AT LAST!

You can paint an original picture like this, using real artists' oil paints... the Vis-A-Lens (overlay) way

JUST AS A TEACHER by your side, this entirely new and original method shows you in actual size and color how and what to do. You compare your progress, step-by-step, with the easy-to-follow VIS-A-LENS, and before you realize it, you are actually painting.

A choice of subjects available—get yours now—

Price includes Vis-A-Lens, 12x16 inch Art Board, 6 tubes Oil Paint, Oil, Turpentine, 2 Brushes, 16 page Instruction Book.

only $4.95

VIS-A-LENS is sold by Aldens, Montgomery Ward, Sears, Roebuck & Co. and leading department stores, coast to coast. If your local stores do not have it, ask them to order an assortment. Address inquiries to:

Vis-a-lens, Inc., 530 E. Bainbridge St., Elizabethtown, Penna
JUNE, 1960

Galaxy

Magazine

Also Published in
Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Finland and Sweden

Contents

Book-Length Novel — First of Two Parts
Drunkard's Walk .............................................. by Frederik Pohl 8

Novellas
Transstar ......................................................... by Raymond E. Banks 108
Inside John Barth ............................................. by William W. Stuart 172

Short Stories
Upstarts .......................................................... by L. J. Stecher 58
The Good Neighbors ........................................... by Edgar Pangborn 74
The Dope on Mars .............................................. by Jack Sharkey 94
Monkey on His Back .......................................... by Charles V. De Vet 135
Idea Man .......................................................... by John Rackham 156

Short-Short Story
Earthmen Bearing Gifts ..................................... by Fredric Brown 148

Science Department
For Your Information ......................................... by Willy Ley 81

Fuels Galore

Features
Editor's Page ................................................... by H. L. Gold 5
Forecast .......................................................... 80
Galaxy's Five Star Shelf ..................................... by Floyd C. Gale 151

Cover by EMSH illustrating Drunkard's Walk

Robert M. Guinn, Publisher
Willy Ley, Science Editor
Joan J. De Mario, Asst. to the Publisher

H. L. Gold, Editor
W. I. Van Der Poel, Art Director
Sondra Greisen, Asst. to the Editor

Galaxy Magazine is published bi-monthly by Galaxy Publishing Corporation. Main offices: 421 Hudson Street, New York 14, N. Y. 50¢ per copy. Subscription: (6 copies) $2.50 per year in the United States, Canada, Mexico, South and Central America, and U. S. Possessions. Elsewhere $3.50. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office, New York, N. Y. Copyright, New York 1960, by Galaxy Publishing Corporation, Robert M. Guinn, president. All rights, including translations reserved. All material submitted must be accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelopes. The publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material. All stories printed in this magazine are fiction, and any similarity between characters and actual persons is coincidental.

Printed in the U.S.A. by The Guinn Co., Inc., N. Y.

You can control your fate!

Only one power controls your destiny—a strange force sleeping in your mind. Awaken it! Command it to obey you! Push obstacles aside and attain your fondest hopes and ideals. Let the Rosicrucians show you how this can be done.

Learn why many of history's great masters were Rosicrucians such as Leonardo de Vinci, Benjamin Franklin, Isaac Newton, Sir Francis Bacon, etc. Each of these men learned how to control their fate, to develop mind power, to attain success and happiness. The knowledge that helped these men of history is now helping thousands of thinking men and women throughout the world climb to new heights they, at one time, thought impossible. And they are no different than you!

SEND FOR FREE BOOK

Why not discover for yourself how you can take advantage of this priceless knowledge The Rosicrucians have preserved through the ages. If you are sincere in wanting greater success, security and happiness send TODAY for the fascinating FREE book, “The Mastery of Life.” There is no obligation and it may mean the turning point in your life, toward achievements you’ve never believed possible. Why not do it NOW? Just address your request to: Scribe S.Q.L.

The ROSICRUCIANS (AMORC)
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA
(NOT a religious organization)
WHAT ARE ALIENS MADE OF?

ONE of the most resourceful men on this planet is Lester Green of Prospect, Conn. Word for word, here are some of his truly incredible achievements that literally made news:

One fall Lester flooded a meadow to insure a good ice crop for the summer. While cutting ice during February he found a setting of hen's eggs in a block of ice. These he placed in a pan on top of his furnace to thaw out. A few days later he found eight Leghorn chicks in the pan, each covered with what resembled fur instead of feathers.

When Lester's chimney caught fire he went to the roof and threw sand down it. His wife, excited, mistook washing soda for salt and filled the stove with it. The fire fused the two materials and filled the stovepipe and chimney solidly with glass.

Hearing of Thomas A. Edison's experiment to extract rubber from goldenrod, Lester invented a system for producing dairy products from milkweed. He attached Mrs. Green's vibrating machine and churned the juice of the plants so that the leaves exuded butter.

Finding a snapping turtle that had been scared out of its shell, Lester made another for it out of concrete into which the turtle crawled and rewarded its benefactor by keeping his feed house free of rats and mice.

To assure a winter crop of fresh apples Lester sprayed his trees with glue which prevented the fruit's dropping off in the fall. During the winter a fresh apple always was available merely by washing off the glue.

While butchering a hog Lester discovered the fluid responsible for the curl in a pig's tail. By rubbing it on their hair Mrs. Green and her daughter produced beautiful permanent waves.

Great as Lester Green is, C. Louis Mortison of the Waterbury Republican and American is greater, for Green is Mortison's invention, and the exploits quoted are among the many in Hoaxes by Curtis D. MacDougall, published by Dover Publications, 920 Bway., N.Y. 10, @ $1.75. (Address and price are given to duck mail.)

"Ridiculous as some of these stories may appear," MacDougall continues, "the following results are on record:

"A Canadian farmer tried to
buy a pair of the fur-coated chickens. Mortison answered that
they had sweltered to death in the
warm weather.

"Two prominent chemical engi-
neers tried to find the Green home
to investigate the chimney filled
with glass.

"American and Canadian glue
manufacturing concerns sent let-
ters addressed to Lester Green
asking what kind of glue he used
for his apples, and a representa-
tive of a Boston concern came to
Prospect to investigate.

"Mrs. Green was inundated with
requests for the exact method of
extracting the pigtail fluid."

MacDougall's worthy purpose
is to expose hoaxes — and hoaxes
should indeed be exposed, espe-
cially vicious ones.

But it is no disrespect to his
purpose to say that the charm of
Hoaxes is the array of engaging
whoppers constructed for the sheer
love of invention, not only meant
to hurt nobody but to enrich their
lives, as indeed they do.

For MacDougall, in attributing
the success of hoaxes to every-
thing from indifference to preju-
dice and ignorance, does not at-
ttribute enough to their inventors'
ability to sweat illogic into the
shape — if not the substance — of
logic.

This is deadly, of course, in evil
causes. For instance, the Nazi
claim that Jews have a far higher
incidence of insanity than any
other religious group is true. But
it happens to coincide with the ur-
ban rate, which is the only one
that should be applied. Ukases for-
bidding Jews to own land forced
them into the cities, making them
an urban people — and therefore
subject to the same stresses as all
other city folk. As to the oft-made
charge that they prefer city life,
the Bible says otherwise, and the
phenomenal modern agricultural
production of Israel confirms the
Bible's testimony.

Very far from evil in such in-
tent or effect are Mortison's
hoaxes, And that a faker can be a
hero, commemorated as one, you
can see for yourself outside Win-
sted, Conn., where the welcoming
signs read:

Winsted, founded in 1799, has
been put on the map by the ingen-
ious and queer stories that em-
anate from this town and which
are printed all over the country,
thanks to L. T. Stone.

Unfortunately, Louis T. Stone,
the "Winsted Liar," is not living
proof. He died in 1933, managing
editor of the Evening Citizen,
whose building also marks his mem-
ory with a plaque, and a bridge
named after him has been built
over — what else? — Sucker Brook.

Beginning his journalistic tall-
tale career in 1895, Stone brillian-
ly manufactured circumstances that made the following dazzlers seem entirely reasonable:

A tree on which baked apples grew.

A farmer who plucked his chickens for market with a vacuum cleaner.

A rooster that stopped a train. (MacDougall doesn’t say, but my recollection of latter-day versions — hoaxes neither die nor fade away—was that the rooster stopped the train to save a life.)

A deaf and dumb pig.

A three-legged bullfrog.

A hen that laid a red-white-and-blue egg on the Fourth of July.

A Plymouth hen that hopped off a railroad engine’s cowcatcher when “Plymouth” was called, and left an egg “to pay for her ride.”

A cat with a harelip that whistled “Yankee Doodle.”

A modest cow owned by two old maids that refused to let any man milk her.

Three tunneling trout that burrowed their way underground from Highland Lake to Mr. Stone’s brook and received their New Year’s Day meal annually from Mr. Stone’s hand.

A man who painted a spider on his bald head to keep the flies away.

A watch in the stomach of a cow that lost only two hours over a period of years because the breath of the animal acted as an automatic winder.

Hoaxes deserves to be read for its relentless tracking down of frauds in art, history, literature, science, politics and journalism.

But there is a wonderfulness in the harmless exuberant imaginations — the purely entertaining variety — that science fiction could use more of, not just now but at any time in the past or future. This, in other words, is one thing there can’t be too much of.

Writers willing to settle for tentacled aliens might instead be inspired by the whirling whimpus, which spins so fast that nobody knows what one looks like; the rubberado, which bounces when shot, and anyone who eats it bounces, too; the tripodero, which has extensible legs and stuns its enemies with clay pellets shot from its blowgun proboscis; the racka-bore — adapted to living on hills, it has two legs, either left or right, shorter than the other two — but may be overspecialized because neither the left- nor right-legged type can turn in the opposite direction.

These and the wonders of the ancients were invented with such minuteness of detail to amaze the folks back home. Until the stars are explored, we all are the folks back home, and we love being amazed by cleverly fashioned aliens. Tentacles?

Bah, humbug!

— H. L. GOLD
THIS man’s name is Cornut, born in the year 2166 and now thirty. He is a teacher. Mathematics is his discipline. Number theory is his specialty. What he instructs is the mnemonics of number, a study which absorbs all his creative thought. But he also thinks about girls a lot.

He is unmarried. He sleeps alone and that is not so good.

If you wander around his small bedroom (it has lilac walls and a cream ceiling; those are the Math Tower colors), you will hear a whispering and a faint whirring sound. These are not the sounds of Cornut’s breath, although he is sleeping peacefully. The whispering is a hardly audible wheep, wheep from an electric clock. (It was knocked to the floor once. A gear is slightly off axis; it rubs against a rivet.) The whir is another clock. If you look more carefully, you will find that there are more clocks.

There are five clocks in this
WALK

By FREDERIK POHL

Illustrated by EMSH
room, all told. They all have alarms, set to ring at the same moment.

Cornut is a good-looking man, even if he is a little pale. If you are a woman (say, one of the girls in his classes), you would like to get him out in the sun. You would like to fatten him up and make him laugh more. He is not aware that he needs sunshine or fattening, but he is very much aware that he needs something.

He knows something is wrong. He has known this for seven weeks, on the best evidence of all.

The five clocks march briskly toward seven-fifteen, the time at which they are set to go off. Cornut has spent a lot of time arranging it so that they will sound at the same moment. He set the alarm dial on each, checked it by revolving the hands of the clocks themselves to make note of the exact second at which the trigger went off, painfully reset and rechecked. They are now guaranteed to ring, clang or buzz within a quarter-minute of each other.

However, one of them has a bad habit. It is the one that Cornut dropped once. It makes a faint click a few moments before the alarm itself rings.

It clicks now.

The sound is not very loud, but Cornut stirs. His eyes flicker. They close again, but he is not quite asleep.

After a moment he pushes back the covers and sits up. His eyes are still almost closed.

Suppose you are a picture on his wall — perhaps the portrait of Leibnitz, taken from Ficquet’s old engraving. Out of the eyes under your great curled wig, you see this young man stand up and walk slowly toward his window.

His room is eighteen stories up.

If a picture on the wall can remember, you remember that this is not the first time. If a picture on the wall can know things, you know that he has tried to leap out of that window before, and he is about to try again.

He is trying to kill himself. He has tried nine times in the past fifty days.

If a picture on a wall can regret, you regret this. It is a terrible waste for this man to keep trying to kill himself, for he does not at all want to die.

II

Cornut was uncomfortable in his sleep. He felt drowsily that he had worked himself into an awkward position, and besides, someone was calling his name. He mumbled, grimaced, opened his eyes.

He was looking straight down, nearly two hundred feet.

At once he was fully awake. He teetered dangerously, but someone
behind him had caught him by an arm, someone shouting. Whoever it was, he pulled Cornut roughly back into the room.

At that moment the five alarm clocks burst into sound, like a well-drilled chorus; a beat later the phone by his bed rang; the room lights sprang into life, controlled by their automatic timer, one reading lamp turned and fitted with a new, brighter tube so that it became a spotlight aimed at the pillow where Cornut's head should have been.

"Are you all right?"

The question had been repeated several times, Cornut realized. He said furiously, "Of course I'm all right!" It had been very close; his veins were suddenly full of adrenalin, and as there was nothing else for it to do, it charged him with anger... "I'm sorry. Thanks, Egerd."

The undergraduate let go. He was nineteen years old, with crew-cut red hair and a face, normally deeply tanned, that was now almost white. "That's all right." He cautiously backed to the ringing phone, still watching the professor. "Hello. Yes, he's awake now. Thanks for calling."

"Almost too late," said Cornut, "alarms, lights, phone, you..."

"I'd better get back, sir. I'll have to - oh, good morning, Master Carl."

The house master was standing in the doorway, a gaggle of undergraduates clustered behind him like young geese, staring in to see what all the commotion was. Master Carl was tall, black-haired, with eyes like star sapphires. He stood holding a wet photographic negative that dripped gently onto the rubber tiles. "What the devil is going on here?" he demanded.

Cornut opened his mouth to answer, and then realized how utterly impossible it was for him to answer that question. He didn't know! The terrible thing about the last fifty days was just that. He didn't know what; he didn't know why; all he knew was that this was the ninth time he had very nearly taken his own life.

"Answer Master Carl, Egerd," he said.

THE undergraduate jumped. Carl was the central figure in his life; every student's hope of passing, of graduating, of avoiding the military draft or forced labor in the Assigned Camps lay in his house master's whim.

Egerd said, stammering, "Sir, I - I have been on extra duty for Master Cornut. He asked me to come in each morning five minutes before wake-up time and observe him, because he - That is, that's what he asked me to do. This morning I was a little late."

Carl said coldly, "You were late?"
“Yes, sir. I — ”

“And you came into the corridor without shaving?”

The undergraduate was struck dumb. The cluster of students behind Carl briskly dissolved. Egerd started to speak, but Cornut cut in. He sat down shakily on the edge of his bed. “Leave the boy alone, will you, Carl? If he had taken time to shave, I’d be dead.”

Master Carl rapped out, “Very well. You may go to your room, Egerd. Cornut, I want to know what this is all about. I intend to get a full explanation . . .” He paused, as though remembering something. He glanced down at the wet negative in his hand.

“As soon as we’ve had breakfast,” he said grimly, and stalked back to his own rooms.

Cornut dressed heavily and began to shave. He had aged a full year every day of the past seven weeks; on that basis, he calculated, he was already pushing eighty, a full decade older than Master Carl himself. Seven weeks, and nine attempts at suicide.

And no explanation.

He didn’t look like a man who had just sleepwalked himself to the narrow edge of suicide. He was young for a professor and built like an athlete, which was according to the facts; he had been captain of the fencing team as an undergraduate, and was its faculty advisor still. His face looked like the face of a husky, healthy youth who for some reason had been cutting himself short on sleep, and that was also according to the facts. His expression was that of a man deeply embarrassed by some incredibly inexcusable act he has just committed. And that fit the facts too.

Cornut was embarrassed. His foolishness would be all over the campus by now; undoubtedly there had been whispers before, but this morning’s episode had had many witnesses and the whispers would be quite loud. As the campus was Cornut’s whole life, that meant that every living human being whose opinion counted with him at all would soon be aware that he was recklessly trying to commit suicide — for no reason — and not even succeeding!

He dried his face and got ready to leave his room — which meant facing everybody, but there was no way out of that.

A bundle of letters and memoranda was in the mail hopper by his desk. He paused to look at them: nothing important.

He glanced at his notes, which someone had been straightening. Probably Egerd. Cornut’s scrawled figures on the Wolgren anomaly were neatly stacked on top of the schema for this morning’s lectures. In the center of the desk, with a paperweight on top of it, was the red-bordered letter from the presi-
dent’s office, inviting him to go on the Field Expedition.

He reminded himself to ask Carl to get him off that. He had too much to do to waste time on purely social trips. The Wolgren study alone would keep him busy for weeks, and Carl was always pressing him to publish. But trying to get off the Field Expedition was premature. Three months from now . . . maybe . . . if Computer Section allocated enough time, and if the anomalies didn’t disappear in someone’s long-past error in simple addition.

And if he was still alive, of course.

“Oh, damn it all, anyhow!” Cornut said. He tucked the president’s letter into his pocket, picked up his cape and walked out irritably.

The Math Tower dining room served all thirty-one masters of the Department, and most of them were there before him. He walked in with an impasive face, expecting a sudden hush to stop the permanent buzz of conversation in the hall. It did. Everyone was looking at him.

“Good morning,” he said cheerfully.

One of the few women on the staff waved to him, giggling. “Good for you, Cornut! Come sit with us, will you? Janet has an idea to help you stop suiciding!”

Cornut smiled and turned his back on the two women. They slept in the women’s wing, of course, twelve stories below his own dorms, but already the word had spread. Naturally.

He stopped at the table where Master Carl sat alone, drinking tea and looking through a sheaf of photographs. “I’m sorry about this morning, Carl,” he said.

Master Carl looked vaguely up at him. With his equals, Carl’s eyes were not the star sapphires that had pierced Egerd; they were the mild, blue eyes of a lean Santa Claus, which was much closer to his true nature. “Oh? Oh. You mean about jumping out of the window. Sit down.” He made a space on the table for the student waitress to put down Cornut’s place-setting. The whole cloth was covered with photographic prints. He handed one to Cornut. “Tell me,” he said apologetically, “does that look like a picture of a star to you?”

“No.” Cornut was not very interested in his department head’s hobbies. The print looked like a light-struck blob of nothing much at all.

Carl sighed and put it down. “All right. Now, what about this thing this morning?”

Cornut accepted a cup of coffee from one of the student waitresses and waved away the others. “I wish I could,” he said seriously.

Carl waited.

“I mean — it’s hard,” said Cornut. Carl waited.
CORNUT took a long swallow of coffee and put down his cup. Carl was probably the only man on the faculty who hadn’t been, listening to the grapevine. It was almost impossible to say to him the simple fact of what had happened. Master Carl was a child of the University, just as Cornut himself was; like Cornut, he had been born in the University’s medical center and educated in the University’s schools. He had no taste for the boiling, bustling Townie world outside. In fact, he had very little taste for human problems at all. Lord knew what Carl, dry as digits, his head crammed with Vinogradoff and Frénicle de Bessy, would make of so non-mathematical a phenomenon as suicide.

“I’ve tried to kill myself nine times,” Cornut said, plunging in. “Don’t ask me why; I don’t know. That’s what this morning was all about. It was my ninth try.”

Master Carl’s expression was exactly what Cornut had anticipated.

“Don’t look so incredulous!” Cornut snapped. “I don’t know any more about it than that. It’s at least as much of an annoyance to me as it is to you!”

The house master looked helplessly at the photographic prints by his plate, as though some answer might be there. It wasn’t. “All right,” he said, rubbing the lobes of bone over his eyes. “I understand your statement. Has it occurred to you that you might get help?”

“Help? My God, I’ve got helpers all over the place! The thing is worst in the morning, you see; just when I’m waking up, not fully alert, that’s the bad time. So I’ve set up a whole complicated system of alarms. I have five clocks set; I got the superintendent’s office to rig up the lights on a timed switch; I got the night proctor to call me on the house phone — all of them together, so that when I wake up, I wake up totally. It worked for three mornings, and, believe me, the only thing that the experience resembles is being awakened by a pot of ice water in the face. I even got Egerd to come in every morning to stand by while I woke, just on the chance that something might go wrong.”

“But this morning Egerd was late?”

“He was tardy,” Cornut corrected. “A minute or two more and he would have been late, all right. And so would I.”

Carl said, “That’s not exactly the sort of help I had in mind.”

“You mean the Med Center?” Cornut reached for a cigarette. A student waitress hurried over with a light. She was in one of his classes; a girl named Locille. She was pretty and very young. Cornut said absentely, following her with his eyes, “I’ve been there, Carl. They offered me analysis. In fact, they were quite insistent.”
MASTER Carl's face was luminous with interest. Cornut, turning back to look at him, thought that he hadn't seen Carl quite so absorbed in anything since their last discussion about the paper Cornut was doing for him: the analysis of the discrepancies in Wolgren's basic statistical law.

Carl said, "I'll tell you what astonishes me. You don't seem very worried about all this."

Cornut reflected. "... I am, though."

"You don't show it. Well, is there anything else that's worrying you?"

"Worried enough to kill myself? No. But I suppose there must be, mustn't there? The evidence speaks for itself."

Carl stared into the empty air. The eyes were bright blue again; Master Carl was operating with his brain, examining possibilities, considering their relevancy, evolving a theory. "Only in the mornings?"

"Oh, no, Carl. I'm much more versatile than that! I can try to kill myself at any hour of the day or night. But it happens when I'm drowsy. Going to sleep, waking up — once, in the middle of the night, I found myself walking toward the fire stairs, God knows why. Perhaps something happened to half-wake me, I don't know. So I have Egerd keep me company at night until I'm thoroughly asleep, and again in the morning. He's my — babysitter."

Carl said testily, "Surely you can tell me more than this!"

"Well... Yes, I suppose I can. I think I have dreams."

"Dreams?"

"I think so, Carl. I don't remember very well, but it's as though someone were telling me to do these things, someone in a position of authority. A father? I don't remember my own father, but that's the feeling I get."

The light went out of Carl's face. He had lost interest.

Cornut said curiously, "What's the matter?"

The house master leaned back, shaking his head. "No, it's fallacious to believe someone is telling you, Cornut. There isn't anyone. I've checked the matter of dreams very thoroughly. Dreams come from the dreamer."

"But I only said —"

Master Carl held up his hand. "To consider any other possibility," he lectured, in the voice that reached three million viewers every week, "involves one of two possibilities. First, there might be a physical explanation. That is, someone may actually be speaking to you as you sleep. That isn't very likely, now is it? The second possibility is telepathy. And that," he said sadly, "does not exist."

"But I only —"

"Look within yourself, my boy," the old man said wisely. Then, his expression showing interest again,
“And what about Wolgren? Any progress with the anomalies?”

FIFTEEN minutes later, on the plea that he was late for an appointment, Cornut made his escape. There were twelve tables in the room and he was invited to sit down at eight of them for a second cup of coffee . . . and, oh yes, what is this story all about, Cornut?

His appointment, although he hadn’t said so to Master Carl, was with his analyst. Cornut was anxious to keep it.

He wasn’t very confident of analysis as a solution to his problem. Despite three centuries, the techniques of mental health had never evolved a rigorous proof system, and Cornut was skeptical of whatever was not susceptible of mathematical analysis. But there was something else he had neglected to tell Master Carl.

Cornut wasn’t the only one of his kind.

The man at the Med Center had been quite excited. He named five names that Cornut recognized, faculty members who had died in ambiguous circumstances within the past few years. One had made fifteen attempts before he finally succeeded in blowing himself up after an all-night polymerization experiment in the Chem Hall. A couple had succeeded on the first or second try.

What made Cornut exceptional was that he had got through seven weeks of this without even seriously maiming himself. The all-time record was ten weeks. That was the chemist.

The analyst had promised to have all the information about the other suicides to show him this morning. Cornut could not deny that he wanted to see the data. Indeed, it was a matter of considerable concern.

Unless all precedent was wrong, he would succeed as all the others had ultimately succeeded. He would kill himself one way or another, and it was unlikely that he ever would know why he had done it.

And unless precedent was wrong again, it would happen within the next three weeks.

III

THE University was beginning its day. In the Regents Office, a clerk filled a hopper and flipped a switch, and Sticky Dick — sometimes written as S. T.-I (C.E.), Di. C. — began to grind out grades on the previous day’s examinations in English, Sanskrit and the nuclear reactions of the Bethe Phoenix cycle. Student orderlies in Med School wheeled their sectioned cadavers out of the refrigerated filing drawers, playing the time-honored ribald jokes with the detached parts. In the central Tape
Room, the TV technicians went about their endless arcane ritual of testing circuits and balancing voltages; every lecture was put on tape as a matter of course, even those which were not either broadcast or syndicated.

Thirty thousand undergraduates ran hastily over the probable mood of their various instructors, and came to the conclusion that they would be lucky to live through to evening. But it was better than trying to get along in the outside world, the Townie world.

And in the kitchen attached to the faculty dining room of Math Tower, the student waitress, Locille, helped a Culinary Engineer mop the last drops off the stainless steel cooking utensils. She hung up her apron, checked her makeup in the mirror by the door, descended in the service elevator and went out to the hot, loud walks of the Quad.

Locille didn’t think them either hot or loud. She had known much worse.

Locille was a scholarship girl; her parents were Town, not Gown. She had been at the University for only two years. She still spent some of her weekends at home. She knew very clearly what it was like to live in the city across the bay — or, worse, to live on one of the teases off the coast — with your whole life a rattling, banging clamor day and night and everyone piled up against everyone else. The noise in the Quadrangle was human noise and the ground did not shake.

Locille had a happy small face, short hair, a forthright way of walking out. She did not look worried, but she was. He had looked so tired this morning! Also he wasn’t eating, and that was not like him. If it wasn’t scrambled eggs and bacon, it was a hot cereal with fruit on top, always. Perhaps, she planned, smiling at a boy who greeted her without really seeing his face at all, tomorrow she would just bring the scrambled eggs and put them in front of him. Probably he’d eat them.

Of course, that wasn’t getting at the real problem.

Locille shivered. She felt helpless. It was distressing to care so much what happened to someone, and be so far outside the situation itself . . .

RUNNING footsteps came up behind her and slowed. “Hi,” panted her most regular date, Egerd, falling into step. “Why didn’t you wait at the door? What about Saturday night?”

“I don’t know yet. They might need me at the faculty dance.”

Egerd said brusquely, “Tell them you can’t make it. You have to go out to the texas. Your brother has, uh, some disease or other, and your mother needs you.”
Locille laughed.

"Aw, look. I've got Carnegie's boat for the evening! We can go clear down to the Hook."

Locille willingly let him take her hand. She liked Egerd. He was a good-looking boy and he was kind. He reminded her of her brother... well, not of her real brother, but the brother she should have had. She liked Egerd. But she didn't like him. The distinction was quite clear in her mind. Egerd, for example, obviously liked her.

Egerd said, "Well, you don't have to make up your mind now. I'll ask you again tomorrow." That was a salesman's instinct operating; it was always better to leave the prospect with a "maybe" than a "no."

He guided her between two tall buildings toward the back gardens of the campus, where Agronomy had made a little Japanese retreat in the middle of fifteen intensively farmed acres of experimental peas and wheat.

"I think I got some demerits from old Carl this morning," he said gloomily.

"Too bad," Locille said, although that was not an unusual phenomenon. But then he caught her attention.

"I was just trying to do Cornut a favor. Trying? Hell, I saved his life!" She was all attention now. "He was practically out the window. Loopy! You know, I think half of these professors are off their rockets. Anyway, if I hadn't got there when I did, he would've been dead. Slop. All over the Quad. At that," he said cheerfully, "I was kind of late."

"Egerd!"

He stopped and looked at her. "What's the matter?"

"You shouldn't have been late! Didn't you know Master Cornut was relying on you? Really! That was awful of you!"

She was actually angry. Egerd studied her thoughtfully and stopped talking; some of the pleasure had gone out of the morning for him. Abruptly he caught her arm.

"Locille," he said in a completely serious tone, "please marry me for a while. I know I'm here on a scholarship and my grades are marginal. But I won't go back. Listen, I'm not going to stay with Math. I was talking to some of the fellows at Med School. There's a lot of jobs in epidemiology, and that way my Math credits will do me some good. I'm not asking for ten years of your life. We can make it month to month, even, and if you don't opt for a renewal, I swear I won't hold it against you. But let me try to make you want to stay with me, Locille. Please. Marry me."

He stood looking down at her, his broad, tanned face entirely open, waiting. She didn't meet his eye.

After a moment he nodded com-
posedly. "I can’t compete with Master Cornut, can I?"

She suddenly frowned. "Egerd, I hope you won’t feel – I mean, just because you’ve got the idea I’m interested in Master Cornut, I hope—"

“No,” he said, grinning, “I won’t let him dive out a window. But you know something? You’re a very pretty girl, Locille, but I don’t think Cornut knows you’re alive.”

THE analyst followed Cornut to the door. He was frustrated and not concealing his frustration.

Cornut said stiffly, “Sorry, but I won’t put everything else aside.”

“You’ll have to, if you succeed in killing yourself.”

“That’s what you’re supposed to prevent, isn’t it? Or is this whole thing a complete waste of time?”

“It’s better than suicide.”

Cornut shrugged. It was a logically impeccable point.

“Won’t you even stay overnight? Observation might give us the answer.”

“No.”

The analyst hesitated, shook his head, shook hands. “All right. I guess you know that if I had my way, I wouldn’t be asking you. I’d commit you to Med Center.”

“Of course you would,” Cornut said. “But you don’t have your way, do you? You’ve tried to get an order from the president’s office already, haven’t you?”

The analyst had the grace to look embarrassed. "Front office interference. You’d think they’d understand that Mental Health needs a little cooperation once in a while . . .”

Cornut left him still muttering. As he stepped out onto the Quad, the heat and noise struck him. He didn’t mind, either; he was used to it.

He had recovered enough to think of the morning’s escape with amusement. The feeling was wry, with a taste of worry to it, but he was able to see the funny side. And it was ridiculous, no doubt about it. Suicide! Miserable people committed suicide, not happy ones, and Cornut was a perfectly happy man.

Even the analyst had as much as admitted that. It had been a total waste of time, making Cornut dig and dig into his cloudy childhood recollections for some early, abscessed wound of the mind that was pouring poisons out of its secret hiding place. He didn’t have any! How could he? He was Gown. His parents had been on the faculty of this very University. Before he could walk, he was given over to the creches and the playschools, run by the best-trained experts in the world, organized according to the best principles of child guidance. Trauma? There simply could not be any!

Not only was it impossible on the face of it, but Cornut’s whole
personality showed no sign of such a thing. He enjoyed his work very much, and although he knew there was something he lacked — a secure love — he also knew that in time he would have it.

"Good morning, good morning," he said civilly to the knots of undergraduates on the walks. He began to whistle one of Carl’s mnemonic songs. The undergraduates who nodded to him smiled. Cornut was a highly popular professor.

He passed the Hall of Humanities, the Lit Building, Pre-Med and the Administration Tower. As he got farther from home ground, the number of students who greeted him became smaller, but they still nodded politely to the Master’s cloak. Overhead, the shriek of distant passing aircraft filled the sky.

The great steel sweep of the Bay Bridge was behind him now, but he could still hear the unending rush of cars across it and, farther and louder, the growl of the city.

Cornut paused at the door of the studio where he was to deliver his first lecture.

He glanced across the narrow strait at the city. There was a mystery.

It was, he thought, a problem greater than the silent murderer in his own brain. But it was not a problem he would ever have to solve.

“A GOOD teacher is a good makeup man.” That was one of Master Carl’s maxims. Cornut sat down at the long table and methodically applied a daub of neutral-colored base to each cheekbone. The camera crew began sighting in on him as he worked the cream into his skin, down from the bone and away.

“Need any help?”

Cornut looked up and saw his producer. “No, thanks.” He brought the corners of his eyebrows down a fraction of an inch.

The clock was clicking off half-seconds. Cornut penciled in age-lines (that was the price you paid for being a full professor at thirty) and then brushed on the lip color. He leaned forward to examine himself more closely in the mirror, but the producer stopped him. “Just a minute! Dammit, man, not so much red!”

The cameraman turned a dial. In the monitor, Cornut’s image appeared a touch paler, a touch greener.

“That’s better. All done, Professor?”

Cornut wiped his fingers on a tissue and set the golden wig on his head. “All done,” he said, rising just as the minute hand touched the hour of ten.

From a grille at the top of the screen that dominated the front of the studio came the sounds of his theme music, muted for the
studio audience. Cornnut took his place in front of the class, bowed, nodded, smiled, and pressed the pedal of the prompter until he found his place.

He had more than a hundred students physically present. Cornnut liked a large flesh-and-blood enrollment — because he was a traditionalist, but even more because he could tell from their faces how well he was getting across. This class was one of his favorites. They responded to his mood, but without ever overdoing. They didn’t laugh too loudly when he made a conventional academic joke; they didn’t cough or murmur. They never distracted the attention of the huger, wider broadcast audience from himself.

Cornnut looked over the class while the announcer was finishing the intro to the broadcast watchers. He saw Egerd, looking upset and irritable about something, whispering to the girl from the faculty dining room. What was her name? Locille. Lucky fellow, Cornnut thought absently to himself, and then the Binomial Theorem entered his mind — it was never far away — and displaced everything else.

“Good morning,” he said, “and let’s get to work. Today we’re going to take up the relationship of Pascal’s Triangle to the Binomial Theorem.” A sting of organ music rode in under his words.

Behind him, on the monitor, the symbols \( p + q \) appeared in letters of golden fire.

“I presume you all remember what the Binomial Theorem is — unless you’ve been cutting your classes.” Very small laugh — actually a sort of sub-aural grunt, just about what the very small jocular remark deserved. “The expansion of \( p \) plus \( q \) is, of course, its square, cube, fourth power and so on.” Behind him an invisible hand began multiplying \( p + q \) by itself in bright gold. “\( P \) plus \( q \) squared is \( p \)-squared plus two \( pq \) plus \( q \)-squared. \( P \) plus \( q \) cubed —” The writer in gold noted the sum as he spoke: \( p^3 + 3p^2q + 3pq^2 + q^3 \).

“That’s simple enough, isn’t it?” He paused; then, deadpan, “Well, then, how come Sticky Dick says fifteen per cent of you missed it in the last test?” A warmer giggle, punctuated with a couple of loud, embarrassed hie-haws from the back. Oh, they were a very fine class.

The letters and numbers wiped themselves from the screen and a little red-faced comic cartoon figure of a bricklayer dropped into view and began building a pyramid of bricks:
“Now, forget about the theorem for a moment. That won’t be hard for some of you.” Small giggle which he rode over. “Consider Pascal’s Triangle. We build it just like a brick wall, only . . . Hold it a minute there, friend.” The cartoon bricklayer paused and looked curiously out at the audience. “Only we don’t start from the bottom. We build it from the top down.” The cartoon bricklayer did a comic pratfall in astonishment. Then, shrugging, he got up, erased the old wall with a sweep of his trowel, hung a brick in space and began building a triangle under it.

“And we don’t do it with bricks,” added Cornut. “We do it with numbers.”

The bricklayer straightened up, kicked the wall off the screen and followed after it, pausing just at the rim of visibility to stick his tongue out at Cornut. The monitor went to a film with live models, cartwheeling into view along the banks of seats of the university’s football stadium, each model carrying a placard with a number, arranging themselves in a Pascal Triangle:

```
  1  1
  1  2  1
  1  3  3  1
  1  4  6  4  1
  1  5  10  10  5  1
```

Cornut turned to relish the construction Pascal had first written down, centuries before. “You will note,” he said, “that each number is the sum of the two terms nearest in the line above it. The Pascal Triangle is more than a pretty pattern. It represents—”

Cornut picked up the ivory-tipped pointer that lay on his desk, clustered with the ceremonial desk furnishings of the instructor — paper cutter, shears, pencils, all there for appearance — and, with the aid of every audio-visual help possible to Man, began explaining to three million viewers the relation between Pascal’s Triangle and the binomial distribution.

**EVERY** line on Cornut’s face, every word, every posturing ballet dancer or animated digit that showed itself on the monitor behind him was caught in the tubes of the cameras, converted into high-frequency pulses and hurled out at the world.

Cornut had more than a hundred live watchers — the cream; the chosen ones who were allowed to attend University *in person* — but his viewers altogether numbered three million. In the relay tower at Fort Monmouth, a senior shift engineer named Sam Gensel watched with concentrated attention as across the dimpled tummies of the five girls in the fourth line of the Pascal Triangle electronics superimposed the symbols:

\[ p^4 + 4p^3q + 6p^2q^2 + 4pq^3 + q^4 \]
He was not interested in the astonishing fact that the sign of the five terms in the expansion of \((p + q)^4\) were 1, 4, 6, 4 and 1 — the same as the numbers in the fourth line of the Triangle — but he cared very much that the image was a trifle fuzzy. He twisted a vernier, scowled, turned it back, threw switches that called in an alternate circuit, and was rewarded by a crisper, clearer image. At some relay point, a tube was failing. He picked up the phone to call the maintenance crew.

The crisper, clearer signal was beamed up to the handiest television-relay satellite and showered back down on the world.

On the Sandy Hook texas, a boy named Roger Hoskins, smelling seriously of fish, paused by the door of his room to watch. He did not care about mathematics, but he was a faithful viewer; his sister was in the class, and Mom was always grateful when he could tell her that he'd caught a glimpse of their very fortunate, very seldom encountered daughter.

In a creche over Lower Manhattan, three toddlers munched fibrous crackers and watched; the harried nursery teacher had discovered that the moving colors kept them quiet.

On the twenty-fifth floor of a tenement on Staten Island, a monocar motorman named Frank Moran sat in front of his set while Cornut reviewed Pascal's thesis. Moran did not get much benefit from it. He had just come off the night shift. He was asleep.

There were many of them, the accidental or disinterested dialers-in. But there were more, there were thousands, there were uncounted hundreds of thousands who were following the proceedings with absorption.

For education was something very precious indeed.

The thirty thousand at the University were the lucky ones; they had passed the tests, stiffer every year. Not one out of a thousand passed those tests. It wasn't only a matter of intelligence; it was a matter of having the talents that could make a University education fruitful — in terms of society. For the world had to work. The world was too big to be idle. The land that had fed mere millions of people now had to feed twelve billion.

CORNUT'S television audience could, if it wished, take tests and accumulate credits. That was what Sticky Dick was for; electronically, it graded papers, supplied term averages and awarded diplomas for students no professor ever saw. Almost always the credits led nowhere. But to those trapped in dreary production or drearier caretaker jobs for society, the hope was important.

There was a young man named
Max Steck, for example, who had already made a small contribution to the theory of normed rings. It was not enough. Sticky Dick said he would not justify a career in mathematics. There were thousands of Max Stecks.

Then there was Charles Bingham. He was a reactor hand at the 14th Street generating plant. Mathematics might help him, in time, become a supervising engineer. It also might not — the candidates for that job were already lined up a hundred deep. But there were half a million Charles Binghams.

Sue-Ann Flood was the daughter of a farmer. Her father drove a helipopper, skimming the plowed fields, seeding, spraying, fertilizing, and he knew that the time she put in on college-level studies would not help her gain admittance to the University. Sue-Ann knew it too. But she was only fourteen years old and she could hope. There were more than two million like Sue-Ann, and every one of them knew that all the others would be disappointed.

Those, the millions of them, were the invisible audience who watched Master Cornut’s busy image on a cathode screen. But there were others. One watched from Bogota and one from Buenos Aires. One in Saskatchewan said, “You goofed this morning,” and one flying high over the Rockies said, “Can’t we try him now?” And one was propped on soft pillows in front of a set not more than a quarter of a mile from Cornut himself; and he said, “It’s worth a try. The son of a bitch is getting in my hair.”

It was not the easiest task ever given Man, to explain the relationship between the Pascal Triangle and the binomial distribution, but Cornut was succeeding. Master Carl’s little mnemonic jingles helped, and what helped most was the utter joy Cornut took in it all. It was, after all, his life. As he led the class, he felt again the wonder he himself had felt, sitting in a class like this one.

He hardly heard the buzz from the class as he put his pointer down to gesture, and blindly picked it up again, still talking. Teaching mathematics was a kind of hypnosis for him, an intense absorption that had gripped him from the time of his first math class. That was what Sticky Dick had measured, and that was why Cornut was a full professor at his age. It was a wonder that so strange a thing as numbers should exist in the first place, rivaled only by the greater wonder that they should perform so obediently the work of mankind.

The class buzzed and whispered.

It struck Cornut cloudily that they were whispering more than usual.
He looked up absent-mindedly. There was an itch at the base of his throat. He scratched it with the tip of the pointer, half distracted from the point he was trying to make. But the taped visual aids on the screen were timed just so and he could not falter. He picked up the thread of what he was saying. Itch and buzz faded out of his mind...

Then he faltered again.

Something was wrong. The class was buzzing louder. The students in the first row were staring at him with a unanimous, unprecedented expression. The itch returned compellingly. He scratched at it. It still itched. He dug at it with the pointer.

No. Not with the pointer. Funny, he thought, there was the pointer on his desk.

Suddenly his throat hurt very much.

"Master Cornut, stop!" screamed someone — a girl. Tardily he recognized the voice, Locille's voice, as she leaped to her feet, and half the class with her. His throat was a quick deep pain, like fire. A warm tickling thread slipped across his chest — blood! From his throat!

He stared at the thing in his hand, and it was not the pointer at all but the letter opener, steel and sharp. Confused and panicked, he wheeled to gaze at the monitor. There was his own face, over a throat that bore a slash of blood!

Three million viewers gasped. Half the studio class was boiling toward him, Egerd and the girl ahead of the rest.

"Easy, sir! Here, let me—" That was Egerd, with a tissue, pressing it against the wound. "You'll be all right, sir! It's only—it was close!"

Close? He had all but cut his jugular vein in two, right in front of his class and the watching television world.

The murderer inside his head was getting very strong and sure, to brave the light of day.

IV

CORNUT was a marked man — literally, now. He had a neat white sterile bandage on his throat, and the medics had assured him that when the bandage was gone, there would be a handsome scar. They demanded that he stay around for a complete psycho-medical checkup. He said no. They said, "Would you rather be dead?" He said he wasn’t going to die. They said, "How can you be sure?"

But, as it turned out, the clinic was not going to be free for that sort of thing for a couple of hours, and he fought his way free.

He was furious at the medics for annoying him, at himself for being such a fool, at Egerd for staunching the flow of his blood, at Locille for seeing it. His patience with the world was exhausted.
Cornut strode like a beam-guided aircar to the Math Tower gym, looking neither to left nor right, for he knew what he would see. Eyes. The eyes of everyone on the campus looking at him.

He found an undergraduate who was reasonably willing to mind his own business (the boy only looked slightly doubtful when Cornut chose his epee, but one glimpse of Cornut's face made his own turn into opaque stone), and they fenced for a murderous half-hour. The medics had told Cornut to be sure to rest. Winded and muscles aching, he returned to his room to do so.

He spent a long afternoon lying on his bed and looking at the ceiling, thinking, but nothing came of it. The whole thing was simply too irritating to be borne.

Medics or not, at a quarter of five he put on a clean shirt to keep his appointment at the faculty tea.

The tea was a sort of official send-off to the University's Field Expedition. Attendance was compulsory, especially for those who, like Cornut, were supposed to make the trip; but that was not why he was there. He considered it to be his last good chance to get off the list.

There were three hundred persons in the huge, vaulted room. The University conspicuously consumed space; it was a tradition, like the marginal pencilings in all the books in the library. Every one of the three hundred glanced once quickly at Cornut as he came in, then away — some with a muffled laugh, some with sympathy, the worst with an unnatural lack of any expression at all. So much for the grapevine.

Damn them, Cornut thought bitterly, you'd think no professor ever tried to suicide before.

He couldn't help overhearing some of the whispers:

"And that's at least the seventh time. It's because he's desperate to be Department Head and old Carl won't step down."

"Esmeralda! You know you're making that up!"

FACE flaming, Cornut walked briskly past the little knot. It was like a fakir's bed of coals; every step seemed to crisp him. But there were other things being gossiped about at the tea besides him.

"—want us to get along with a fourteen-year-old trevatron. You know what the Chinas have? Six brand-new ones. And coin silver for the windings!"

"Yes, but there's six billion of them. Per capita, we stack up pretty—"

Cornut felt minutely better. He halted in the middle of the drinking, eating, talking, surging mass and looked about for Master Carl. He caught sight of him. The department head was paying his re-
pects to a queer-looking, ancient figure — St. Cyr, the president of the University. Cornut was startled. St. Cyr was an old man and by his appearance a sick one; it was rare to see him at a faculty tea. Still, this one was special — and anyway, that could make it a lot easier to get off the list.

Cornut pushed his way toward them, past a stocky drunk from Humanities who was whispering ribaldly to a patient student waitress, and threaded his way through a group of anatomists from the Med School.

"Notice what decent cadavers we've been getting lately? It hasn't been this good since the last shooting war. Of course, they're not much good except for geriatrics, but that's selective euthanasia for you."

"Will you watch what you're doing with that martini?"

Cornut made his way slowly toward Master Carl and President St. Cyr. The closer he got, the easier it was to move. There were fewer people at St. Cyr's end of the room. He was the central figure of the gathering, but the guests did not cluster around him. That's the kind of a man he was.

THE kind of man St. Cyr was was this: He was the ugliest man in the room.

There were others who were in no way handsome — old, or fat, or sick — but St. Cyr was something special. His face was an artifact of ugliness. Deep old scars made a net across his face like the flimsy cloth that holds a cheese. Surgery? No one knew. He had always had them. And his skin was a cyanotic blue.

Master Greenlease (Phys Chem) and Master Wahl (Anthropology) were there, Wahl because he was too drunk to care whom he spoke to, no doubt; Greenlease because Carl had him by the elbow and would not let him go.

St. Cyr nodded four times at Cornut, like a pendulum. "Nice weath-er," he said, tolling it like a clock.

"Yes, it is, sir. Excuse me. Master Carl—"

St. Cyr lifted the hand that hung by his side and laid it limply in Cornut's hand — it was his version of a handshake. He opened his seamed mouth and gave the series of unvoiced glottal stops that were his version of a chuckle. "It will be heav-y weath-er for Mast-er Wahl," he said, spacing out the syllables like an articulate metronome. It was his version of a joke.

Cornut gave him a waxen smile and a small waxen laugh. The reference was to the fact that Wahl, too, was scheduled to go on the Field Expedition. Cornut didn't think that was funny — not as far as he himself was concerned, anyway — not when he had so many
more urgent things on his mind.

"Carl," he said, "excuse me." But Master Carl had other things on his mind; he was badgering Greenlease for information about molecular structure, heaven knew why. And also St. Cyr had not removed his hand.

Cornut grumbled internally and waited. Wahl was giggling over some involved faculty joke to which St. Cyr was listening like a judge. Cornut spared himself the annoyance of listening to it and thought about St. Cyr. Queer old duck. That was where you started. You could account for some of the queerness by, say, a bad heart. That would be the reason for the blueness. But what would be the reason for not having it operated on?

And then what about the other things? The deadpan expression. The lifeless voice, with its firmly pronounced terminals "ings" and words without a stress syllable anywhere. St. Cyr talked like a clockwork man. Or a deaf one?

But again, what would be the reason for a man allowing himself to be deaf?

Especially a man who owned a University, including an 800-bed teaching hospital.

Wahl at last noticed that Cornut was present and punched his shoulder—cordially, Cornut decided, after thought. "Committed any good suicides lately, boy?" He hiccoughed. "Don't blame you.

Your fault, President, you know, dragging him off to Tahiti with us. He doesn't like Tahiti."

Cornut said, with control, "The Field Expedition isn't going to Tahiti."

Wahl shrugged. "The way us anthropologists look at it, one good island is like another good island." He even made a joke of his specialty! Cornut was appalled.

St. Cyr seemed neither to notice nor to mind. He flopped his hand free of Cornut's and rested it casually on Wahl's weaving shoulder. The other hand held the full highball glass which, Cornut had observed, always remained full. St. Cyr did not drink or smoke (not even tobacco), nor had Cornut ever seen him give a second look to a pretty girl.

"Listen," St. Cyr said in his slow-march voice, turning Wahl to face Carl and the chemist. "This is in-ter-est-ing."

CARL was oblivious of the president, of Cornut, of everything except the fact that the chemist by his side knew something that Carl himself wanted to know. The information was there; he went after it. "I don't seem to make myself clear. What I want to know, Greenlease, is how I can visualize the exact structure of a molecule. Do you follow me? For example, what color is it?"

The chemist looked uncomfortable.
ably at St. Cyr, but St. Cyr was apparently absorbed. "Well," Greenlease said. "Uh. The concept of color doesn't apply. Light waves are too long."

"Ah! I see!" Carl was fascinated. "Well, what about the shape? I've seen those tinker-toy constructions. The atoms are little balls and they're held together with plastic rods — I suppose they represent connecting force. Are they anything like the real thing?"

"The connecting force is real enough, but you can't see it — or maybe you could, at that." Greenlease, like most of the faculty members present, had had a bit more than enough; he was not of a temper to try to interpret molecular forces in tinker-toy terms for professors who, whatever their status in number theory, were physical-chemical idiots. "Maybe you could, that is, if you could see the atoms in the first place. One is no more impossible than the other. But the connecting force would not look like a rod, any more than the gravitation that holds the Moon to the Earth would look like a rod. . . . Let's see . . . Do you know what I mean by the word 'valence'? No. Well, do you know enough atomic theory to know what part is played by the number of electrons in — or look at it a different way."

Greenlease paused. By his expression, he was getting seriously annoyed, in a way he considered unjust — like an ivory hunter who, carrying a .400 Express in his crooked arm, cannot quite see how to cope with the attack of a hungry mosquito. Greenlease seemed on the point of reviewing atomic structure back through Bohr and well on the way to Democritus.

"I'll tell you what," he said at last. "Stop around tomorrow if you can. I have some plates made under the electron-microscope."

"Oh, thank you!" cried Carl with enthusiasm. "Tomorrow — But tomorrow I'll be off on this con—" He smiled at St. Cyr. "Tomorrow I'll be with the Field Expedition. Well, as soon as I get back, Greenlease. Don't forget." He warmly shook hands and the chemist went quickly away.

Cornut hissed angrily: "That's what I want to talk to you about."

Carl looked startled but pleased. "I didn't know you were interested in my little experiments, Cornut. That was quite fascinating. I've always thought of a molecule of silver nitrate, for example, as being black or silvery. Perhaps that's where my work has gone wrong. Greenlease says—"

"No, I'm not talking about that. I mean the Field Expedition. I can't go."

An observer a yard away would have thought that all of St. Cyr's attention was on Wahl; he had lost interest in the dialogue
between Carl and Greenlease minutes before. But the old head turned like a parabolic mirror. The faded blue eyes radaled in on Cornut. The slow metronome ticked: “You must go, Cor-nut.”

“Must go? Of course you must go. Good heavens, Cornut! Don’t mind him, President. Certainly he’ll go.”

“But I have all the Wolgren to get through—”

“And then a su-i-cide to com-mit.” The muscles at the corner of the mouth tried to twitch the blue lips upward, to show that it was a pleasantry.

But Cornut was nettled. “Sir, I don’t intend to—”

“You did not intend to this morn-ing.”

Carl interrupted. “Cornut, be quiet. President, that was distressing, of course. I’ve had a full report on it and I believe we can pass it off as an accident. Perhaps it was an accident. I don’t know. It would have been quite easy to pick up the paper-knife in error.”

Cornut said, “But—”

“In an-y case, he must go.”

“Naturally, President. You understand that, don’t you, Cornut?”

“But—”

“You will take the ad-vice plane, please. I want you to be there when I ar-rive.”

“But—” said Cornut, but he could not get a word deeper into that thought; through the mill of faculty came a man and a woman with the tense, nervous bearing of Townies. The woman carried a phototaper; the man was a reporter from one of the nets.

“President St. Cyr? Thanks for inviting us. We’ll have a whole crew here when your expedition gets back, but I wonder if we can’t get a few photographs now. As I understand it, you’ve located seven aboriginals. I see. It’s a whole tribe, then, but seven are being brought back here. And who is the head of the expedition? Oh, naturally. Millie, will you be sure to get President St. Cyr?”

The reporter’s thumb was on the trigger of his voicetaper, getting down the fact that nine faculty members were going to bring back the seven aboriginals, that the expedition would leave, in two planes, at nine o’clock that night, so as to arrive at their destination in early morning, local time; and that the benefits to anthropological research would surely be beyond calculation.

Cornut drew Master Carl aside. “I don’t want to go! What the hell does this have to do with mathematics anyhow?”

“Now, please, Cornut. You heard the President. It has nothing to do with mathematics, no, but it is purely a ceremonial function and a good deal of an honor. At the present time, you should not refuse it. You can see that some rumors
of your, uh, accidents have reached him. Don’t cause friction.”

“What about the Wolgren? What about my, uh, accidents? Even here I nearly kill myself, and I’m all set up against it. What will I do without Egerd and my system of alarms?”

“I’ll be with you.”

“No, Carl!”

Carl said, speaking very clearly, “You are going.” The eyes were star sapphires.

Cornut studied the eyes for a moment, and then gave up. When Carl got that expression and that tone of voice, it meant that argument served no further useful purpose. Since Cornut loved the old man, he always stopped arguing at that point.

“I’m going,” he said. But the expression on his face would have soured wine.

Cornut packed — it took five minutes — and went back to the clinic to see if diagnostic space was free. It was not. He was cutting his time very close — takeoff for the first plane was in less than an hour — but mulishly he took a seat in the reception room and stolidly he did not look at the clock.

When the examination room was available, things went briskly. His vital statistics were machine-measured and machine-studied, his blood spectrum was machine-chromatographed, automatically the examining table was tipped so that he could step off, and as he dressed, a photoelectric eye behind where garments had hung glanced at him, opened the door to the outside corridor and said, “Thank you. Wait in the outer office, please,” from a machine-operated tape.

Master Carl, in a fluster, found him waiting.

“Good heavens, boy! Do you know the plane’s about to take off? And the president especially said we were to go in the first plane. Come on! I’ve a scooter waiting!”

“Sorry.”

“What the devil do you mean, sorry? Come on!”

Cornut said flatly, “I agreed to go. I will go. But, as there is some feeling, shared by yourself, that the medics can help keep me from killing myself, I do not intend to leave this building until they tell me what I must do. I am waiting for the results of my examination now.”

Master Carl said, “Oh.” He glanced at the clock on the wall. “I see.” He sat down beside Cornut thoughtfully, but then suddenly he grinned. “Quite right, boy. The president can’t argue with that.”

Cornut relaxed. He said, “Well, you go ahead, Carl. No reason for both of us to get in trouble—”

“Trouble?” Cornut realized it had finally occurred to the house master that this trip was a sort of vacation; he was practicing for a
holiday mood. "Why should there be any trouble? You have a good
go reason for not being on time. I, too,
have a good reason for waiting for you. After all, the president urged
me to bring the Wolgren analysis
along. He's quite interested, you
know. And I did not see it in your
room, so I suppose it is in your
bags. Therefore I will wait for your
bags."

Cornut protested, "But it isn't
anywhere near finished!"

Carl actually winked. "Now, do
you suppose he'll know the differ-
ence? Be flattered that he is in-
terested enough to pretend to look
at it!"

"Well, all right. But how the
devil did he hear about it in the
first place?"

"I told him, of course. I - I've
had occasion to discuss you with
him a good deal, these past few
days." Carl's expression lost some
of its glow. "Cornut," he said se-
verely, "we can't let this go on,
can we? Your life must be regular-
ized. Take a wife."

"MASTER CARL!" Cornut
exploded. "You have no
right to interfere in my personal
affairs!"

"And let you suicide?" the old
man said. "This arrangement of
alarms and Egerd is only a make-
shift. A thirty-day marriage would
surely see you through the worst
of it, wouldn't it?"

"Three weeks, thought Cornut—
that's how long I have — with luck.
"And, truly, you need a wife. It
is bad for a man to go through life
alone."

Cornut snapped, "How about
you?"

"I'm old. You're young. How
long is it since you've had a wife?"

Cornut was obstinately silent.
"You see? There are many
lovely young girls in the Univer-
sity. They would be proud. Any of
them."

Cornut did not want his mind to
roam the corridors that had just
been opened for it, but it did.
"Besides, you will have her with
you at all the dangerous times. You
won't need Egerd."

Cornut's mind ran back quickly
and began to trace a more familiar
less attractive maze. "I'll think
about it," he said at last, just as the
medic came in with his report, a
couple of boxes of pills and a sheaf
of papers. The report was negative,
all down the line. The pills? They
were just in case — they couldn't
hurt; they might help.

And the sheaf of papers ... The
top one said: Confidential. Ten-
tative. Studies of Suicidal Tend-
cies in Faculty Members.

Cornut covered it with his hand,
interrupted the medic, who was
about to explain the delay in get-
ting the dossiers for him, and cried,
"Let's get a move on, Carl! We can
still make that plane."
As fast as the scooter would go, they got to the aircraft park — just in time to see the first section of the Field Expedition lift itself off the ground with a great whistling roar on its VTO jets.

Much to Cornut's surprise, Master Carl was not upset. "Oh, well," he said, "we had our reasons. It isn't as though we were arbitrarily late. And anyway—" he allowed himself another wink, the second in a quarter of an hour—"this gives us a chance to ride in the president's private plane, eh? Real living for us underprivileged Gownies!" He even opened his mouth to chuckle, but he didn't do it, or if he did the sound was not heard.

Overhead, there was a gruff giant's cough and a bright spray of flame. They looked up. Flame, flame all over the heavens, falling in great white droplets to the Earth.

"My God!" said Cornut softly. "That was our plane!"

IV

"NOTHING loath," said Master Carl thoughtfully, "I kissed your concubine." He squinted out the window of the jet, savoring the sentence. It was good, yes, but was it perfect?

A towering cumulonimbus, far below, caught his attention and distracted him. He sighed. He didn't feel like working. Apparently everyone else in the jet was asleep. Or pretending to be.

Only St. Cyr, way up front, propped on pneumatic pillows in the semicircular lounge, looked as much awake as he ever did. But it was better not to talk to St. Cyr. Carl was aware that most conversations involving himself turned, sooner or later, to either his private researches or to number theory. As he knew more about either than anyone else alive, they wound up as lectures. That was no good with St. Cyr. He had made it clear long ago that he was not interested in being instructed by the instructors he hired.

Also he was in a bad mood.

It was odd, thought Master Carl, less in resentment than in a spirit of scientific inquiry, but St. Cyr had been quite furious with Cornut and Carl for no good reason. It could not have been for missing the first plane. If they'd caught it, they would have died, just like its crew and the four graduate students it carried. But St. Cyr had been furious, the tick-tock voice hoarse and breathless, the hairless eyebrows almost scowling.

Master Carl took his eyes away from the window and abandoned the question of St. Cyr. Let him sulk. Carl didn't like problems that had no solution. Nothing loath, I kissed your concubine. But mightn't it be better to write it as a song?
He became conscious of a beery breath on the back of his neck.

"I'm glad you're awake, Wahl," he said, turning, his face inches away from the hung-over face of the anthropologist. "Let me have your opinion, please. Which is easier to remember: 'Nothing loath, I kissed your concubine.' Or: 'Last digit, O, a potential square!'"

Wahl shuddered. "A little pity, please. I just this minute woke up."

"Why, I don't think that matters. It might help. The whole idea is to present the mnemonic in a form that is available under any conditions — including," Master Carl said delicately, "a digestive upset."

He rotated his chair to face Wahl, flipping through his notebook to display a scribbled page. "Can you read that? The idea, you see, is to provide a handly recognition feature for quick factoring of aliquot numbers. Now you know, of course, that all squares can end in only one of six digits. No square can end in two, three, seven or eight. So my first idea — I'm still not sure that I wasn't on the right track — was to use, 'No, quantity not squared.' You see the utility, I'm sure. Two letters in the first word, 'no.' Eight letters in 'quantity,' three in 'not' and seven in 'squared.' It's easy to remember, I think, and it's self-defining. I consider that a major advantage."

"Oh, it is," groaned Wahl.

CARL went on, "But it's negative. Also there is the chance that 'no' can be misread for 'nought' or 'nothing'—meaning zero. So I tried the reverse approach. A square can end in zero, one, four, five, six or nine. Letting the ejaculative 'O' stand for 'zero,' I then wrote: 'Last digit? O, a potential square.' Four, five, zero, one, nine and six — you see? Excuse me. I'm so used to lecturing to undergraduates that sometimes I tend to overexplain. But, although that has a lot to recommend it, it doesn't have — well — yumph." He smiled with a touch of embarrassment.

"So, just on an inspiration, I came up with 'Nothing loath, I kissed your concubine.' Rather catchy, no?"

"It's all of that, Carl," agreed Wahl, rubbing his temples. "Say, where's Cornut?"

"You realize that the 'nothing' again is 'zero.'"

"Oh, there he is. Hey, Cornut!"

"Let the boy sleep!" Carl snapped, jolted out of his concentration. He leaned forward to look into the wing-backed seat ahead of him and was gratified to find that Cornut was still snoring faintly.

Wahl burst into a laugh, stopped abruptly and clutched his head. After a moment he said, "You take care of him like he was your baby."

"There is no need to take that sort of tone."

"I've heard of accident-prones,
but this one’s fantastic. Wrecks planes that he ought to be in but isn’t!”

Master Carl bit back his rejoinder, paused to regain his temper and pondered an appropriate remark. He was saved the trouble. The jet lurched slightly and the distant thunderheads began to wheel toward the horizon. It wasn’t the clouds; it was the jet swinging in for a landing vectored by unseen radar. Only a very small motion, but it sent Wahl lurching frantically to the washroom and it woke Master Cornut.

Carl leaped up as soon as he saw the younger man move, stood over him until his eyes were open. “Are you all right?”

Cornut blinked, yawned and stretched his muscles. “I guess so. Yes.”

“We’re about to land.” There was relief in Carl’s voice. He had not expected anything to happen. Why should it? But there had been the chance that something might. “I can get you a cup of coffee from the galley.”

“Yes, I’d like — no, never mind. We’ll be down in a minute.”

Below them, the island was slipping back and forth slantwise, like a falling leaf — a leaf that was falling upward, at least to them, because it was growing enormously fast.

Wahl came out of the washroom and stared at the houses.

“Dirty hovels,” he growled. It was raining beneath them — no, around them — no, over. They were through the patchy cloud layer, and the “hovels” Wahl had glimpsed were clear beneath. Out of the patches of clouds, rain was falling.

“Cum-u-lus of or-o-graph-ic or-i-gin,” said St. Cyr’s uninflected voice, next to Master Carl’s ear. “There is al-ways cloud at the island. I hope the storm does not dis-turb you.”

Master Wahl said, “It disturbs me.”

THEY landed, the jet’s wheels screaming thinly as they touched the wet concrete runway. A short, dark man with an umbrella ran out and, holding it protectively over St. Cyr’s head, escorted them to the administration building, though the rain had nearly stopped.

It was evident that St. Cyr’s reputation and standing were working for them. The whole party was passed through customs under seal; the brown-skinned inspectors didn’t even touch the bags. One of them prowled around the stack of the Field Expedition’s luggage, carrying a portable voice-typer. “Research instruments,” he chanted, singsong, and the machine clacked out its entry. “Research instruments . . . Research instruments.”

Master Carl interrupted. “That’s
my personal bag! There aren’t any research instruments in it.”

“Excuse,” said the inspector politely, but he went right on calling every bag “research instruments.” The only concession he made to Carl’s correction was to lower his voice.

It was, to Master Carl, an offensive performance, and he had it in his mind to speak to someone in authority about it, too. Research instruments! They had nothing resembling a research instrument to their names, unless you counted the collection of handcuffs Master Wahl had brought along, just in case the aboriginals were obstinate about coming along. He thought of bringing it up with St. Cyr, but the president was talking to Cornut. Carl didn’t want to cut in. He had no objection to interrupting Cornut, but interrupting the president of the university was something else again.

Wahl said, “What’s that over there? Looks like a bar, doesn’t it? How about a drink?”

Carl shook his head frostily and stomped out into the street. He was not enjoying his trip, and it was a pity, he thought, because he realized that he had been rather looking forward to it. One needed a change of scene from the Halls of Academe every once in a while. Otherwise one tended to become stuffy and provincial, to lose contact with the mass of humanity out-

side the university walls. For that reason, Carl had made it a practice, through all the decades since he began to teach, at least once in every year to accept or invent some task that would bring him in contact with the non-academic world... They had all been quite as distasteful as this one, but since Master Carl had never realized this, it didn’t matter.

He stood in a doorway, out of the fresh hot sun, looking down a broad street. The “filthy hovels” were not filthy at all; it was only Wahl’s bad temper that had said that, not his reason. Why, they were quite clean, Master Carl marveled. Not attractive. And not large. But they did have a quaint and not too repulsive appearance. They were clumsy prefabs of some sort of pressed fiber, plastic-bonded — a local product, most likely, Master Carl diagnosed; pulp from palm trees had gone into the making of them.

A roadable helipopper whirred, dipped, settled in the street before him, folded its vanes and rolled up to the entrance of the building where Carl was standing. The driver jumped out, ran around the side of the craft and opened the door.

NOW, that was odd. The driver acted as though the Empress Catherine were about to set foot on the soil she ruled, and yet what
came out of the copter was no great lady but what seemed, at least at first glance, like a fourteen-year-old blonde. Carl pursed his thin lips and squinted into the bright sun. Curious, he marveled — the creature was waving at him!

The creature said, in the brassy voice of no fourteen-year-old, "You're Carl. I'm Madame Sant' Anna. Come on, get in. I've been waiting for you people for an hour and a half, and I've got to get clear back to Rio de Janeiro tonight.

And hurry up that old goat St. Cyr, will you?"

To Carl's surprise, St. Cyr didn't strike the child dead. He came out and greeted her as affably as his corpse's voice could be made to sound, and he sat beside her in the front seat of the popper in the wordless association of old friend. But it wasn't the only surprising thing. Looking a little more closely at the "girl" was a kind of surprise too, because a girl she was not. She was a painted
grandmother with a face-lift.
Bermuda shorts and a blonde bob! Why couldn't the woman grow old gracefully, like St. Cyr, or for that matter like Master Carl himself?

All the same, if St. Cyr knew her, she couldn't be all bad, and anyway Carl had something else bothering him,
The helipopper was already on the bounce. Carl stood up. "Wait! We're missing someone. Where's Cornut?" No one was listening.
The outrageous grandmother was chattering away in St. Cyr's ear, her voice queer and muffled under the sound of the sequenced rockets that whirled the vanes. "President St. Cyr! Please have this pilot turn back." But St. Cyr didn't even turn his head.

Master Carl was worried. He pressed his face to the window, looking back toward the native town, but already it was too far to see anything.
He had promised the boy…
He felt very guilty indeed. But of course, he told himself, there was no danger. There were no hostile natives anywhere in the world. Lightning would not strike. Cornut was as safe as if he were in his own bed.

Exactly as safe, Carl’s own mind assured him sternly. And no safer.

But the fact of the matter was that Cornut was drinking a glass of beer at a dusty sidewalk table. For the first time in — was it forever? — his mind was at rest.

He was not thinking of the anomalies a statistical census had discovered in Wolgren’s Distributive Law. He was not thinking of Master Carl’s suggestion about term marriage, or even about the annoying interruption that this expedition represented. It did not seem quite as much of an annoyance, now that he was here. It was so quiet. He tested it experimentally with his ears and decided that, though odd, it was pleasant. A few hundred yards away some aircraft chugged into the sky, destroying the quiet, but the odd thing was that the quiet returned.

Cornut now had the chance he had been looking for since leaving the clinic, the night before and ten thousand miles away. He ordered another beer from the sallow waitress and reached into his pocket for the sheaf of reports that the medic had handed him.

There were more of them than he had expected.

How many cases had the analyst said had occurred at their own University? Fifteen or so. But here were more than a hundred case histories.

Cornut scanned the summaries quickly and discovered that the problem extended beyond the University — cases from other schools, cases from outside University circles entirely. There seemed to have been a rash of them among Government employees. There was a concentration of twelve on the staff of a single television network.

He read the meaningless names and studied the almost as meaningless facts. One of the TV men had succeeded in short-circuiting a supposedly foolproof electric mattress eight times before he managed to die of it. He was happily married and about to be promoted.

“Ancora birrap” Cornut jumped, but it was only the waiter.

“No, thanks — no, wait.” There was no sense in these continual interruptions. “Bring me a couple of bottles and leave them.”

The sun was setting, the clouds overhead powerless to shield the island from its heat, for the horizon was bare blue. It was hot and the beer was making him sleepy.

It occurred to him that he really ought to be making an effort to catch up with the rest of the party.
It was only chance that they had gone off without him; probably Master Carl would be furious.

It also occurred to him that it was comfortable here.

On an island as small as this, he would have no trouble finding them when he wanted them. Meanwhile he still had some beer, and he had all these reports, and it did not seem particularly disturbing to him that, though he read them all from beginning to end, he still found none where the course of the syndrome had taken more than ten weeks to reach its climax. Ten weeks.

He had twenty days left.

**MASTER** Carl demanded: “Turn back! You can’t leave the poor boy to die!”

St. Cyr whinnied surprisingly. The woman shrieked: “He’ll be all right. What’s the matter, you want to spoil his fun? Give the kid a chance to kill himself, will you?”

Carl took a deep breath. Then he started again, but it was no use; they insisted on treating the matter lightly. He slumped back in his seat and stared out the window.

The helipopper came down in front of a building larger than most of the prefabs. It had glass in the windows, and bars over the glass. Madame Sant’ Anna leaped up like a stick doll and shrielled, “Everybody out! Hop to it, now!

I haven’t got all day, you know!”

Carl morosely followed her into the building. He wondered how, even for a moment and at a distance, he had taken her for a child. Bright blue eyes under blonde hair, yes; but the eyes were bloodshot, the hair a yellow mop draped on a skull. Loathing her, and worrying about Cornut, he climbed a flight of steps, went through a barred door and looked into a double-barred room.

“The ab-o-rig-i-nes,” St. Cyr said in his toneless voice.

It was the local jail, and it had only one cell, and that cell was packed with a dozen or more short, olive-skinned, ragged men and women. There were no children. No children, thought Master Carl petulantly, but they had promised an entire population to select from! These were all old. The youngest of them seemed at least a hundred.

“Observe them care-ful-ly,” came St. Cyr’s slow voice. “There is not a per-son there more than fif-ty years old.”

Master Carl jumped. Mind-reading again! He thought with a touch of envy how wonderful it must be to be so wise, so experienced, so all-understanding that one could know, as St. Cyr knew, what another person was thinking before he spoke it aloud. It was the sort of wisdom he hoped his subordinates would attribute to him;
and they didn’t; and it hurt to see that in St. Cyr it existed.

Master Carl moved fretfully down the corridor, looking through the electrified bars at the aborigines. A sallow fat man in flowered shorts came in through the door, bowed to the blonde woman, bowed to St. Cyr, stared contemptuously through the others, and offered a slight inclination of the head to Master Carl. It was an instructive demonstration of how a really adept person could single out the categories of importance of a group of strangers on first contact.

“I,” he announced, “am your translator. You wish to speak to your aboriginals, sir. Do so. The short one there, he speaks some English.”

“Thank you,” said Master Carl.

The short one was a surly looking fellow wearing much the same costume as the others. All of them were basically clad in ragged shorts and a short-sleeved jacket with an incongruous, tight-fitting collar. The clothes looked very, very old; not merely worn, but old. Men and women dressed alike. Only in the collars and shoulder-bars of the jackets were there any particular variations.

They seemed to have military insignia to mark their ranks. The woman’s collar, for example, bore a red cloth patch with a gold stripe running through it; the red was faded, the gold was soiled, but once they had been bright. Across the gold stripe was a five-pointed star of yellow cloth. The shortest of the men, the one who looked up when the translator spoke, had a red patch with much more gold on it, and with three stars of greenish, tarnished metal. Another man had a plain red patch with three cloth stars.

These three, the two men and the women, stepped forward, placed their palms on their knees and bowed jerkily. The one with the metal stars spoke breathily: “Tai-i Masatura-san, I captain, sir. These are of my command: Heicho Ikuri, Joto-hei Shokuto.”

Master Carl stepped back fastidiously. They smelled! They didn’t look dirty, exactly, but their complexions were all bad — scarred and pitted and seamed, as well as sallow; and they did have a distinct sour aura of sweat hanging over them,

He glanced at the interpreter. “Captain? Is that an army rank?”

The interpreter grinned. “No army now,” he said reassuringly. “Oh, no. Long gone. But they keep military titles, you see? Father to son, father to son, like that. This fellow here, the tai-i, he tells me they are all part of Imperial Japanese Expeditionary Force which presently will make assault landing in Washington, D.C. Tai-i is
captain; he is in charge of all of them, I believe. The heicho—that's the woman—is, the captain tells, a sort of junior corporal. More important than the other fellow, who is what they say a superior private.”

“I don’t know what a corporal or a private is.”

“Who does? But to them it is important, it seems.” The translator hesitated, grinned, and wheezed: “Also, they are related. The tai-i- is daddy, the heicho is mommy, the joto-hei is son. All named Masatura-san.”

“Dirty looking things,” Master Carl commented. “Thank heaven I don’t have to go near them.”

“Oh,” said a grave, slow voice behind him, “but you do. Yes, you do. It is your re-spon-si-ble-ty, Carl. You must su-per-vise their tests by the med-ics.”

MASTER Carl frowned and complained, but there was no way out of it. St. Cyr gave the orders, and that was the order he gave.

The medics looked over the aboriginals as thoroughly as any dissecting cadavers. Medics, thought Master Carl in disgust. How can they! But they did.

They had the men and women strip — flaccid breasts, sagging bellies, a terminator of deepening olive showing the transition from shade to sun at the lines marked by collars and cuffs and the hems of their shorts. Carl took as much of it as he could, and then he walked out—leaving them nakedly proud beside their rags, while the medics fussed and muttered over them like livestock judges handing out ribbons.

It was not only that he was tired of the natives — whose interest to a mathematician was not zero, no, but a quantity vanishingly small. More than that, he wanted to find Cornut.

In the light of a huge moon, Carl retraced his steps to where the helipopper was casting a black silhouette on the silver dust. The pilot was half asleep on the seat, and Carl, with a force and determination previously reserved for critical letters in Math. Trans., said sharply: “Up, you! I haven’t all night!”

The startled pilot was airborne with his passenger before he realized that it was neither his employer, the young-old blonde, nor the old, old St. Cyr.

By then it did not much matter. In for a penny, in for a pound; when Carl ordered him back to the town where the jet had landed, the pilot grumbled to himself but complied.

It was not hard to find where Cornut had gone. The scooter police told Carl about the sidewalk cafe, the cashier told him
about the native cafeteria, the counterman had watched Cornut, failing to finish his sandwich and coffee, stagger back to — the airport again. There the traffic tower had seen him come in, try to get transportation to follow the others, fail, and stagger off into the jungle on the level truck road.

He had been hardly able to keep his eyes open, the towerman added.

Carl pressed the police into service. He was frightened.

The little scooter bounced along the road, twin spotlights scanning the growth on both sides. Please find him, begged Carl silently. I promised him ... The brakes squealed and the scooter skidded to a halt.

The police were small, thin, young and agile, but Master Carl was first off the scooter and first to the side of the huddled figure under the breadfruit tree.

For the first time in weeks, Cornut had fallen asleep — passed out, in fact — without a guardian angel. The moment of helplessness between walking and sleeping, the moment that had almost killed him a dozen times, had caught him by the side of a deserted road, in the middle of an uninhabited sink of smelly soft vegetation.

Carl gently lifted the limp head. “My God,” he said, a prayer instead of an oath, “he’s only drunk. Help me get him to bed.”

Cornut woke up with a sick mouth and a banging head. Master Carl was seated at a field desk, a shaded light over his head. “Oh, you’re up. Good. I had the porter call me a few minutes early, in case—”

“Yes. I know.” Cornut waggled his jaw experimentally, but that was not a pleasant experiment. Still, he felt very good. He had not been drunk in a long, long time, and a hangover was strange enough to him to be interesting in itself.

He sat on the side of the bed. The porter had evidently had other orders from Master Carl, because there was coffee in a pewter pot, and a thick pottery cup. Cornut drank some.

Carl watched him for a while, then browsed back to his desk. He had a jar of some faintly greenish liquid and the usual stack of photographic prints. “How about this one?” he asked. “Does it look like a star to you?”

“No.”

Carl dropped it back on the heap. “Becquerel’s was no better.”

“I’m sorry, Carl,” Cornut said cheerfully. “You know I don’t take much interest in psion—”

“Cornut!”

“Sorry. In your researches into paranormal kinetics, then.”

Carl said doubtfully, having already forgotten what Cornut had said, “I thought Greenlease had put me on the track of something.
You know I've been trying to manipulate single molecules by P. K. — using photographic film — on the principle that as the molecules are just about to flip over into another state, not much energy should be needed to trigger them. Well, Greenlease told me about Brownian movement. Like this.” He held the jar of soap solution to the light. “See?”

Cornut got up and took the quart jar from Master Carl’s hand. In the light, he could see that the greenish color was the sum of myriad wandering points of light, looking more gold than green. “Brownian movement? What about it?”

“The actual motion of molecules,” Carl said solemnly. “One molecule impinging on another, knocking it into a third, the third knocking it into a fourth. There’s a term for it in—”

“In math, of course. Why, certainly. Drunkard’s Walk.” Cornut remembered the concept with clarity and affection. He had been a second-year student, and the House Master was old Wayne; the audiovisual had been a marionette drunkard, lurching away from a doll-sized lamp post with random drunken steps in random drunken directions. Cornut smiled at the jar.

“Well, what I want to do is sober him up. Watch.” Carl puffed and thought; he was a model of concentration; Rodin had only sketched the rough outlines, compared to Master Carl. Then he panted. “Well?”

Apparently, Cornut thought, what Carl had been trying to do was to make a molecule move in a straight line. “I don’t think I see a thing,” he admitted.

“No. Neither do I... Well,” said Master Carl, retrieving his jar, “even a negative answer is an answer. But I haven’t given up yet. I have a few more thoughts on photographs — if Greenlease can give me a little help.” He sat down next to Cornut. “And you?”

“You saw.”

Carl nodded seriously. “I saw that you were still alive. Was it because you were on your own Drunkard’s Walk?”

Cornut shook his head. He didn’t mean no. He meant, “How can I tell?”

“And my idea about finding a wife?” asked Carl.

“I don’t know.”

“That girl in the dining hall,” Carl said with some acuteness. “How about her?”

“Locille? Oh, good Lord, Carl, how do I know about her? I — I just barely know her name. Anyway, she seems to be pretty close to Egerd.”

Carl got up and wandered to the window. “Might as well have breakfast. The aboriginals ought to be ready now.” He stared at the crimson morning. “Madame Sant’-
Anna has asked for a helper to get the aboriginals to Valparaiso,” he said thoughtfully. “I think I’ll help her out.”

V

Ten thousand miles away, in the early afternoon, Locille was not very close to Egerd at all.

“Sorry,” she said. “I would like to. But—”

Egerd stood up.

“What’s the record for suicides?” he said angrily. “Ten weeks? Good enough. I’ll be around to see you again — along about the first of the month.”

He stalked out of the girls’ dayroom.

Locille sighed, but as she did not know what to do about Egerd’s jealousy, she did nothing. It was difficult to be a girl sometimes.

For here’s Locille, a girl, a pretty girl, full of a girl’s problems. It is a girl’s business to keep her problems to herself. It is a girl’s business to look poised and lovely. And available.

It is not true that girls are made of sugar and spice. These mysterious creatures, enameled of complexion, scented with distant flower fields and musk, constricted here and enlarged there — they are animals, as men are animals, sustained by the same sludgy trickle of partly fermented organic matter — and indeed with a host of earthy problems men need never know.

Womanhood has always been a triumph of artifice over the animal within.

And here, as we say, is Locille, twenty years old, student child of a retired subway enginer and his retired social-worker wife.

She is young.

She is nubile.

She has the health of a plowmare.

What can she know of mysteries?

But she knew.

On the night the Field Expedition was due to return, Locille was excused all of her evening classes. She took advantage of an hour of freedom to telephone her parents, out on the Texas, She discovered, as she had discovered a hundred times before, that there was nothing to say between them; and returned to the kitchens of the Faculty Mess in time to take up her duties for the evening.

The occasion was the return of the Field Expedition. It promised to be a monstrous feast.

More than two hundred visiting notables would be present, as well as most of the upper faculty of the University itself. The kitchens were buzzing with activity. All six C.E.s were on duty, all busy.

The Culinary Engineer in charge of Sauces and Gravies spied Locille first and drafted her to
help him, but there was a struggle; the Engineer whose charge was Pastries knew her and wanted her too, Sauces and Gravies won out, and Locille found herself emulsifying caked steer blood and powdered spices in a huge metal vat. The sonic whine of the emulsifier and the staccato hiss of the steam as she valved it expertly into the mixture drowned out the roar of the settling jet — the Field Expedition had returned without her knowing it.

The first clue she had was when there was a commotion at one end of the kitchens, and she turned, and there was Egerd, shepherding three short, sallow persons she didn’t recognize.

He saw her. “Locille! Come on over and meet the aboriginals!”

She hesitated and glanced at her C.E., who pantomimed take-ten-if-it-won’t-spoil-the-gravy. Locille slipped off her gauntlets, set the automatic timers and thermostats and ducked past the kneading, baking, pressure-cooking machines of the Faculty Kitchen toward Egerd and his trophies.

“They’re Japanese,” he said proudly. “You’ve heard of World War Two? They were abandoned on an island, and their descendants have been there ever since. Say, Locille—”

She took her eyes off the aboriginals to look at Egerd. He seemed both angry and proud.

“I have to go to Valparaiso,” he said. “There are six other aboriginals who are going to South America, and Master Carl picked me to go along.”

She started to answer, but the young instructor, Master Cornut, was wandering into the room, looking thoughtful.

Egerd looked thoughtfully back at him.

“I wondered why Carl picked me for this,” he said, not bitterly, but with comprehension. “Good enough.” He turned to leave through another door. “He can have his chance — for the next sixteen days.”

THOUGHTFUL Cornut looked, and thoughtful he was. He had never proposed marriage before.

“Hello, Locille,” he said formally.

She said, “Hello, Master Cornut.”

He said, “I, uh, want to ask you something.”

She said nothing.

He looked around the kitchen as though he had never been in it before, which was probably so. He said, “Would you like to — ah — would you like to meet me on Overlook Tower tomorrow?”

“Certainly, Master Cornut.”

“That’s fine,” he said politely, nodding, and was halfway into the dining room before he realized he hadn’t told her what time. Maybe
she thought he expected her to stand there all day long!

He hurried back. “At noon?”
“Yes, Master Cornut.”
“And don't make any plans for the evening,” he commanded, hurrying away. It was embarrassing. He had never proposed marriage before, and had not succeeded in proposing now.

But he was wrong. He had. He didn't know it, but Locille did.

The rest of the evening passed very rapidly for Cornut. The dinner was a great success. The aborigines were a howl. They passed among the guests, smoking their pipe of peace with anyone who cared to try it, which was everyone, and as the guests got drunker, the aborigines, responding to every toast with a loud Banzai!, then a hoarse one, then a simper — the aborigines got drunker still.

Cornut caught glimpses of Locille from time to time at first, then not at all. He asked after her, asked the waitress, asked the aborigines, finally found himself asking — or telling — about Locille with his arm around the flaccid shoulders of Master Wahl. He was quite drunk early, and he kept on drinking. He had moments of clarity. Master Carl listening patiently while Cornut tried to demonstrate Brownian motion — the Drunkard's Walk of molecules — in, appropriately, a rye-and-ginger-ale; a queer, alone moment when he realized he was staggering around the empty kitchen, calling Locille's name to the cold copper caldrons.

Somehow, God knows how, he found himself in the elevators of Math Tower, when it must have been very late, and Egerd in a cream-colored robe was trying to help him into his room. He knew he said something to Egerd that must have been either coarse or cruel, because the boy turned away from him and did not protest when Cornut locked his door, but he did not know what coarse or cruel thing he had said. Had he mentioned Locille? When had he not!

He fell sprawled on his bed, giggling. He had mentioned Locille a thousand times that night, and he stroked the pillow beside him as he drifted off to sleep.

He drifted off to sleep and halted, for a moment sober, for a moment terrified, knowing that he was on the verge of sleep, again alone. But he could not stop.

He could not stop because he was a molecule in a sea of soapy soup and Master Carl was hurling him into the arms of Locille.

Master Carl was hurling him at Locille because Egerd had hurled him at Master Carl; Locille thrust him at St. Cyr, and St. Cyr, voicelessly chuckling, hurled him clear out of the jar, and he could not stop.
He could not stop because St. Cyr told him: “You are a molecule, drunken molecule. You are a molecule, drunk and random, without path. You are a drunken molecule and you cannot stop.”

He could not stop though the greatest voice in the world was shouting at him: “YOU CAN ONLY DIE, DRUNKEN MOLECULE! YOU CAN DIE — YOU CANNOT STOP!”

He could not stop because the world was reeling, reeling. He tried to open his eyes to halt it, but it would not stop.

He was a molecule.

He saw that he was a molecule and he saw he could not stop.

Then —
the molecule
— stopped.

VI

GERD tried pounding on the locked door for nearly five minutes and then went away. He could have stayed longer, but he didn’t want to. He thought it out carefully and concluded, first, that he had done what he undertook to do — in spite of the fact that Cornut’s choosing to marry Locille upset the undertaking — and second, that if he was too late, he was already too late.

An hour later, Cornut woke up.
He was alive, he noticed immediately.

DRUNKARD’S WALK

It had been a most peculiar dream. It did not seem like a dream. His afternoon lecture, with Pogo Possum drawling hickory-bark rules for factoring large integers, was much more fantasy in his mind than the dream-scene of himself contemplating himself, staggering drunk and with a bottle in his hand, trapped in the ceaseless Brownian zigzag. He knew that the only way a molecule could stop was to die, but curiously he had not died.

He got up, dressed and went out.

He was remarkably hung over, but it was much, much better outside. It was bright morning and, he remembered very clearly, he had an engagement with Locille at noon.

He was on tape for the A.M. lecture; it gave him the morning off. He walked about the campus aimlessly, past the green steel and glass of the stadium, past the broad lawns of the lower campus to the bridge. The Med School lay huddled under the bridge itself. He liked the bridge, liked its sweep across the Bay, liked the way it condescended to drop one pylon to the island where the University had been built. He very much liked that pylon. That was Overlook Tower.

On impulse, thinking that this was a good time to be wholly sober, he stopped at the clinic to get a refill on his wake-up pills. The clinic
was not manned at that hour, except for emergencies, but because Cornut was a returnee, he was admitted to the automatic diagnosis machines.

It was very much the same as the experience before the Field Expedition, except that there was no human doctor at all. A mechanical finger inserted a hair-thin tendril into his arm and tasted his blood, compared it with the recent chromatograph, and whirred thoughtfully while it considered if there had been changes. In a moment the Solution light winked pink, there was a click and clatter, and in a hopper by his hand there dropped a plastic box of his pills.

He took one. Ah, fine! It was a strange and rewarding sensation. Whatever the pills contained, they fought fatigue at first encounter. He could trace the course of that pill clear down his throat and into his abdomen. The path tingled with well-being. He felt pretty good. No, he felt very good.

He walked out into the fresh air again, humming to himself.

It was a long climb up the pylon to Overlook Landing, but he did it on foot, feeling comfortable all the way. He popped another pill into his mouth and waited in patient good humor for Locille.

SHE came promptly from her class. From the base of the pylon, she glanced up at the Overlook Landing, nearly two hundred feet over her head. If Cornut was there, she couldn’t see him. She rode up on the outside escalators, twining round the huge hexagonal tower, for the sake of the air and the view.

It was a lovely view — the clean white rectahedron of the Biologicals factory, the dome-shaped Clinic under the spreading feet of the pylon itself, the bright University buildings, the green of the lawns, the two dissimilar blues of water and sky.

Lovely...

But she was nervous.

She stepped off the escalator, turned around the bulk of the pylon and bowed. “Master Cornut,” she said.

The wind caught at her blouse and hair. Cornut stood dreaming over the rail, his own hair blown carelessly around his forehead. He turned idly and smiled with sleepy eyes.

“Ah,” he said. “Locille.” He nodded as though she had answered — she had not. “Locille, I need a wife. You will do.”

“Thank you, Master Cornut.”

He waved a gentle hand. “You aren’t engaged, I understand?”

“No.” Unless you counted Egerd — but she didn’t count Egerd.

“Nor pregnant, I presume?”

“No. I have never been pregnant.”

“Oh, no matter, no matter,” he
said. “I don’t mind that. No sort of physical problem, I suppose?”

“No.” She didn’t meet his eye that time, though. For there was a sort of physical problem, in a way. There couldn’t have been a pregnancy without a man, and she had avoided that.

She stood waiting for him to say something else, but he was a long time in getting around to it. Out of the corner of her eye, she noted that he was taking pills out of that little box as though they were candy. She wondered if he knew he was taking them.

She remembered the knife-edge at his throat in class. She remembered the stories Egerd had told.

Silly business.

Why would anyone try to kill himself?

He collected himself and cleared his throat, taking another pill.

“Let me see,” he mused. “No engagements of record, no physical bars, no consanguinity, of course—I’m an only child, you see. Well, I think that’s everything, Locille. Shall we say tonight, after late class?” He looked suddenly concerned. “That is—you have no objection, do you?”

“I have no objection.”

“Good.” He nodded, but his face remained clouded. “Locille,” he began, “perhaps you’ve heard stories about me. I—I have had a number of accidents lately. And one reason why I wish to take a wife is to guard against any more accidents. Do you understand?”

“I understand that, Master Cornut.”

“Very good. Very good.” He took another pill out of the box, hesitated, glanced at it.

His eyes widened.

Locille stood motionless; she didn’t know that a sudden realization had come to Master Cornut.

It was the last pill in the box. But there had been twenty—at least twenty—not more than three-quarters of an hour before—twenty!

He cried hoarsely: “Another accident!”

It was as if the realization released the storm of the pills. Cornut’s pulse began to pound. His head throbbed in a new and faster tempo. The world spun scarlet around him. A rush of bile clogged his throat.

“Master Cornut!”

But it was already too late for the girl to cry out. He knew; he had acted. He hurled the box out into space, stared at her, crimson, then without ceremony leaped to the rail.

Locille screamed.

She was after him, clutching at him, but impatiently he shrugged her off, and then she saw that he was not climbing to hurl himself to death. He had his finger down his throat. Without romance or
manners, Master Cornut was getting the poison out of him quickly, efficiently —
Locille stood by silently, waiting.
After a few minutes his shoulders stopped heaving, but he leaned on the rail, staring, for minutes after that. When he turned, his face was the racked face of a damned soul.
"I'm sorry. Thanks."
Locille said softly, "But I didn't do anything."
"Of course you did. You woke me up —"
She shook her head. "You did it by yourself, you know. You did."
He looked at her with irritation, then with doubt. And then, at last, he looked at her with the beginning of hope.

VII

The ceremony was very simple. Master Carl officiated. There was a friendly meal, and then they were left alone, Locille and Cornut, by the grace of the magisterial power vested in house masters man and wife.
They went to his room.
"You'd better rest," said Locille.
"Right." He sprawled on the bed. He was very much aware of her, now studying, now doing woman-like tasks around his room — no, their room. She was as inconspicuous as a flesh-and-blood person could be, moving quickly when she moved. But she might have been neon-lit and blaring with sirens for the way she kept distracting him.
He stood up and dressed himself, not looking at her. She said questioningly, "It's time for sleep, isn't it?"
He fumbled. "Is it?" But the clock said yes, it was: he had slept the day through. "Right," he said, as though it were some trivial thing and not world-shaking at all. "Yes, it's time for — sleep. But I think I will take a walk around the campus, Locille. I need it."
"Certainly." She waited, polite and calm.
"Perhaps I shall be back before you are asleep," he went on. "Perhaps not. Perhaps —" He was rambling. He nodded, cleared his throat, picked up his cloak and left.
No one was in the corridor outside, no one in sight in the hall.
There was a thin electronic peep from the robot night-proctors, but that was all right. Master Cornut was no undergraduate, to wriggle under the scanning beams. It was his privilege to come and go as he chose.
He chose to go.
He walked out onto the campus, quiet under a yellow moon, the bridge overhead ghostly silver. There was no reason why he should be so emotionally on edge. Locille was only a student.
The fact remained — he was on edge.
But why should he be? Student marriage was good for the students, good for the masters; custom sanctioned it; and Master Carl, from the majesty of his house master’s post, he had suggested it in the first place.

Queerly, he kept thinking of Egerd.

There had been a look on young Egerd’s face, and maybe that was what bothered him. Master Cornut was not so many years past his sheepskin that he could dismiss the possible emotions of an undergraduate. Custom, privilege and law to one side, the fact remained that a student quite often did feel jealous of a master’s prerogatives. While a student, Cornut himself had contracted no liaisons to be interfered with. But other students had. And there was no doubt that, in Egerd’s immature, undergraduate way, he might well be jealous.

BUT what did that matter? Egerd’s jealousy could harm only himself. No serf, raging inwardly against his lord’s *jus primae noctis*, was less able to make his anger felt than Egerd. But somehow Cornut was feeling it.

He felt almost guilty.

He was no logician; he was Mathematics. But this whole concept of right, he thought as he paced along the river bank, needed some study. What the world sanctioned was clear: The rights of the higher displaced the rights of the lower, as an atom of fluorine will drive oxygen out of a compound. But *should* it be that way?

It was that way — if that was an answer.

And all of class, all of privileges, all of law, seemed to be working to produce one single commodity — a product which, of all the world’s goods, is unique in that it has never been in short supply, never quite satisfied its demand and yet never failed to find a market: babies. Wherever you looked, babies. In the creches in the women’s dorms, in the playrooms attached to the rooms of the masters — babies.

It was almost as though it had been planned that way; custom and law determined the fact that as many adult humans as possible spend as much of their time as possible in performing the acts that made babies arrive. Why? What was the drive that produced so many babies?

It wasn’t a matter of sex alone — it was babies. Sex was perfectly possible and joyous under conditions that made the occurrence of babies utterly impossible; science had arranged that decades, even centuries, before. But contraception was no answer. And so, all over the world, this uncomplicated and unaided practice of baby-making added a clear two per cent to the world’s population every time the Earth sailed around the Sun.
Two per cent per year!
There were now something over
twelve billion persons alive. Next
year’s census would show two per
cent more than that. And why?
What made babies so popular?
Crazy as it was, the conclusion
forced itself on Master Cornut: It
was planned that way.
By whom, he wondered, settling
down to a long night’s thoughtful
ramble and a pursuing of the line
of thought to its last extreme —
But not tonight, because he
looked up and there was his own
dorm. His feet had known more
clearly than he the ultimate answer
to the question: Babies?
He was back at the entrance of
Math Tower where the girl, Locille,
was waiting.

The thing was — the bed. She
had had a bed of her own
moved into the room, for that was
the way it was done; but of course
there was his bed already there,
much larger, so that —
Well, which bed would she be in?
He took a deep breath, nodded
blindly to the unseeing electronic
night-proctor, and opened the door
of his room.
A riotous alarm bell shattered
the stillness.
Master Cornut stood staring,
stupidly, while the flesh-and-blood
undergraduate charged with super-
vising the corridors came peering
worriedly around the corner, drawn
by the sound; and the bell con-
tinued to ring. Then he realized it
was connected with the door. It was
his automatic alarm bell, rigged by
himself. But he had not connected
it this night.
He stepped in quickly, threw a
scowl at the undergraduate, and
closed the door. The ringing
stopped.
Locille was rising from the bed
— his bed.
Her hair was braided about her
head and her eyes were downcast
but bright. She had not been asleep.
She said, “You must be tired.
Would you like me to fetch you
something to eat?”
He said in a tremulously stern
voice, “Locille, why did you bug
the door?”
“Why, to wake me up when you
came in. The bell was there. I only
had to turn it on.”
“And why?”
“Why?” she said. “I wanted to.”
And she yawned, rather prettily,
and excused herself with a smile,
and turned to straighten the covers
on the bed.
Cornut, watching her from be-
hind as he had never watched her
from the front, made note of two in-
credible facts.
The first was that this girl, Lo-
cille, was beautiful. She was wear-
ing very little, only a sleeping skirt
and a sleeping yoke, and there was
no doubt of her figure; and she was
wearing no makeup that the eye
could see, and there was no doubt about her face.

Amazing, Cornut told himself, conscious of commotions inside himself, amazing, but I want this girl. I want her very much.

And that led him to the other fact, which was more incredible still.

He looked at her and knew what had never entered into his calculations. It had never occurred to him that she might want him.

Tap, tap. The girl shook him awake — fully awake. “What do you want?” Cornut cried crossly at the door. Beside him, Locille made a face, a sweet, a mock-arrogant face, that was a tender caricature of his own; so that by the time the morning-proctor opened the door a crack and peered around it, Cornut was smiling at him.

Wonders never-ceasing, thought the proctor, and said timidly, “Master Cornut, it is eight o’clock.”

Cornut drew the covers over Locille’s bare shoulder. “Go away,” he said. “Thanks, but go away.”

The door closed, and one of Locille’s pink slippers slapped lightly against it. She raised the other to toss after the first. Cornut caught her arm, laughing very softly; and she turned to him, not quite laughing, and kissed him, and sprang away.

“And stay awake,” she warned. “I have to go to class.”

**Cornut leaned back against the pillow.**

Why, it was a pleasant morning, he thought, and maybe in a way a pleasant world! It was perfectly astonishing what hues and brightnesses there were in the world that he had either never suspected or long forgotten. He watched the girl, miraculously a part of his life, a segment joined on without a trace or seam where he had never suspected a segment was missing.

Quick-quick, she was dressed; much too quickly. “You,” said Cornut, “are in much too much of a hurry to get out of here.”

Locille came and sat on the edge of the bed. Even in the uniform she was beautiful now. That was another amazing thing. It was like knowing that a chalice was purest gold under the enamel; the colors were the same, the design was the same; but suddenly what had been a factory product was become a work of art, simply through knowing what graces lay underneath.

She said, “That is because I am in a hurry to return.” She looked at him again, questioningly. “You won’t go back to sleep?”

“Of course not.” She was frowning slightly, he saw with fondness, reminding him of the reason he had sought a companion in the first place — that old reason.

She kissed him, rose, found her carry-all where she had left it on a chair, and her books. She caroled
softly to herself: “Strike the Twos and strike the Threes, the Sieve of Eratosthenes. When the multiples — Cornut, you’re sure you won’t go back to sleep?”

“Sure.”

She stood, hesitating with one hand on the door. She said doubtfully, “Maybe you’d better take a wake-up pill. Will you?”

“I will,” he said, rejoicing in being nagged.

“And you’d better start dressing in a few minutes. It’s only half an hour until your first class —”

“I know.”

She blew him a kiss, and a smile; and she was gone.

CORNUT dutifully got up, found himself the pillbox with the red and green sleeping regulators, took one and returned to bed. He had never felt better in his life.

He lay back against the pillow, utterly relaxed and at peace. He had bought himself an alarm clock and it turned out to be a wife. He smiled at the low cream ceiling and stretched and yawned. What a perfectly fine bargain! What a superperfect alarm clock!

And that reminded him. He glanced at his watch, but he’d taken it off, and the wall clock was out of his angle of vision. Well, no matter; the wake-up pill would keep him from going back to sleep again. It felt as though he had been lying here half an hour, but it couldn’t be more than five minutes; that was how wake-up pills worked.

He fumbled in the little divided box. Fortunate that they were handy; another pill would make doubly sure.

He swallowed it, leaned back again and yawned. There was something about the pillow...

He turned his head, sniffed, breathed deeply. Yes, there was Locille about the pillow; that was what it was. Locille, who left a fragrance behind her. Beautiful fragrance of Locille. Beautiful name. Beautiful girl. He caught himself yawning again —

Yawning?

Yawning!

He blinked the eyes that were much too heavy, and tried to turn the very weary head. Yawning! But after two wake-up pills — or was it three — or six?

History was repeating!

Red pills for wake-up, green for sleep. The green pills, he sobbed in his thoughts, he’d been taking the green ones!

Oh, Lord, he whimpered soundlessly — oh, Lord, why now? Why did you wait to catch me until I cared?

— FREDERIK POHL

CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE
ILLUSTRATION ACTUAL SIZE
NO BATTERIES NEEDED
WEIGHS 1 1/2 OUNCES
READY TO PLAY
SIMPLE TUNING
HI-FI TONE

This perfect radio, a marvel of modern science, is unconditionally guaranteed.

**Postpaid**

$3.00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stations</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 KW</td>
<td></td>
<td>50 Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 KW</td>
<td></td>
<td>38 Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 KW</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 Miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clip on radiator, telephone, or light cord, etc.

If for any reason whatsoever this radio is not entirely satisfactory, the manufacturer guarantees you an immediate refund. The fulfillment of this guarantee is warranted by Galaxy Magazine.

BARMARAY CORP. Box 122, Village Station, New York 14, N. Y.

Enclosed find ___________ Please send ___________ Radios postpaid
($3 per radio)

Name...........................................................................

Address...........................................................................

City.......................................................... State..............