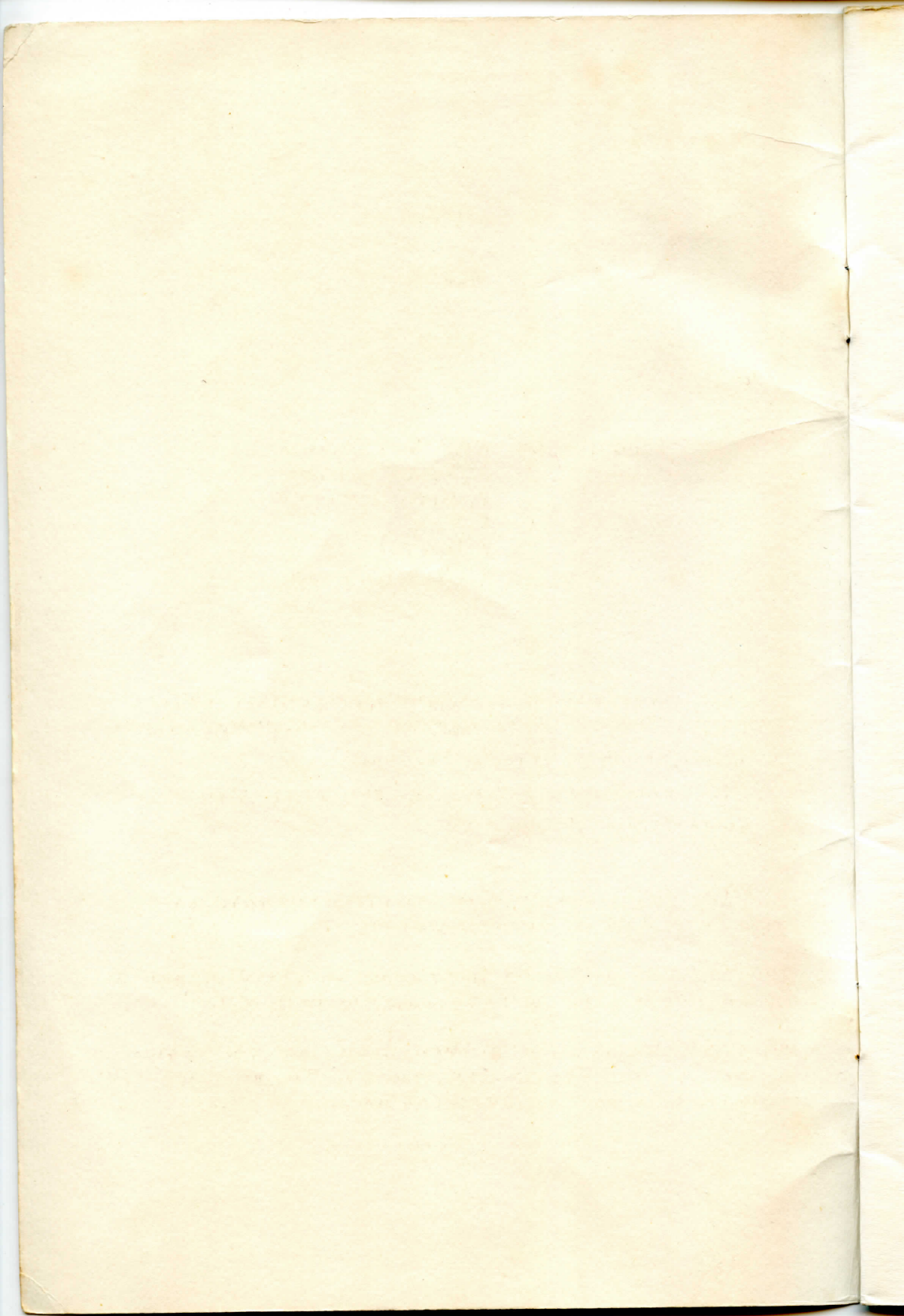


July 1969



No. 4



THE
BLACK
LION

Editorial Board: *C.F.J. Bard, Chairman*
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R. Ward,
T. Burchett,
& Mr. A. R. Johnson

When I was a small boy in Eastern Rumania I often used to have philosophical monologues with Ronald Smallacre: the great wit, and sometime plastic surgeon.

Drawing me close to his kneecap he would say:

"Son, the nearer you get to Heaven, the more lonely it becomes."

But he was talking of blocks of Flats.

IN CASE the meaning has eluded you the poem on Page 9 is a protest against money, if it still eludes you, read more pound notes.

CONTRIBUTIONS are still needed, the management intend to publish a leaflet on how to set out MSS in order that it will be accepted by any magazine.

NOW THIS MAGAZINE is PRINTED there is a double advantage in having work published herein, not only has the market increased, but if the printed poem is sent to certain magazines the chances of it being reprinted are much higher.

BROKEN CHINA

Wanna have a laugh the good man said
take a look at authority
do as you're told get on in life
age is wisdom and we're so young
weren't we all good children
respected our parents loved our teachers
like what man love the fuz
nice kind men show the old dears across the street
set a radar trap frisk us all for drugs
be careful not to hinder criminals

Pretty sickening

Wanna have a laugh the good man said
take a look at religion
be kind to your neighbours
perhaps they'll give you something in return
love everybody baby but don't try too hard
an excess is sinful
church every sunday religion by instalment
we live a moral life holier than thou
we went to sunday school learnt all our lessons
you are the sheep and the strong are the shepherds

Pretty sickening

Wanna have a laugh the good man said
take a look at society
here we all live happy little capitalists
squares say bloody bolsheviks fifty years on
i'm all right jack
hard luck on you mate
work sell buy work
sacrifice the mind to the money flesh god
run life's straight race to society's goal
freedom for everyone except the individual

Pretty sickening

Wanna have a laugh the good man said
take a look at me

Alan Hill

AFTER SCHOOL

The bell went at the end of afternoon school. Boys poured into corridors; there was the clattering and banging of many desk-lids and chattering of many boys. The boys of St. Peter's Grammar School were going home.

"What's Latin, Johnny?" enquired Squibs Astley.

"Dunno," I replied absent-mindedly.

"What's Latin, Pete?"

The information came. "Them sentences on page ninety five. First seven."

I tried to make a mental note of the Latin homework, but by the time I had found my pen, which had become lost temporarily inside the lining of my jacket, and by the time I had retrieved two sixpences, which had also fallen through the hole in the lining, I had forgotten; for my mind was occupied elsewhere. How was I to put them off to-night? They had suggested that we should go and see him twice already this week. They surely could not resist making me see him to-night. I put some books into my satchel, hoping they would be the right ones. My mind was anxiously and fearfully groping for another excuse. But what excuse was there left?

We were now in the cloakroom, struggling with the mass of boys all frantically searching to find their regulation navy-blue rain coats while at the same time trying to avoid impaling our heads on pegs. They had not mentioned him yet to-night. Perhaps they would not I dared to hope. A couple of quick contortions and my satchel straps were cutting diagonally across my mac, and I could feel the weight of my homework sitting firmly on my bum. Squibs and Pete were ready.

What if I simply declined to walk to the 'bus station with them? That was impossible: we had always travelled on the same 'bus ever since starting at the grammar school, and since we were all in the same class it was natural for us to go to the 'bus station together. Besides we were friends. Perhaps they would not ask me to-night. We scrambled through the main entrance, donning our brilliant red, monogrammed caps and immediately doffing them again when Fanny, our maths master cycled past. I was afraid of him. He sailed by on his bicycle, acknowledging our deference.

"I haven't seen him this week, have you, Pete? My heart sank. Twice already this week they had talked of nothing else all the way to the 'bus station.

"No, but I think he's still around the town, 'cos I heard Nobby talking about him at break to-day," replied Pete.

"Funny old geezer," Squibs laughed, but his laughter had the slightest trace of nervousness in it.

"You've said that a hundred times this week, I thought to myself. Now they would discuss him all the way to the 'bus station.

All the way to the 'bus station they talked about him. Apparently some of the boys at school had seen the man on and off for a week now, walking about the town. He was often to be seen standing at the entrance to one of the big stores, talking meekly to people as they went into the shops. I had not seen

him, but I learnt that the man was always unshaven, wore a filthy raincoat with a slit at the back right up to the neck and which fastened at the front only at the top button. It seemed the man stood at the entrance to the store, talking incessantly and repeating to himself in the manner of someone who has made a tremendous discovery the four words, England ... Ireland ... Scotland ... Wales ... England ... Ireland ... Scotland ... Wales.

"England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales." Squibs mimicked the weak, trembling voice, delightedly. "Cor, I bet he was top at Geography." Pete doubled up with laughter at this witticism and Squibs, the another of it, was duly satisfied with himself.

"You haven't seen him yet have you, Johnny?" inquired Squibs compassionately.

"No!"

"What's the matter? I only asked."

"No, I haven't. Don't particularly want to." I tried to sound nonchalant. Why was it that I was so afraid to see the man?

"Pity you had to get that tobacco for Mr. Ramsden on your way home on Monday. You'd have seen him then," Pete commiserated.

"Yes, I suppose so." I tried hard to sound indifferent. Pete went on.

"You should have seen him yesterday afternoon though. He was walking up and down, saying good afternoon to everyone. Every now and then he would stop and then he'd say England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales. "England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales," Squibs mimicked yet again and laughed, inviting me to.

"I can't see anything funny," I complained.

"You aren't seen him are you?" retorted Squibs with a certain savageness, sensing his source of fun might dry up by my attitude.

"I can't see anything funny. You must want your 'eads testing." I protested, my voice rising in response to Squibs' taunt.

"He wants his head testing, I reckon," quipped Squibs and immediately convulsed in laughter.

"I can't see anything funny." There was a tremulous note in my voice.

"Keep yer 'air on." Squibs expression took on a pained innocence.

"Why don't you come and see him to-night, just once, and catch the late 'bus home," coaxed Pete. "We could have an ice-cream and walk round Wooly's afterwards," he added as if to tempt me. "You can't have anything to do to-night." They both looked at me.

I was trapped now. I could not avoid going with them. Why was I making it into such an ordeal for myself.

I suppose the answer was simple really, but how could I explain to the other two, eyeing me suspiciously, wondering why on earth I was not willing to join in a little bit of fun this once, when I was renowned for dare-devilry at school. I was afraid I would see my father in the town.

I met him sometimes on Saturdays when he was well and we either went to the professional football in the neighbouring town where he rolled cigarettes; or went to the pictures where he snored. I preferred the pictures. Only the headmaster, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsden who were my foster-parents knew that my father had to spend time in mental hospitals. Once when we were travelling to football he must have been going funny because I made him go into a barber's shop to shave while I pretended to read a magazine and pretended I was nothing to do with him. Nobody I knew saw us. Another time he had come to the school and delivered a brand new bicycle to the headmaster for me.

But why should this man be my father? As far as I knew he had moved to a job in a town about seventy miles away after his employer had grown tired of his continually having to go into the mental hospital for treatment: I was no longer obliged to see him regularly on a Saturday. A naggingly persistent misgiving had seized my mind and made me fearful for a week now that the man the boys were talking of at school was my father.

If it was my father what would the other two think? What if he spoke to me? He might say, "Hello, John." What if he did? I could talk to him coolly and when Squibs asked, "Who is he then?" I could coolly lie, "An old friend of my father's." No. That would be no good, because Pete would only say, "I thought you didn't have any father." "Well he could still be my father's friend, couldn't he?" Perhaps if it was my father I could simply dart past him quickly and pretend to the other two I had just seen someone in the shop I wanted to speak to. If I moved quickly enough (if it was my father) he might recognise me. Even if he did I would be lost in the crowd.

"We could have an ice-cream and walk round Wooly's afterwards," repeated Pete, as if to tempt me. We had stopped now at the point where we had either to go to the 'bus station or to go on across the hump bridge into the main street of the town. By refusing to go I would feel a fool: by going on I might be humiliated. The man might not be my father. He might not be there. "All right," I said. Weakly I chose the path of least resistance for the moment and my heart thumping in my ears walked over the hump bridge into the town.

The main street was fairly crowded. Squibs and Pete, like small puppies, darted this way and that, into the recesses of shop windows and lusted after a shot-gun and a fishing-rod displayed in the sports shop, which I noted was half-way from the bridge to the store where the man, who might or might not be my father, might or might not be standing. I kept my eyes fixed upon the area immediately outside the store, as we walked on. I felt doomed. There were always many people outside the store so that it was difficult to tell if he was there or not.

Squibs and Pete were engrossed in another shop window and I pretended to be engrossed with them. I could just walk away I said to myself. I could always say I had remembered Mrs. Ramsden said I had to be back early for tea and that I had forgotten until just then. But perhaps they would begin to suspect that I was connected with the man if I made a third excuse in one week. I felt a few drops of rain on my neck.

The knot of people outside the store, which was now only about twenty yards away suddenly vanished as the rain increased and I saw the man. He stood facing the roadway. I noticed his lips moving slowly, but incessantly, but what he was saying I could only guess from what the others had said earlier. He was staring straight ahead at a point in the middle of the road. He did not seem to see anything, and yet his expression was intent and implied concentration. The mouth trembled as he spoke quietly to himself. The chin was weak and unshaven. A week's growth made the man look dirty. Indeed, his fawn rain-coat, already spotting with rain-drops, was filthy with huge round grease stains. His shoes and the bottoms of his trousers were stiff with dried mud. As people passed into the shop they nudged each other and gave knowing looks. The rain became heavier still. A policeman took the man by the elbow and the wrist. The man's eyes seemed conscious of his weakness and yet seemed to plead with the policeman to pity him. They were red-rimmed. I was afraid.

"Funny old geezer isn't he?" said Squibs with triumph in his voice. "Lucky you came to-day by the looks of it." He darted into the store with Pete.

I stood staring at the back of man as he was led off. A few people coming out of the shops stopped and stared too. A woman muttered, "Poor fellow." It was my father and I felt ashamed and guilty, and I despised myself; for no sympathy came.

A.R. Johnson

THE ETERNAL ORANGE

The eternal orange crawls above a grey carpet,
while expressionless plastic masks hang motionless,
they complain of the wind and oh! it destroys their
cellulose hair.

and torrents of life, stream from the heavens,
while polymer faces cover themselves,
to prevent them melting.

R. Lamey.

OH BABY

Sitting in front of the tele,
and sitting on a pouffe,
watching the girls with little skirts,
watching their legs go up,
and I was saying "knees."

But on another occasion,
(this is not so funny)
I was taken to hospital,
the first ever time,
I had been.

I went to have my tonsils out,
and very afraid was I,
but the Nurse gave me
a box of maltesers,
and I was satisfied.

When I lived at Bursledon,
and was sitting in the garden,
I was hit,
with a brick,
which was thrown,
by the girl next door.

I went to a Chest
Hospital, for a week,
for I was ill,
and when my Mum
and Dad left me,
I started to cry,
and the horrible Nurse
who was on duty,
locked me up,
in the stockroom.

W. Cowan

PURPOSES

They invented hell
to make us obey
to make us be good.

They invented heaven
to give us some hope
of something good.

Nick Manley

tick
tock tick
tock tick tock
tick tock tick
tock
tick tock
CUCKOO!!!
tick tick
tick
tick tick
tick tick tick
BOOM!!!!!!

The First 'tick' is the beginning of the world: the planet has started to tick. Nothing more. Evolution of the earth is represented by the constant increase in the number of syllables per line until the first 'tock' is used. This 'tock' is the coming of man, quite a significant part of the world's make up. The next line is Man's progress from savagery to little better than savagery; the progress in civilisation being vast in terms of material wealth but relatively little in other respects. "Cuckoo" is the advent of Christianity, a big impact, necessitating three exclamation points. Then the world begins to tick, and tick and tick, rather like a time bomb set to explode two thousand years after the cuckoo spat out its unusual and revolutionary good-morning. The first two ticks show that little has changed since the big shot arrived. Then the poem starts to build up to the climax when it explodes. The distorted and disproportionate length from CUCKOO to BOOM (which warrants six exclamation points) in comparison with the first section is a typical allegory of the religious psyche. If anybody can follow this argument, please go to the Taj Mahal, a very large and important building in Southampton, where you will be welcomed by fifty other madmen who will claim they can understand it too!

Love is all you need

J.S. Fforde

I love you.

Every Saturday mornin'

I try a little

I cry a little

I die a little

'Cos I wan' a little

J.S. Fforde

I wanna hold your hand

J.S. Fforde

I wanna hold you in my arms

I wan' you

For ever.

And ever.

And ever.

Every Saturday mornin'

J.S. Fforde

You're killin' me

Every where I look

I see your name

J.S. Fforde

J.S. Fforde

J.S. Fforde

An' if I don' get you soon

I'm gonna die.

J.S. Fforde

J.S. Fforde

J.S. Fforde

cfjbard

THE WAY

"Hey! man,
Who's that chick over there
- The smart blonde?

Little people:
Much intelligence
- or
Much knowledge
- But
Little wisdom, Little morals;

So he picks her up;
Drops her down:
IT'S THE WAY.

M.R.H.

and the sun

rose

and the sky

caught fire

and the blood

flooded onto the world

and felt

into even the coldest corner

and

she

came to me.

cfjbard

SISENEG

So he indulged in reproduction
And created, in his own image,
Himself — or a similar deduction.
He gave his creation, superiority
Over all that was his.
And the created gained authority.

The creator gave the created
A toy fish, a toy bird, and a toy dog
To toy with, when allocated.
The producer watched the produced at play
With all the toys that he loved so much
And the producer wanted it to stay that way.

And the creator built a play-pen for his loved one.
With light that shone when it was dark
And when not in use, then shone the sun.
And the newly-born lived in his new environment
Under the watchful eye of his happy father
Who gazed from the firmament
And the Father made his son's house inhabitable
With flowers, and a water bath, and other pleasant
things,

Then had the Father given his son all.
So he retreated, wearily, and left his son at play.
Trusting his son, that he loved,
To enjoy himself in every way.

But after a short while the child rampaged
Through his toys that the maker
Had made
He tore up the flowers, and began to destroy
The flimsy bars of his play-pen,
And he turned to a devil from a boy.

Meanwhile, the creator awoke, from the din,
And approached the play-pen, to see
His creation, drunk with sin.
So he paused, anger generating within his soul;
—Then the creator destroyed
The destroying creation.

W.I.K.

Man And Beast

Grey clouds pass slowly overhead.
A glimmer of sunshine
Casts shadows on the bright green grass
Of the towers of matchless majesty and strength
As they waver gracefully in the cool, Autumn breeze.

An isolated shimmer
Shudders through the
Topmost limb as a bird,
A black bird,
Flutters hurriedly towards the sun.

A scampering rabbit
Trips over —
Over a brick?
No, no.
He limps on
But stops and rests

Thud.

M.A. Seeley

The untamed sea

The swell of the great waves break
The white foam goes crashing onto the rocks.
Again a wave breaks,
The cliffs catch another lashing of white spray
And the seagulls stir and swoop
Their crying is barely heard above the roaring of the breaking surf.
On the horizon a small vessel is tossed like a cork,
And the fearsome waves crash over her bows
The spray drenches the deserted deck.
Soon the untamed sea will claim another victim.

By D.M. Natt

This Old Man

His eyes were cold,
Grey greenish-blue;
His skin was wrinkled,
Like frozen white snow-drifts;
His voice was crisp and harsh,
Like the crunch of frozen snow;
His bones were brittle and hard,
Like sheets of medium-thick ice;
His skin was rough and pock-marked,
Like the surface of the moon;
Around his face ran contour lines,
His fingers were cut and broken,
Like burst water-pipes;
His hair had receded,
His heart was cold,
His lips were thin and anaemic-white,
When he coughed,
Some wintry cold air blew out;
His back was hunched,
Like a tree laden with snow;
His nose was blue and frost-bitten,
His face leathery and weather-beaten,
His body covered with a forest of hairs.

Through the clouds of immovable fog,
I could not see his icy heart:
His love was not made for me.

by J. Innes

Remarks about famous artists (and a musician)

Rembrandt: Famous for the invention of the night watch (with luminous hands, dials etc.).

Vermeer: Painted the milkmaid but was severely reprimanded.

Van Gogh: Cut off various parts of his anatomy and painted them; finally in a frenzy of creativity committed suicide but was sadly unable to paint the result.

Van Dyck: Remarkable acrobatic artist who skilfully but unsuccessfully attempted to paint Charles I on horseback.

Seurat: Enigmatic artist; some critics say his pictures have a point while others are divided in saying that he was a little dotty. (If this one has you puzzled, worry not; everyone else is equally baffled).

- Cezanne:** Attempted to paint still life with apples but found it impractical: awkward until the day he died, he even tried painting landscape with a viaduct but realised the clumsiness of this style.
- Wagner (a musician):** Included because of an inventive tendency shared with Rembrandt; invented the penny-farthing (not the Threepenny Opera also called Half-a-Sixpence for commercial reasons) but, wishing to avoid confusion, named it the ring cycle.
- Michelangelo:** Became notoriously insane and finally executed a statue of David in the nude.
- Degas:** Revoltingly witty; made the unbearable remark, "Why can't those bally dancers keep still?"
- Thornhill:** Heralded the age of the comic with his memorable cartoons; worked in his shirt-sleeves, so earning the adjective "strip" as applied to his pictures.
- A final comment on the world of music: when an infamous (judging by his sense of humour) musician was asked if he thought music was being cheapened in the great supermarket of life, he replied that, if it were so, one should take care not to forget one's Chopin-Liszt.

A. F'll

Spot the Puns

How many puns can you find bottled up on this piece of paper?

"Hello Miss B.," I said, "you look pale. What ails you?"

"I'm feeling browned off", she replied bitterly, "my 49th boy-friend has just left me" (Miss B. is a spintster).

"Take courage; do not feel so dispirited Miss B."

"I need a diet" she said, and to prove her point, she lifted up her skirt.

"My, what knees you have!" I gasped.

"Yes, they are rather stout, and what's more, they get larger and lager," she lamented, "in fact, I can't walk properly — I find it easier to hop". So saying, Miss B. left the room.

She returned with a large book, which, she claimed, was her own translation of the Bible, as yet unpublished. She began to read: "In the beerginning God created the fermentment.....
.....Let there be light....."

I turned to go. "No, do not leave me," she whined.

A.L. Smith

Our gripping, sensation packed, THRILLER ADVENTURESERIAL

"Clout".

Tough, newspaper editor Hermann Gland hissed my name between the gap in his teeth, just vacated by his cigar. I rushed over to his desk as fast as I could crawl.

"Clout!" he repeated, waving his cigar.

"Yes, sir, Mr. Gland," I replied, praying the effort would not weaken his heart.

"Clout, I've got a little job for you."

"Yes, sir, Mr. Gland a job, Mr. Gland, might I ask what kind of a job, Sir."

"I want you to report on the latest crime by that wickedest of arch-villians The Smoker."

"Thank you so much, Mr. Gland, sir and may I compliment you on your taste in boot polish, sir, Mr. Gland."

"No!"

"Yes, sir, Mr. Gland." I left his office as quickly as possible so he would not tire his eyes. Steathily I crept into the reporter's convenience, and tore off my puny Edwin Clout mask, false beard, clothes and flippers to become—

SUPERNUDE!!!!

Crushing my special molecular constructed clothes into a ball the size of a pea I dived through an open ventilator.

Pulling myself together I contacted my assistant, Dick, by the nude-phones.

"Is that you standing by the nude-phones, Dick?", I shouted,

"Yes", was his quick-thinking reply.

Suddenly I heard a strange noise, my super-hearing had detected the near silent ticking of a hydrogen bomb, the size of a grain of smoke, due to go off in five seconds, hidden somewhere in Thogam City - obviously the work of THE SMOKER.

Then my superbrain realized the awful truth:

"The whole world will be destroyed!"

I thought of those pure, wonderful Americans, COULD I SAVE THEM
IN TIME

TO BE CONTINUED

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TO BE CONTINUED

