



*What is the lady at your house serving for dinner tonight? Salad? Cabbage salad? Close your eyes and eat—and after you're finished, then read about . . .*

## A CABBAGE NAMED SAM

By JOHN JAKES

Illustrator KILPATRICK

*And again the miracle of plentitude is done. The cycle is turned full upon itself. The dark aluminum and blueglass*

*cornucopia closes once more. Under the winter star along the rimed white barren the pods slip into larger pods, the airstreams*



*hiss and burn the frost, the plenty-swollen carriers fan out upon the gleaming tracks like spiders on a web, down along networks running a hundred thousand miles. Out of the useless waste has come one course to feed a billion five o'clock bellies, one course of a hundred to be had for the asking, created in a white emptiness where life is hard on one side of the blue glass but quiescent and soft and lapping and easy on the other. Waiting. Stillness and waiting. The turgid peace of growth, until the miracle begins again in forty hours.*

**T**HEY were the only two persons within four hundred

miles of The Karmanov Cabbage Works, Ltd., this man and woman.

The man had the name Sam Cole. He also had teeth of long yellow prominence, and intelligent fish-scale gray eyes.

The girl called herself Jolly Haven. But Sam knew damn well this was just a dodge. Thin, wheat-haired, ivory-faced dollies of her sort did not go thieving with men of Sam Cole's caliber under their own Top status family handles.

Such women as Jolly told their proper, envious friends what exactly they had stolen only *after* they had stolen it. Then the proper could be envious. Could wish to add another status scroll above their mantles and know they could never buy a scroll the way Jolly Haven was buying hers. After all, everyone in the world had money, even the thieves. Money and soft, warm bellies. And a life expectancy just short of a hundred. It was all just perfect.

Women of the Jolly Haven variety, however, lived on a glut of status. Status hogs, Sam thought, the night he met her in a bar in Liverpool after correspondence and pre-arrangement. Gorging was one thing. Sam was now engaged in a much more serious process, the very deadly serious process of moving from a third grade to a second. This

move resolved into transferring wife and little son (cute fish-scale gray eyes, too) into a four rather than a two room apartment on the seventieth floor of the Ionosphere Heights Development, Queens. If he and Jolly got away with it.

Sam Cole breathed the cold air and shinned down the servopipe that led from the deserted penthouse on the roof of the factory to the receiving dock. Under his arm he had rolled up a cut-from-the-frame Dilghous oil. Under his cap he had a little premeditated murder.

"Jolly?" He called up to a shadow against the stars. "You coming, dear?"

"That'll be enough of the familiarity, baby," said a voice. Though female, it managed to sound like a kicked tin can. In the winter-dark Sam sneered. Deb bitch.

The girl, all black boots and trousers and corked face, the second Dilghous oil under her arm, turned on her magnagraples and walked down the pipe surrounded by a faint halation of blue. She snapped at him, "We agreed to do this job together, baby, for what both of us would get out of it. But that doesn't mean we get to be friends, or anything close to it. Think you've got that through your head by now?"

Jolly hit the slippery receiving

dock with a clang. She switched off the grapples. In the starshine, intensified by the glint of distant Lake Aral, her face was a white chalk oval slashed by the mean charcoal line of her lips.

"You're a crude one, Cole. That holding hands trick was pretty neat."

"Hell, you'd have fallen into the damn Volga if I hadn't grabbed."

"That gives you no right to touch me!"

"One of these days maybe I'll steal enough to have the right to touch you, remember."

"Enough to move into Top? In how many thousands of years? My Father killed—"

"Yes?" Sam's eyes shone blue as frosted rocks. "Yes, love? Go on about your daddy."

"So you can find out where I came from?" Jolly laughed at him. "Maybe walk in some night and breathe your drunken breath all over my friends? Tell them how we jetted and boated and walked a thousand miles together for these two pictures? No, baby. I'll take my mingling at the ball park, where I can watch the millionaires sweating in the bleachers."

**I**F IT was just money made you top—" Sam began, impotent with rage.

"But it isn't, baby. It used to be, but it isn't now. It's the

heritage. I had a head start five hundred years ago, when the first one of my ancestors I care to talk about sold ten thousand faulty hub assemblies to a light plane company in Wichita, Kansas. Do you know how many people died? Sixty-seven the first year. I've got to reach to top the record. That's why I went so far as to hook up with someone from your class. The first time out—"

"Sure, I get you, but how about canning it?"

As he talked, Sam was thinking: *Why not five rooms instead of four; Up the ladder another notch.* He couldn't do it with a book. He couldn't do it with an equation. He couldn't do it with a propulsion process. He did it the way the other thieves did, up to and including those in Top, like Jolly Haven, whom the world respected and honored from the simple fact that they got away with it and lived to tell.

Sam watched the girl's flash of blonde hair as she bent to look over the edge of the receiving platform. The aircar was parked somewhere below. He let his eyes drift out over the tundra waste, pulling the fur collar nearer his cheeks. Six steps, across three of the recessed semi-circular receiving chutes. *Now*, while Jolly Haven was trying to see where they'd parked the stolen vehicle . . .

Clutching the Dilghous which was his half of the loot, Sam lifted a boot.

Red lights began to blink on a distant hillside.

The innumerable beads of bleeding radiance caught Sam in the corner of the eye.

"What the hell—?" He swiveled his head. Could it be Pytor Rathensteen returning from the Bahamas?

Impossible. Rathensteen sometimes occupied the sealed penthouse atop the factory. He was the factory owner and operator, although that last word hardly had a rational meaning any more. Sam Cole and Jolly Haven had hired a seedy detective to search Rathensteen's itinerary. He was not due back until the equinox.

Peering at the lights through a cloud of his own breath, Sam was vaguely aware that Jolly had vanished. Probably over the dock's lip into the aircar. The lights were strung out in a long incandescent red chain, serpentine over the whiteness.

Couldn't be a human party. The plant was miles off the tourist routes. The suggestion to steal the two priceless Dilghous oils had come from Jolly Haven simply because Rathensteen's factory was so remote, even though it was also one of the tougher alarm-and-guard places in the world to crack. They had cracked it. Spent eight months

with the diagrams, but cracked it. Now was someone coming to queer—?

Sam Cole felt enraged. Damn it, where *was* Jolly? A sec more and he'd have killed her. Had two Dilghous oils instead of one. Five rooms instead of four. *What in hell were those red lights?*

A COUPLE of feet above his head a klaxon went off.

Afterward, Sam Cole reasoned that it must have made him start, that klaxon, together with the spot bank which came on, photoelectric and otherwise, set in a row beneath the roof guttering. He had a fleeting glimpse of the source of one of the red lights—a black ovoid riding up on blasts of air, bouncing over the frozen terrain pulling a train of other ovoids behind it. Then Sam Cole heard a whirring. He knew what it was the moment his foot somehow slipped and went down onto the receiving dock which by a misstep was no longer a dock but one of the intake chutes.

The wide belt at the bottom caused the whir. The stars went around. Sam dropped the Dilghous oil. He cried Jolly's name. The sound was obscured by the padded thud of the first of the ovoids in the delivery train knocking against the bumpers on the dock's edge, right as Sam fell squarely into the chute.

For a mocking moment all the red eyes on the pod train, actually little running lights, seemed focused on him. He flailed. But the chutes were faintly slimy, and angled downwards. Sam slid.

With a whang and clang, gates opened. Sam tried to get a grip on the dock above him, pull himself up. Beneath him one of his legs, he couldn't tell which in his panic, felt twisted and hurt. He forgot it. His head snapped back. He went sliding on his back headfirst down the chute.

He didn't try to escape once he saw the top of the first pod esculate up over the dock and dump. Dump a cabbage, and then another. And then a hundred cabbages, and then a thousand. Big as basketballs, they struck him on the head, in the belly, everywhere, blam, blam, blam, his head just another cabbage among the scores piling down the chutes.

Overhead he had a faint glimpse of what appeared to be a metallic partition, only a fraction of it in his sight through a crack between cabbages. Wet with leathery leaves, vegetables oppressed him, stifled him. His most vigorous wrench and twist was soft and useless against the sides of the down pitched toboggan of the factory intake chute.

That he was in the factory he had no doubt. The partition

which had passed overhead marked one set of intake gates. Besides, brilliant sunlight, not natural but artificial, lanced down in hot beams through the gaps between the vegetables.

**S**UDDENLY, above the grinding and bumping of the cabbages Sam heard another sound. A metallic ratchet-y clacking. Frantically he tried to remember the diagrams he and Jolly Haven had studied. Oh, heavenly Christ—the processing gates! *Where the chutes narrowed!*

He remembered most of the layout all in a rush, just as the stifling river of not-quite-matured cabbages bumped to a slower pace. One by one the cabbages would be forced into the v of the processing gate. How narrow *was* the chute between the gate walls?

Sam couldn't recall enough of the diagrams to be positive. He began to flail like a wild man until he managed to turn on his side. The weight of the layers of cabbages came close to breaking his back. His head slid between polished guides. The control mechanism chugged, changed gears. The belt carried Sam on.

His shoulders wedged, barely sliding, between two plates of stainless steel. Ah, sweet God, it was going to squeeze his lungs out, that damn belt that kept

moving, moving him between those plates as though he were half a dozen individual cabbages in a row.

His hips, caught between metal surfaces, began to suffer excruciating agony. Sam bit his lips and opened his crazed eyes a crack. What he saw, not an inch from his face, was a distorted picture of himself in the polished stainless steel as the intake machines squeezed him, squeezed him, squeezed him down and down, thinking him just a row of larger than usual vegetables. At the moment when Sam thought his body would pop open like a rotten melon he heard another whir, over the constant bumpity-bumpity-bumpity of a thousand vegetables going down chutes. Mercifully he felt the pressure against his chest relax a little. The gears! The blessed gears had shifted to accommodate a larger than usual head . . .

With a quick slippery slide he was through the gates. He plunged down again, more steeply, under the hot blaze of lights. He wrenched, twisted, tried to slow his fall by grappling the sides of the chute. His palms screamed with pain and he let go. A cabbage rolled over his head and tumbled off into space. There were cabbages at heel and nose, jamming, pushing.

Sam remembered another de-

tail of the layout when his body lurched and smashed around a sickening toboggan bend in the chute and was suddenly unsupported.

Growth tanks! Nearly a God damned mile of them! But there was no stopping. Out of all the chutes cabbages were plopping like pebbles into the tanks of thick gray liquid. Sam tumbled, screamed Jolly Haven's name. Then the warm gray fluid, thick as syrup, closed with a final sucking glug-glug over his terrified head.

NO matter what the courts and the reformers and the analysts attempted in the way of a social burning, the thief was a phoenix.

Once, the thief stole for a warm loaf of bread. Or because he had been whipped with a belt in a musty trunk-filled attic of childhood. Or because he had been forced to purchase certain upholstered females when his glands told him to do so.

Then one saving day the laboratories rammed all the bread he could eat, fresh from the automated bread factories, into his surprised mouth. Later he woke from a restful floating sleep at a free clinic with all invisible belt marks expunged from his back end, and his glands fully mastered.

The thief walked out into the

pleasant sun of a neatly organized world where, praise be to the planners, money could be had for the printing and a man worked to satisfy his desire to carve curios or print circuits with a process camera but never to buy bread, pay encephalo physicians or purchase loving companionship.

Why, wondered the courts, reformers and analysts, was not everyone content in their multi-layered, interworking world? Why, they wondered, did not abolition of the need to work abolish the desire to excel? To belong to cozy in-groups, each possessing at least some tiny shred of exclusivity? *Why?* They wondered while staring vacantly into faces behind which lay brains that were still perverse and darkly tainted.

So class perpetuated. To move up a notch required a novella or a thin little string quartet. Or a big steal. A big, gotten-away-with steal. The phoenix came up shrieking from the healing flames. And one of the shrewdest and toughest of the birds was Sam Cole.

He stole when he was eight with scuba under yachts in the East River. This moved his family forever away from dormitory-style federal housing provided for explosive populations. And once in an element—even if the element was cabbage nutritive

juice, thick and soupy and opaque to the point of inkiness—Sam Cole concentrated on the element until he nullified it. Sam stroked. He kicked. He kept his mouth shut tight against the lappings of the obscenely thick stuff, and even though the fluid was not bracing but just the opposite, soporific in its sucking, lapping warmth, its very touch sharpened his mind and made him think:

Sam, kid, you either swim up again or bleed your lungs out.

So his head broke the surface and he sucked air. He kicked with one leg. The tank was hardly three feet deep, so he was only in danger mentally of drowning. As he kicked his other leg struck the side wall of the tank.

"Oh, Christ!"

He screamed. Anguish. The leg must have been broken and twisted under him sometime during the ride down the chute. Only now, as the shock wore away, did sensation fully fill up that leg and spill over along his nerves to his brain.

He grabbed the edge of the tank and tried to pull himself up. He fell back with a viscous splash, sobbing. Never had anything hurt as much as that leg.

But he *had* to crawl out of this filthy gray tank with its cabbages, hundreds of them, floating up and down either way he looked.

HE heard a little pneumatic hiss. Jointed cables the diameter of his little finger shot out of the sides of the tank, tendrils, one on each side of him. To the end of each cable was affixed a thin aluminum wafer. The cables swayed around his head, curiously alive, like artificial cobras. Then they struck.

Before Sam knew it he had an aluminum wafer practically welded to his two temples. Down the long narrow tank, so long and narrow Sam could barely make out its ending at a gray multi-doored wall almost a mile distant, a thousand other cabbages bobbed in the nutritive fluid, each with two aluminum wafer tight against its leaves.

Sam lunged, thrashed, leaped. He got his hands on one cable. He tried to pull it away from his head. He stopped when it felt as though his skin were being stripped off.

Next he tried to pull the cable out by its mechanical roots at the tank wall. That was equally futile. And all the activity just made his leg scream more.

He fell back down in the floating goo, spitting some of it, faintly tasting like cod liver oil, off his lips. The cables, however, did allow him a slight bit of latitude in which to turn his head. What he saw, both in front and in back, depressed and made him hysterical by turns.

Parallel tanks, several dozens of them on either hand, stretched the length of the atmospherically sealed growing shed. Above ran the plane of the roof, at least two stories overhead. Its blueglass severity was relieved only by the mammoth illuminators, by the cross-hatch of aluminum framing and by one darker oblong in the center of the factory roof which had no lights beneath it. That would be the deserted penthouse of Pytor Rathensteen, the man who ran this automated vegetable hell. A hell in which Sam's own head had become merely one more cabbage among ten thousand in the tanks. Sam cackled shrilly. The echo bounced back from the artificial suns high above him.

He tried to remember details of how often the factory, operated by computers, was serviced by human technicians. How often? A month? A year? *Never?*

Rathensteen did not have to live here. The factory ran itself. But Rathensteen's father had started the business, Sam knew that much. Rathensteen himself was nearing ninety. The penthouse atop the factory made as good a place as any to store clothing and a couple of art treasures between world tours. Another six months and Rathensteen's two prizes, the Dilghous oils, would have been donated to

the Sydney Museum. That was why he and Jolly—

"Jolly!" Sam shrieked. "Jolly! Jolly Haven! In here, Jolly. In here, come and get me."

*Get me get me get me*, sang his voice. All the false suns went out at once. *Get me get me get me . . .*

Ah, God, God, thought Sam, I am going to drown.

THINKING so, he began to splash and muddle about in the nutritive fluid again. He swallowed one whole sickening mouthful of it. He tried very hard to understand precisely why the whole vast cabbage-stinking vault had been plunged into total blackness. Now the winter stars pricked through, wan dots outside the blueglass roof.

With pain beginning to flay him pain that tormented worse than any pain he had ever known, Sam knew that he had to get out of this place or he would die here.

But Jolly Haven was still outside! She would wait—wouldn't she?

For five minutes Sam Cole's mind went completely blank while he screamed Jolly Haven's name.

At the end of that time a jar of his leg against the side of the tank produced enough pain to render him partially lucid

again. He jerked and yanked at the cables until he felt his own blood leaking out from little hemorrhages under the aluminum wafers.

The wafers did not release. Sam panted, blinking. They would not release until the Goddamn computers told them to, he knew that much about automated factories. And the notion that Jolly Haven had left in the aircar with the two Dilghous oils—well, that was so unthinkable that if it were true he might as well relax and drown in the tank. Instead Sam simply put it out of his mind. In spite of all her bitchiness and her status, Jolly Haven was surely out there this very minute, pacing and fretting and wondering where Sam had gone off to.

Wouldn't she look inside the factory?

Why should she? Sam wouldn't go in there, even if he was dumb and low-rank. No, Sam said to himself, playing Jolly, Sam would not go in there by himself because the diagrams specifically said that human intrusion tripped relays which activated cathodes and signalled Rathenseen wherever he was in the world.

Human intrusion on the walkways, Sam amended. How about human intrusion in the guise of a cabbage? Oh, sweet bleeding Christ, *funny?* It was pathetic.

Of course Rathensteen wouldn't hear that. No alarms had gone off. The machines obviously considered Sam just one more cabbage. Therefore, Jolly Haven was crouched somewhere outside in the air car, never dreaming that Sam Cole might have decided to join the cabbages as just one more cabbage himself.

*How to call her?*

ANOTHER interval of screaming, at the end of which time his larynx felt aflame, produced no effect. All the rows after rows of artificial suns came back on, blinding and hot.

In another quarter of an hour they winked dark. Picking over the bits and tatters of the diagrams still left stored in his head, Sam had a frantic memory of what the Karmanov works was all about. Two more intervals of light, random intervals by his reckoning, proved it.

In Mexico City Sam Cole had bought a notebook for fifteen hundred dollars. The notebook contained a dossier on the Karmanov works assembled by a fence who had once been a biochemist for the General Foods Cartel, but who had lost his status when discovered photocopying the firm's only copy of the anise-water carbonated beverage, Licoricola, Trademark.

*What did it say?* Sam thought wildly. *What, what? What about*

*Karmanov? Who was Karmanov? What did he do? What did he discover? It's all there but unless you dredge it up you may be squeezed to death and crated.*

Breathing raggedly, Sam lolled his head against the edge of the tank. So warm, the liquid. So soothing. Better to sleep. *Sleep?* Christ, no! And wake with his spine cracked in a U inside one of those unbreakable plastic crates they made nowadays?

*What was it? Remember! Karmanov and pressure. Karmanov*

Although Sam Cole did not recall all the details in anything resembling a logical order, and did not know why the details should be as they were, after a long struggle he recalled enough.

In essence the Karmanov works was the simplest of mechanisms. Once in the twentieth century there really had been a Karmanov, a phytobiologist, a man who knew semiconductors and light physiology. And he had discovered, God knew how but Sam didn't, that plants signal when they need growth light. Karmanov answered silent screams that had gone unheeded for centuries.

Gauges were affixed to leaves, gauges sensitive to some kind of pressures at the surface. With this pressure the plant signalled its photosynthetic needs. To

grow a plant—actually to let it grow itself Karmanov had simply hooked in the plants' surfaces with the electrical center. The pulses ran through wafer gauges to a computer and thence to servomechanisms which lighted the artificial suns as the surface pressure went down. The lights darkened when the pressure went up. The lights—daylight duplicated—went on and off at intervals set by the plants themselves.

Sam Cole caught hold of the edge of the tank. He dragged himself up so that his weight rested on his good knee but did not pressure his bad leg in too agonizing a fashion. He bit his jaws together. He tried to make the veins in his temples change their size.

After the first bite the suns blazed on again, blinding him, sending up clouds of invisible mugginess throughout the vast echoing loneliness of the factory. Sam knew he had nothing to do with it. The plants had dropped pressure, signalling for light. His gambit was to shut the lights off.

In three quarters of an hour the light went off again. Sam still had nothing to do with it, although his lips were bitten through and his mouth was brown with dried blood and he was panting.

He had to sleep. He positively

could not try it again without sleeping. He hung his arms over the edge of the tank so that he would not drown and closed his eyes to the dark.

LATER Sam woke up. He slithered around in the tank, testing his leg, and found that the pain had somewhat deadened. It remained a thick, tumid hurt at the end of his body. But it was not nearly so demanding now. The lights were on again.

Sam bent his head back and glared up at them, round row on row of nourishing eyes. Sam screamed an indecency at them but quickly decided against the foolishness of that approach. He had one more try left in him. Sam was sufficiently a realist to understand that if it did not work this time, when he had more or less regathered what little strength he had left, it would never work.

All the suns were blazing. Sam hooked his slimed hands on the tank edge, pulled himself up as far as the cables and his leg would allow, shut his eyes and bit his lower lip through.

*Pressure*, he thought. *Pressure*.

The suns on the ceiling flickered for part of an instant.

"Bastards!" Sam screamed with delirious joy at the cabbages. "Stupid vegetable bastards."

From that point forward it became easier and easier.

The only way he could fight was to fight against several thousand cabbages once their total surface pressure was reduced and the lights were shining. Sam thought and bit his lips to strips of raw meat. He heaved back and forth like a revivalist in an ancient tent meeting. He thought, *pressure*, *pressure*. The lights flicked off.

Sam strained for air, gulped it. The cabbages turned the lights on again. Sam turned them off a moment later. Sam Cole against the cabbages. Sam Cole defeating all the God damn cabbages of the world. The blood gouted red and hot over the point of his chin and congealed in the nutritive fluid. But it got so he could establish a regular rhythm of pain, the lights coming on because the cabbages did not get enough light in a short interval, Sam turning the lights off, the cabbages turning them on, Sam turning them off again. Flick, flick, flick, flick. Blinking out through the blueglass to the eyes of Jolly Haven somewhere in the winter night. Flick flick flick flick.

Sam sank down into the tank. Where the wafers pressed his temples felt as though they were huge livid boils. "No more," he said to himself. "No more—can't—"

Just then the lights came back on. Sam screamed in rage and bit the last ragged strings of his lower lip completely off.

"Show you! Show you—"

*Flick.*

On.

*Flick.*

Off.

"Something vegetables, something something dumb something cabbages—"

The shrieks rang and bounced until a hundred Sams were cursing all the cabbages of creation while the artificial suns, receiving one signal, and then another went on, went off, on, off, in almost a blur. Sam clashed his teeth together faster and faster. At last the exhaustion became too severe. His hands slid from the tank edge. He sprawled out into the nutritive with a sick moan of pain. The suns blazed and fused over him, burning hot and bluish white and steady down upon the quietly shrieking vegetables.

Sam Cole floated lazily in the tank, defeated. Only the cables and wafers at his head kept him from drowning again.

Sam Cole had no accurate way to reckon time. Thus he did not precisely know that it took Jolly Haven seven hours to get inside the Karmanov Cabbage Works, Ltd., without signalling Pytor Rathenstein half around the world.

ONE moment, a half dead Sam had been blearily staring up at the suns. The next moment a shadow fell over his face. Jolly Haven was on a catway overhead.

"Took—you so long," Sam panted, crawling up the side of the tank. "Took—you—"

"The alarms, baby," came Jolly's voice, tinny again, and even more so due to the racketing interior of the factory. Jolly leaned onto the catway rail, one elbow propping up her palm which in turn propped her chin. She was a picture of bland and sophisticated amusement in spite of her workmanlike black fur clothing and smudged face.

"What a fix. And what a partner I picked. Can't you do anything right?"

"Signals," Sam burred in almost hysterical joy. "Didn't think—you saw—"

"How could I miss? I'm no agrophyst but I'm smart enough to know cabbages don't need that much light that often."

"You were *waiting!*" Sam howled. "Oh, bless you, Jolly, I take back all I said, all I did. You're okay. Jolly, Jolly, know what? I wanted to kill you, I wanted to kill you and take the other Dilghous to upgrade. I confess, Jolly. Jolly, you're a saint. Jolly, what are you looking at?"

Sam blinked through the film

of ichor dripping off his eyebrows. Jolly held out her wrist on which an object flashed. Time? Why was she checking time.

"Jolly, Jolly Haven, thank you, oh my God, thank you. Now come down. Come down and get me out quick. Jolly, it might start processing. Come on down, Jolly."

"All right, baby, I'll come down." Jolly started for a descending ladder. "It might be interesting to follow you along."

"Jolly, I thought—" Sam gurgled, unhearing. "—done for when I slipped—"

"Slipped? Baby, you got pushed. I came up the side of the dock behind you. I can use another status point even at Top. I guess we aren't so far apart after all. I was thinking like you. I was only waiting out-

side to make sure you'd gone. Baby, isn't that funny?"

Sam Cole could not hear Jolly Haven's laugh because all the machinery started at once.

*And again the miracle of plenitude begins. The cycle is turned full upon itself, the dark aluminum and blue glass cornucopia opens once more. Under the winter star along the rimed white barren the liquid swirls, the wafers loosen, the cables retract, the drains open, the nutritive flows, cabbage after cabbage after cabbage bobbles its way toward round openings from which will emerge packaged abundance, as cabbage after cabbage after cabbage slips down liquid ways so that a billion five o'clock bellies may take nourishment again from Karmanov's incomparable slaw.*

THE END

EDITORIAL (continued from page 5)

radiation in outer space. These would be linked to other mechanisms that could, when the meter reached a danger level, automatically inject anti-radiation drugs.

THE PICTURE may well fascinate science-fictioners or fantasy enthusiasts. On more sober thought, it sickens. These cyborgs would not be, as the scientists envision, "super-human" beings. They would be sub-human. The individual would become a mere component of an automatized system—a tiny cog in a machine incomparably imaginative, but incomparably fatal to everything we respect.

Perhaps something like a cyborg may be necessary to get us into space. If that is so, one wonders whether the results will be worth dehumanizing what it took a greater Scientist several millions of eons to make human.

—N.L.