fred Taylor and William Benet?" Tony asked. He didn't receive a reply.

"You see, Tony, I think they were killed by cannibals..."

Vincenzo stiffened as a burst of laughter from Ron filled the



room.

"Tony," Kolchak pleaded, "both victims were killed by a knife in the jugular vein." Kolchak ignored the sickly look on Tony's face and went on. "And Tony, there were teeth marks, HUMAN teeth marks, Tony, found on the flesh!"

"Carl," Tony began calmly, "there are no such things as cannibals in Chicago, especially in Chicago! Now, I want you to go down and cover the pet show at the fairgrounds and forget all about ..." Tony was cut off as a police bulletin from the scanner drowned his voice out.

"Car 12, proceed to City Park, body found. Code 3."

Kolchak took the photo from his editor's hands, set it on his desk, grabbed his camera, recorder, and hat, then hustled past Tony.

"Kolchak, the pet show..." Tony warned.

"All right. Ok. I'll try to do it," Kolchak mumbled, opening the door, "but it's more to Ron's capability. You'll get his first news story that really will be for the dogs!" Kolchak disappeared, slamming the door so hard, the glass almost came out of the windows.

#### FOUR

Monday -- 1:00 pm. "While I was sleeping away a headache, Barry Talbert, a former football player, was cordially being invited to dinner. Unfortunately, he was on the menu."

By the time Kolchak arrived on the scene, Barry Talbert's body was being loaded into the ambulance. Kolchak walked quickly over to where Detective Martin was standing and inquired innocently, "Another 'dog' attack, sir?"

"Kolchak," Martin said in a tone that indicated he was the last person the detective wanted to see. "Why are you always covering crimes these days?"

"Oh... I don't know. Dedication, good camera, and a great police scanner. Do you mind if I look around?"

"All right. My men are done here anyway."

Kolchak wandered into the murder scene, letting his presence be known by his flashing camera. Martin watched him for a few minutes, then shook his head and turned to talk to the two patrolmen waiting nearby.

Kolchak looked in amazement at all the damage done to the small area. Bushes ripped from the ground and thrown about, the struggle



extent as number 18's."

"And the heart and liver?"

"They're gone too."

"Thanks, Simon. Here." Kolchak handed him a ten along with the twenty. "You're great."

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Talbert put up must have been fantastic! He kicked away at the bushes and leaves, some stained with blood. As he stood there in thought, he became aware of a dull shine beneath the leaves. He bent down and put his hand upon a knife, the blade still sticky with blood. Quickly, Kolchak straightened and glanced carefully at Martin. He was pleased to see the detective busy with the other officers. Kolchak stooped over and carefully stuffed the knife under his coat. He made sure the blade was secure, then walked stiffly over to his car, and found it quite uncomfortable sitting down.

"Kolchak."

He froze as he saw Martin walking over to him and then lean on the car door.

"Oh...what? Do you care to make a statement about the 'unusual' murders..." Kolchak said while pressing a button of his recorder.

"No." Martin answered while pressing another button, "but I just wanted to inform you not to print any of your exaggerated stories. Simply say there was a murder, a stabbing, and the assailant got away. That simply."

"Now wait a minute, you can't do that!"

"No more than that Kolchak, atleast until we've got this guy under wraps."

"Then you do admit a human being is responsible." Kolchak prodded.

"Crazy insane people! Nuts are born every day!"

"Ya, well you would be an expert on nuts...Sir!" Kolchak spat as he started up his car.

"Just remember what I said..."

"Ya, ya, I'll remember."

Unsatisfied, the detective watched the mustang speed away, then, after some thought, he headed to his car to call Tony Vinchenzo.

## FIVE

"I spent what was left of the afternoon trying to find an anthropologist who knew something about knives. I finally located one on the east side of Chicago in an old museum. Although he was a little strange, Malchome Crawl knew his knives well."

The old museum was past its time to be torn down and Kolchak couldn't shrug off the feeling that the roof was going to land



on his head if he walked or breathed very loudly. He made his way (carefully) thru the rooms and finally found a little gray-haired man seated at a desk bending over a rock under a magnifying glass.

"Excuse me, do you know where Mr. Crawl is?"

"Your look'in at him sonny." The little man answered, his voice reminding Kolchak of a door that needed oiling badly. "So what brings you to my little corner of the world?" Malchome finally said looking up at the reporter.

"Oh well, I was wondering whether you might be able to tell me where this came from." Kolchak said in a casual tone while removing from a box.

"Hmmm, let me take a closer look at that." Malchome said while taking the knife from Kolchak's hands. "Fantastic! I've only seen one or two of this type. Where did you get it?"

"I...bought it at a pawn shop."

"A pawn shop huh? Well, the original owner must have not known what he had."

"Well," Kolchak asked impatiently, "What do I have?"

"You, mister..." Malchome's voice faded as he began wondering who he was talking to.

"Kolchak." The reporter filled in.

"Mr. Kolchak, this blade is of Amazon origin. The blade, although metallic, is formed the same way the native tribes of the deep Amazon make them. As you can see, the handle is carved from a tree limb, probably off a tree of great meaning to the tribe, and stained with some native dye. The carvings symbolize the importance, as well as the warrior who owned it."

"How do you become important?"

"Well, there are many ways to gain status in primitive tribes, but this particular tribe is of cannibalistic type. I've seen pictures of their camps and villages and even been to the Amazon to study them." The little man said proudly, "But this is one of their sacrificial knives used in their practices of Black Magic."

"They believe in Black Magic?"

"Yes," Malchome fondled the knife lovingly, "they still use Black Magic. You see, they believe that, by using certain organs of animals and humans, they can change shapes, raise spirits, or summon a god, almost anything."



"How, would you say, they would use the heart and liver in a ceremony?"

"Well, the heart, to them, is the symbol of life, it is also a sender/reciever of blood. The liver is like a cleanser, so I'd say that a group or single warrior is trying to go to one of their chiefs or gods."

"How many would they need?"

"How many are going?"

Kolchak stood looking at Malchome, "Four or five." He said guessing.

"You see, the bigger the group, the more they would need. Each member would need one heart and one liver. Add a few herbs, what ever, and their usual rituals, then that's, that."

Kolchak thought a moment, wondering if the creatures he saw still needed to kill. Kolchak also knew he couldn't tell the police, or he'd be seeing a padded cell for life. "One more thing Mr. Crawl, where would a group of these people hide out, say in Chicago?"

"In Chicago? Probably somewhere dark, quiet, near a water front, yet close to a food supply. Why do you ask?"

"I'm writing a book. Thank you very much. May I have the knife back?"

"Surely, and if you ever want to get rid of it, I'll be here to take it off your hands."

## SIX

Kolchak arrived back in the news room shortly after Tony had finished talking to Detective martin. Vincenzo watched as Kolchak, carrying a large, oblong box, moved towards his paper covered desk. The editor sighed, got up from his chair, and opened the glass windowed door that separated him from the rest of the News staff.

"Kolchak, come into my office please."

"Just a minute Tony..." Kolchak stalled as he slipped paper into his typewriter.

"Now Kolchak!" Vincenzo snapped.

The reporter, feeling his editors touchy mood, moved to obey.

"Well Tony, what can I do for you?"



refinery was abandon because of health and safty violations. He also noticed that themurder scenes weren't too far from the building. Kolchak glanced at his watch, five o'clock. He figured half an hour to get there, get proof, andnot get himself killed. He wrote the address of the refinery down and headed towards Tonys office. The editor was out for an evening snack and, if Kolchak could rely on a three year habit, would be back at exactly six o'clock. He also added to stop the presses for a page one story. Grabbing his equipment and ~~hat~~, he headed out of the INS building and down to his car.

## SEVEN

By the time Kolchaks Mustang pulled up outside the oil refinery, it was six o'clock. Kolchak jumped out of his car, took a quick survey of the surrounding area, and headed towards the refinery to find a way in.

Inside the building of the basement level, four human-like figures were resting nervously. ~~on~~ They fidgeted and squirmed in the oil on the floor and were glad night was setting in.

Kolchak carefully broke the window ~~and~~ cleared the glass from the frame. He climbed up on some oil drums stacked underneath and wiggled his way thru, into the refinery. He looked nervously around him as he switched on an old flashlight. The smell of the building made him wonder if anything could possibly live in there, but changed his mind when a huge rat scurried by. The reporter paused a moment to get up his nerve, then he started a quiet search of the premisis.

The door to the upper levels was jammed shut so Kolchak tried the one to the basement levels and could open it. Swallowing the lump in his throat, Kolchak shown the light on the stairway and started down.

Tony Vinchenzo stared nervously at the note Kolchak had left on the editors desk. He made a quick silent decision, and dialed Detective Martins phone number.

Kolchak finally came to the bottom of the stairway. He looked above him and traced his decent from the over hanging stairs. Just as he stepped of the basement level, the light in the flashlight flickered and dimmed. He cursed at the batteries and fumbled around for something to make into a torch. Spying an old broom soaked in oil, he picked it up and kept it for future use. A noise behind him brought the flachlight around in that direction. Kolchak squinted in the dim light to try to see a little better. He heard soft low growls from behind a storage tank and Kolchak moved slowly in that direction. He jumped when four human beings came out of the darkness, just as startled. Kolchak grabbed his



and got off one quick picture before the batteries in the flashlight gave out.

Five police cars sped up the roadside and pulled up beside the Mustang in the parking lot. Detective Martin gathered his little group together and headed towards the refinery. They found a door, forced it open, and started searching inside the building for 'trespassers'.

The sudden darkness that followed after the batteries went out gave Kolchak his chance to find a quick hiding place. Seconds later he could hear the 'Amazons' searching for the stranger who had disturbed them. Kolchak felt quietly around himself. He found out that he was cornered between a wall and some oil drums with only one way out for a quick exit. In an attempt to find a more defensive position, Kolchak reached out and put his hand on a soft oily object. He was just thinking of screaming when he realized it was the old broom. Quickly he pulled a lighter from his pocket and lit the oil soaked straw. The burning light shone off the blades the 'Amazons' held in their hands, poised for attack. They moved cautiously towards the reporter but glanced nervously at the makeshift torch. As Kolchak moved from his hiding place and came face to face with the creatures, it amazed him to think people, in this day and age, still lived and dressed like the way these people were. All four were males, tall and dark skinned, they were totally naked except for a thin cord belt with a leather pouch on it. They were covered with oil and dirt, which also matted their long black hair. Their eyes were small, black, and flared with hatred. The savages made low growling noises to one another and Kolchak couldn't help but notice the looks they gave him. A noise from the stairs above caught Kolchak's attention and he was pleased to see the look on Martin's face as the detective saw the naked savages with knives staring back up at him. Kolchak caught a sudden movement out of the corner of his eye and felt the broom being knocked out of his hand. Kolchak backed away as the oil on the floor caught on fire. He started to move towards the stairs when he heard screaming behind him. The 'Amazons' were caught in the deadly blaze. They had backed up against the wall and snarled angrily at the flames around them. Kolchak saw three of them pull out of the pouches on their belts two human organs each and hold them high over their heads. The fourth 'Amazon' screamed miserably and backed away as his companions uttered some strange words, became mist-covered forms, then disappeared altogether. Kolchak's camera got a few pictures before the fire forced him to go up the stairs. He followed Martin and the other cops out of the building and just as they reached the cars, Kolchak, along with several others, was knocked to the ground by an explosion that ripped the refinery apart.



Monday

"The refinery was beyond saving by the time the fire department arrived, and there was so much rubble and junk that they never found any bodies (officially) and plans are now being made for a new park to be built on that site.

"As for my story, the psycho-murders case was closed without even so much as a column in the obituaries. The police confiscated my evidence, and for all I know it's fueling the incinerator behind the police station. I did get an apology from Detective Martin who also said that if I wanted to stay in Chicago, I'd keep my mouth shut and my typewriter quiet about this case, or I'd be buried under so many charges, not even a bulldozer could dig me out.

"So there you have it, and whether you believe it or not won't bother me. I wouldn't even have believed it if I hadn't seen it. I guess it will just remain another one of my 'fictional stories', until someone else decides to dig up what really happened."

--CK  
1975





