

Midwestside Story



MIDWEST SIDE STORY

A Fannish Musical
as presented at
MINICON 12

Leamington Hotel
Minneapolis, Minn.
April 9, 1977

Written and Performed By
Members Of The
Minnesota Science Fiction Society
And The Usual Gang of Idiots

Script Typed By
Denny Lien
And Published By
David Emerson
March, 1978

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CAST OF CARICATURES

Fanzine Fans:

Maria : Renée Valois
Anita : Susan Ryan
Utility Bill: Mark Digre
Colophon : Louie Spooner
Umpkin : Mike Wood
Ego Scan : Karen Johnson
Backspace : Eileen Maloney
Munchy : DeeDee Lessinger

Convention Fans:

Tony : Ken Hoyme
Riff : Jerry Stearns
Comeback : Jan Appelbaum
Filk : Caryl Bucklin*
Faunch : LaLee Kerr
Gittar : Dick Tatge
Charlie : Greg Ketter
Mickey : Elizabeth LaVelle

Others:

Ben Bova : Gordon R. Dickson
Alien : Rick Gellman
Peter Pretentious : Doug Friauf
AntiFan : Denny Lien
Autograph Seeker : Dean Gahlon

Musical accompaniment:
David Emerson

*because of illness, the part of
Filk in the production was split
between Greg Ketter and Al Kuhfeld

Written By

Susan Ryan, Denny Lien, and Jerry Stearns

And By

Ruth Berman, Mark Digre, David Emerson, Ken Fletcher, and Dick Tatge

And By

EssJay, Karen Johnson, Larry Nichols, Renée Valois, and Reed Waller

From An Idea By

Susan Ryan and Sandy Allen

With Moose Joke By

David Stever

Director and Producer : Susan Ryan
Dramatic Consultant : Joel Lessinger
Associate Music Director : David Emerson
Associate Choreographer : Sarah Sue Wilde
Video Engineer : Scott Imes
Set Construction : Greg Ketter
Set Design : David Egge
Assistant Drama Director : Ken Hoyme
Stage Manager, Props,
Program Book & Crudzine : Denny Lien

The play takes place in an alternate dimension, very similar to our own, but with some differences--the Bozo Bus Building has a C and a D side; Ben Bova has a slushpile reader; fanzine fans and convention fans are warring camps; and Minneapolis has actually gotten around to holding the 1973 Worldcon--and in 1973, at that.

ACT ONE

Scene One:

Time: The day before BozoCon--the Minneapolis in '73 worldcon--opens.
Place: The Bozo Bus Building, 5D--Maria's apartment.
Action: A BozoApa collation, and the infringement of convention fandom upon fanzine fandom.

Scene Two:

Time: The same as the preceding scene.
Place: The Bozo Bus Building, 5C--Tony's apartment.
Action: A precon party, and the infringement of fanzine fandom upon convention fandom.

ACT TWO

Scene One:

Time: The first day of the convention--early evening.
Place: BozoCon--the registration area.
Action: Two worlds meet--or three? (Or four?)

Scene Two:

Time: Immediately following.
Place: BozoCon--the party suite.
Action: Mundanes, villains, and star-crossed lovers pass in the night.

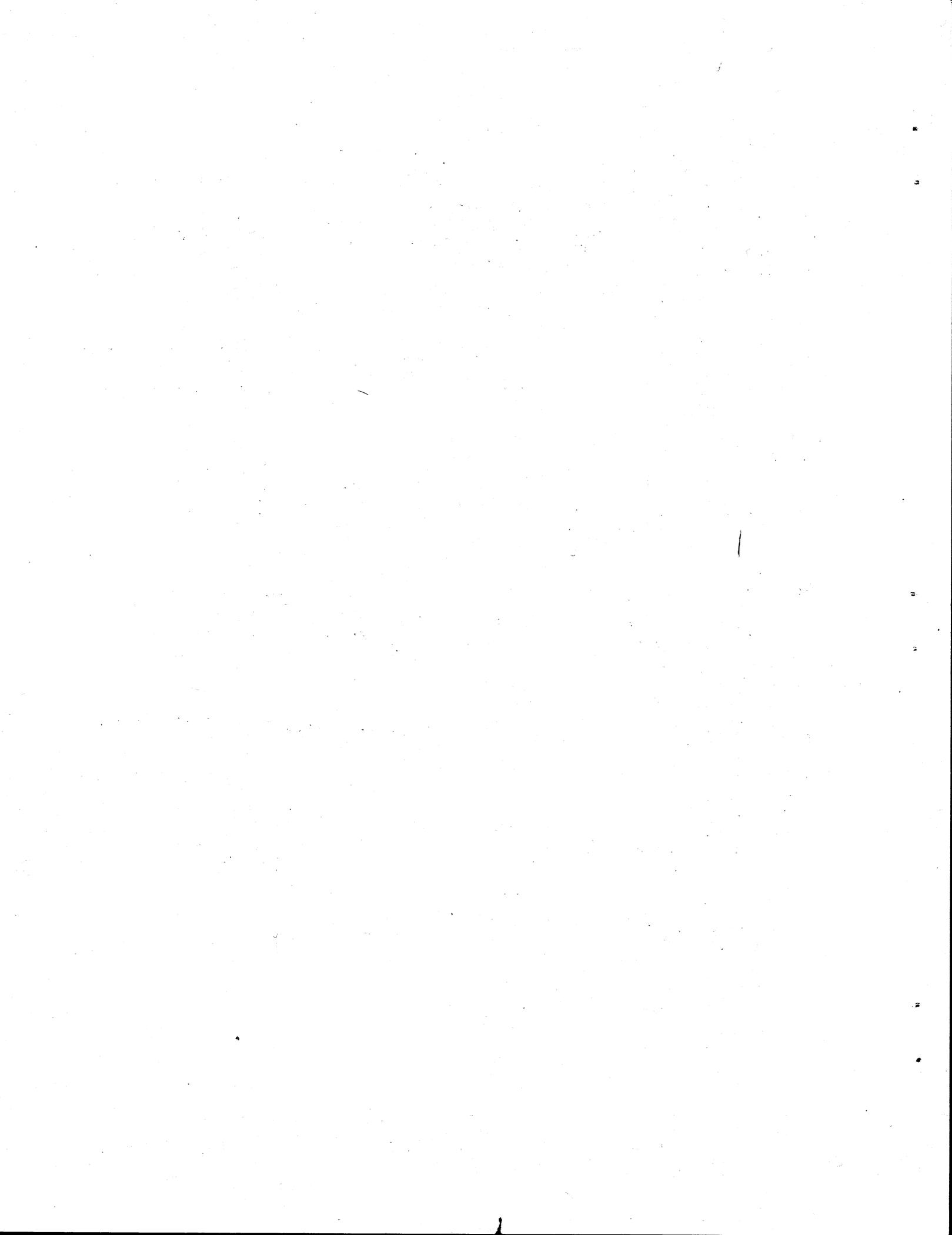
ACT THREE

Scene One:

Time: Later that evening.
Place: BozoCon--outside Tony's door.
Action: Growth, deterioration, and Just Being Silly.

Scene Two:

Time: Sunday morning.
Place: BozoCon--the main lobby.
Action: Despair, rebirth, catharsis, synthesis (and a bit more of Just Being Silly).



MIDWEST SIDE STORY

ACT ONE

Scene One

((The lights are out. In the darkness, a voice is heard:))

MARIA: Anybody got a spare collating rack?

((Lights up on Maria's apartment in the Bozo Bus Building in the heart of the Minneapolis Fan Ghetto. Stage left, a table containing one or two racks already full of paper and a stack of unracked paper. Downstage of this, a small table loaded with munchies. Stage right, a small table with a large stapler and stacks of stapled and unstapled zines. MARIA is at the collating table; UTILITY BILL, COLOPHON, UMPKIN, EGO SCAN, BACKSPACE, and MUNCHY are around the stapling table and center stage area. In response to MARIA's question, UTILITY BILL unhooks a collating rack from his belt and hands it to her.))

UTILITY BILL: Here you go. I never travel anywhere without one. Why it's saved my life many a time. There was the time in Afghanistan when...

COLOPHON: Yeah, yeah, Bill, we know, the wall of human flesh. Tell us about it in the apa...

UMPKIN: Again.

((ANITA enters from back center.))

ANITA: I just talked to Ken and he'll have the third section cover over here in about ten minutes.

BACKSPACE: Now, just a minute, Utility Bill! We believed you about the cheese cutter, and we believed you about the trained orangutan, but this is going too far! How could a collating rack have saved your life?

COLOPHON: He pulled a thorn out of its foot...

UTILITY BILL: I'm glad you asked me that question...

BACKSPACE: On second thought, I'm sorry I asked you that question.

UTILITY BILL: There was this wall of human flesh, see....

((During the above, MARIA has been filling the last collating rack with paper and the fans, with the exception of UMPKIN and BACKSPACE, begin moving around the table collating. Every time MUNCHY passes within range of the munchy table, she drops out to devour more of the goodies. The fans bring the collated copies to the stapling table where BACKSPACE and UMPKIN square up the stacks and staple them.))

EGO SCAN: "Read, but no comment hooks!" "Read, but no comment hooks!" That's all I got from anybody this time!

BACKSPACE: I was going to make a check mark in the margin, but you didn't leave any margin.

ANITA: Sort out the out-of-town copies and give them to me. I'll pass them out at the con tomorrow.

MARIA: The Con. The Worldcon! Minneapolis in '73! It's finally here! I can't wait to go!

ANITA: Now hold on, Maria--we've been through this a hundred times. I've told you that you're just not ready for this.

MARIA: But I still don't see why you think I shouldn't be going.

ANITA: I told you. You don't know what goes on there!

MARIA: Yes I do. I read con reports all the time in Locus.

ANITA: There are more things at cons, Maria, than are ever written up in Locus.

MARIA: Like what?

ANITA: Well--you know that con I went to last year, at the library? I never told anyone this, but the very first day I was there--

((Dramatic pause. All collating and stapling stops, as all fan turn toward ANITA, hanging on her every word.))

ANITA: I was pinched in the elevator!!

((General sigh of disappointment.))

MUNCHY: I didn't even know you wore elevators.

EGO SCAN: I bet that really floored you!

((General groans, as everyone resumes collating and stapling.))

MARIA: But you went right ahead and attended all three days.

ANITA: That was different. Why, I'll bet if you ever got stuck in an elevator with a mad pincher, you'd be wearing a suit of armor for the next three months.

UTILITY BILL: I can get one for you wholesale! Saved my life many a time!

MARIA: That isn't so, Anita. I can take care of myself as well as the next person.

((Unfortunately, the next person is UTILITY BILL. MARIA and the rest turn and look at him; BILL contrives to look modest.))

ANITA: And besides, some of the people at that convention were so silly....

EVERYONE (in unison): HOW SILLY WERE THEY?

ANITA (ignoring them): Wearing silly costumes and singing silly dirty songs and jumping into the swimming pool absolutely naked!

BACKSPACE: What time tomorrow did you say the con started?

MARIA: What's so terrible about that?

ANITA: It's not fannish! I'd hate to think of you turning into one of those frivolous convention fans. As the OE of our apa, you have a fannish duty to maintain an image.

MARIA: As the OE of our apa, I have a fannish duty to attend this convention. Besides, I've never met half the people in the apa, and they're all going to be here! You've been to one and nothing really happened to you. And nothing's going to happen to me.

ANITA: I give up. I'm through talking to you. I can't convince you otherwise, so go ahead and go. Get corrupted. See if I care.

UMPKIN (stapling): Maria, you've been collating upside down!

ANITA (accusingly): Are you getting silly?

MARIA: Well, one little mistake....

UMPKIN (holding up the evidence): And you also just collated in a potato chip bag.

MARIA: That doesn't mean a thing. I'm not losing my fannishness; in fact, just thinking about the WorldCon tomorrow--I feel more fannish than ever!

SONG: I FEEL FANNISH

MARIA: I feel fannish
Oh, so fannish
I feel fannish and slannish, today
So trufannish
I should publish every word I say!

I feel fannish
Oh so fannish
I might put out an annish tonight!
I'm so fannish
Always funny! and always right!

See the BNF at the mimeo
Who can that actifan be?
Such a fannish face
Such a fannish grace
Such a fannish scene
Such a fannish zine!

My zine's super
And eclectic--

EGO SCAN: Your zine's duper's electric, you mean!

MARIA: Yes I know
It's a pretty wonderful zine!

COLOPHON: Have you met my good friend Maria?

UMPKIN: The most fannish fan that we've seen?

EGO SCAN: You'll know her the minute you see her--

UTILITY BILL: She's the one with the perfectly repro'd crudzine.

EGO SCAN: She thinks her prose sings

She thinks she's a slan--

BACKSPACE: Or Lord of the Rings--

COLOPHON: She's only a fan!

UMPKIN: It must be the brew
UTILITY BILL: Or a mundane disease
BACKSPACE: Or an alternate view
Of realities!

ANITA: Keep away from cons
You're a neo
Beer will never work in your mimeo!

ALL: Fannishly true
Sincere and well-read
A good friend of Ghu
And a total fugghead!

ALL (applauding): SPEECH! SPEECH! GUEST OF HONOR! SPEECH!

MARIA: LOCs from Gordy
LOCs from Harlan
LOCs from Simak and Lester Del Rey
They all know me
And they haven't a bad word to say!

No more griping
Feel like typing
Layout-swiping from Bowers today
Fans are sniping
But I'll get that Hugo anyway!

See the fannish legend aborning here!

ALL: (What legend where?)

MARIA: Who can that new Bushyager be?

ALL: (What, who, and where?)

MARIA: Such a fannish glow
Such a budding pro
Not an also-ran
I'm a superfan!

I feel fannish,
Seldon Plannish,
And I'm sure Asimov would agree--
Cause I know--all fanhistory's building to ME!!!

((As song ends, MUNCHY finds that she has
run out of food. The only thing remaining
on the food table is a frisbee.))

UMPKIN: First section's done!

MUNCHY: Frisbee, anyone?

((All exit, ad-libbing agreement. As they do,
COLOPHON turns to MARIA.))

COLOPHON: Gee Maria, I really want to read your con report. ((LIGHTS OUT))

ACT ONE

Scene Two

((Lights up on TONY's apartment in the Bozo Bus Building. Stage right, a small table with a large plastic Blog Bucket upon it and a chair on the side. Behind the table is RIFF, industriously stirring the blog. Along the back wall, left, GITTAR is seated on the floor, tuning his kazoo to his guitar. COMEBACK, FILK, and FAUNCH listen.

((Enter TONY, carrying a bright green case of beer. On top of the case is a stack of mail. TONY places the case under the table and sits in the chair to examine the mail. The Con Fans, with the exception of GITTAR, move over to examine the new beer case.))

FILK: Treefrog Premium??

COMEBACK: Well, it figures--we must have already bought the liquor store out of everything else.

FAUNCH: I've heard of that stuff. When you drink it you don't burp, you go ribbit-ribbit-ribbit...

RIFF: Don't be silly; it's made with the finest malt, barley--and hops.

FILK: I don't dare drink this stuff--I might croak.

COMEBACK: Nah, at worst your stomach will get a little jumpy.

RIFF: Let's see--with this, and the Coors and the Point and the Iron City that the out-of-towners are bringing along, this makes 31 flavors of beer we've laid in for the Con.

FAUNCH: Well, stop laying in them and let's put them in the refrigerator.

GITTAR (singing to Baskin-Robbins tune): 31 different flavors of cold beer...

RIFF: Hey--did we remember to buy any Foster's Lager?

FILK: Oh, that's right. AntiFan's down to the convention.

FAUNCH: Up to the convention.

GITTAR: Sideways to the convention--who cares? I still can't understand it. Most Australian fans are such great people. How could somebody like AntiFan win the Acronym Fund race?

RIFF: Well, as I understand it, a lot of accidental-type accidents seemed to happen to everybody who was running against him. Plus which, the survivors thought it would be nice to get him off the continent for a bit while they tried to rebuild it.

TONY: Hey! My name's in print!
 COMEBACK: You can read?
 RIFF: : What is it, a letter from your mother?

COMEBACK: She can write?

TONY: No, it's a --- fanzine.
 ((Tony and the other Con Fans pronounce this with a long "i" from here on until corrected.))

RIFF: Don't read that--it'll rot your brain!
 ((Riff tries to snatch away the vile zine.))

COMEBACK: He's got a brain?
 ((Throughout the above, FILK has been holding a Tree Frog beer bottle and wandering in search of a bottle opener. At this point, she decides on one, shoves it into COMEBACK's mouth, and opens it on his teeth. COMEBACK staggers back, stifling moans.))

FILK: You got a mouth?

TONY: No, look, it's got a report in it of the SlumpCon last year. Remember that one?

RIFF: How could I forget it? Anything in there about the lime jello getting loose?
 ((RIFF takes zine from TONY and starts looking through it.))

FAUNCH: Hey, now you got Riff doing it. What's the matter with you guys? Put that down! We got work to do!

FILK: Work?

FAUNCH: We got beer to drink! Hey, Comeback, get over here and talk some sense into these guys!

COMEBACK: glargnylar muymbwe glonmbp....

((TONY retrieves zine from RIFF's hands.))

TONY: Hmm...

RIFF: Tony, listen to me. Those fanzines are diabolical! They take fans' time away from conventions! I've heard they make your fingers purple and they give you paper cuts! And worst of all--they make you sercon!

TONY: So what's wrong with sercon?

RIFF: It's not fannish!

((FILK attempts to hand TONY a beer bottle.))

FILK: Here you go, Tony.

TONY (absent-mindedly): No, thanks.

((Everyone freezes in horror. GITTAR hits a loud wrong note. COMEBACK stops moaning. In unison, all except TONY and RIFF say:))

ALL: Tony--refused--a--beer!!!

RIFF: See, that's just what I was saying. You're losing your fannishness already!

TONY: Nonsense! I'm just as fannish as I ever was!

((TONY grabs the beer.))

Where's that bottle opener?

((Everyone turns and looks at COMEBACK, who grabs his mouth again and runs out center. TONY shrugs, puts down bottle, and resumes reading.))

TONY: One fanzine doesn't prove a thing. I'm just as fannish as I ever was.

((GITTAR resumes playing.))

Will you please hold that down! I'm trying to read!

RIFF: That proves my point! Fanzine readers aren't human! Only con fans are real fans. When you become a TruFan, you put aside mundane things and concentrate on the important things of life--

COMEBACK (re-entering): Boozing!

FILK: Leching!

COMEBACK: Boozing!
FAUNCH: SMOFing!
GITAR: Singing!
COMEBACK: Boozing!
RIFF: That's what being a true fan means.

SONG: WHEN YOU'RE A FAN

RIFF: When you're a fan
You're a fan there's no doubt
From the Thursday night blog
To the Monday checkout!

FILK: When you're a fan
If the mundanes complain
You got sibilings around
You got someone to blame!

COMEBACK: You don't take no flak
Your ego is protected!
You got a slan shack
When thousands are expected
Balconies connected!

FAUNCH: Then you're a fan
And that's F-H-A-N
Which you'll never misspell
Till Great Spider knows when!

ALL: When you're a fan,
You stay
A fan!

RIFF: Now look, Tony, I know being the Con chairperson and
running this con hasn't been a piece of cheese, but
that's no reason for you to forget that you're a fan!

RIFF: When you're a fan
You're a fan born and bred
With the tendrils behind
And the beanie-prop head!

FILK: When you're a fan
If the conbid comes off--
Little fan, you're a slan,
Little slan, you're a SMOF!

ALL: The fans have checked in!
 The hotel is in panic!
 Propellers a-spin--
 We're hunting down the fakefans afraid of fanac!

COMEBACK: Here come the fen
 We're the smartest and best!
 We can outtype the pros
 And outdrink all the rsst!

GITTAR: Here come the fen
 We're the future today
 If you're re-action-ary
 Don't get in our way!

FAUNCH: The con is in town
 So keep your comics hidden!
 Slosh the blog down
 Cause sercon is forbidden
 And we ain't kidding!

ALL: Here comes Minn-STF
 And our challenge is hurled
 At Toronto and Dallas and all of the world!
 At the slan-shack living
 Hugo-giving
 WORLD!!!!

((Lights out.))

ACT TWO

Scene One

((The lights are out. In the darkness, a voice is heard:))

UTILITY BILL: ...and so I unsheath my bowie knife and hacked my way through this wall of human flesh....

((Lights up. The scene is the registration area of the hotel lobby. Along the back wall, left, is the registration desk, with cardfiles, program books, etc., stacked upon it. On the wall behind the desk are signs: BOZOCON MEMBERS REGISTER HERE; A-L; M-Z; etc. Also behind the desk are two Con Fans, CHARLIE and MICKY, looking bored.

The Fanzine Fans, minus MARIA and ANITA, have entered right.))

EGO SCAN: What happened to the Rocky Mountain goat?

UTILITY BILL: It was very good with mustard.

((General groan. The CON PHOTOGRAPHER enters left, taking pictures of everything in sight. He crosses to Fanzine Fans.))

CON PHOTOG (to BACKSPACE): Steal your soul, sister?

BACKSPACE: Only if I can have fifty copies for the apa.

CON PHOTOG: Done!

((MARIA enters right.))

MARIA: Well, there you are! I'm glad you could finally make it!

UMPKIN: I would have gotten here earlier but I had to work overtime.

EGO SCAN: What with three sections to the apa this time, it took me all day just to egoscan.

MUNCHY: I got hungry!

BACKSPACE: I had to clean my cat box.

COLOPHON: That took you all day?

BACKSPACE: You bet! I have 55 cats!

UMPKIN: Are they 8½ by 11? You could run them through the apa....

UTILITY BILL: It's an interesting story as to why I'm late today--

MARIA (Hurriedly): Anyway, this is the registration area. Make sure you know this room well. You'll see everyone you want to see here sooner or later, and they'll see you. Because everyone must register.

CHARLIE (in a portentous tone): Even aliens must register.

((Con PHOTOGRAPHER goes off left.))

MARIA: If you don't register, you don't get a name badge and no one will know who you are.

COLOPHON: Yes, and you have to have a name badge to get into the panels, don't you, Maria?

MARIA: That's very good, Colophon. You get to be the tour guide next time.

UMPKIN: What kind of panels are they having?

MICKEY (sotto voice): Birch...oak...knotty pine....

MARIA (overriding): Too bad you got here so late because now there's nothing going on. But there's going to be lots of different panels, and they're all listed in these program books.

((Picks up from table and distributes program books, ignoring outrage of CHARLIE and MICKEY.))

For instance, I was at the first one this morning: "Mythopoeic Structures of Germanic Romance and Its Influence on Perry Rhodan."

MUNCHY: Oooooohhh, what does that mean?

BACKSPACE: Oooooohhh, how was it?

MARIA (brief pause): You had to be there. Well, actually, it wasn't all that good, but there's one tomorrow that I know you'll want to go to: the Ditto-Mimeo-Hecto Workshop! As I understand it, they're going to have a number of machines actually there, and you'll all have a chance to get "hands-on" experience on your very own crank--

((pauses for the punchline))

who'll be leading the discussion group!!!

((deadly, embarrassed silence))

Also, there's the Guest of Honor speech by Ben Bova tomorrow night.

MUNCHY: Is he here yet?

((BEN BOVA enters left, accompanied by the AUTOGRAPHER SEEKER and the CON PHOTOGRAPHER. He autographs the latest Analog for the former, who accepts it with slavering gratitude and runs off. The CON PHOTOGRAPHER is snapping pictures continuously, from increasingly unlikely angles and postures, during this and the following business. BOVA approaches Registration Desk.))

CHARLIE: Pull the card for Ben Bova!!

((CHARLIE and MICKEY register BOVA, shake hands, etc., as the Fanzine Fans do general wowie zowie murmurs of excitement. BOVA turns toward audience and steps forward, pinning on his badge. The Fanzine Fans begin to converge upon him. During this, the ALIEN enters from left, totally ignored by everyone. He goes to the A-L line--CHARLIE-- and pantomimes giving name. CHARLIE glances back at the A-L sign, looks puzzled, shrugs, taps MICKEY on the shoulder. ALIEN moves to the M-Z line, repeats pantomime. MICKEY, equally puzzled, glances at her sign and goes into a conference with CHARLIE. Eventually a decision is reached, and MICKEY writes up a long--three feet or so--nametag which the ALIEN wraps around itself and impales on an antenna. ALIEN leaves, still generally unseen and ignored. MICKEY writes out a new sign and adds it below the M-Z sign. The new one reads AND MISCELLANEOUS. The CON PHOTOGRAPHER, having run out of silly poses, leaves, as among the Fanzine Fans UTILITY BILL takes the plunge and steps forward.))

UTILITY BILL: Mr. Bova! I haven't seen you since that time in Afghanistan!

BOVA (brief pause, then recognition): Ah, yes--the wall of human flesh!

MICKEY (astonished, as is everyone): You know this man?

BOVA: Saved my life many a time!

((The ice broken, all of the Fanzine Fans except MARIA press forward, thrusting things upon him.))

COLOPHON: Could you autograph this book?

UMPKIN: Would you autograph my tee-shirt?

MUNCHY: Could you autograph this sandwich?

EGO SCAN: Will you please autograph this copy of Galaxy?

BOVA: Oh, I'd...

BACKSPACE: Gee, Mr. Bova, where do you get your ideas?

BOVA: Well, I...

UMPKIN: What's it like being an editor?

MUNCHY: What is Issac Asimov really like?

BOVA: Actually...

EGO SCAN: Do you read all the stories that come in?

BOVA: Every one; I...

COLOPHON: Mr. Bova, I had this great new idea for a story...

BOVA:(hollowly): Oh...

COLOPHON: I just finished it! Would you like to read it?

((She pulls out a bulging file folder. BOVA, smiling, looks around for a graceful escape. There are fans on all sides and he is trapped. During the ensuing song, the fans playing parts mime opening and viewing the manuscript--which is then seen to be an ugly mass of mishapen brown paper, held together with string and masking tape; typing and getting down on all fours to form a typing table and chair; and finally, reading the thing.))

SONG: GEE, EDITOR BOVA

COLOPHON: Dear kindly Mr. Bova
I've got this manuscript
If you'll just look it over
You'll see that it's a hit.
It's full of sex and violence
And relevance and art--

ALL: Golly Gernsback! What a way to start!

Gee, Editor Bova, we're doing so well
Been writing for a week now and we're ready to sell,
We used to do fanfic, we're starting to grow--
Deep down inside us is a pro!

COLOPHON: Is a pro!

ALL: There's a pro, there's a pro,
There's a dirty pro,
Like, inside us each there is a pro!

BOVA: That's an interesting-sounding story...
COLOPHON: Let me tell you about the plot!
BOVA: Just tell it to my slushpile reader!

COLOPHON (to UMPKIN):

My hero flies a starship
It keeps him on the run
He's got four hundred crewmen
But he has all the fun;
He goes on landing parties
Explores uncharted worlds
It's his duty!
Also, he meets girls!

UMPKIN:

AAAGGGHHH!
Editor Bova, I don't like to nag
But she's written it in pencil on a brown paper bag!
It may be a winner--it's certainly hyped--
But we can't read it till it's typed!

COLOPHON:

Till it's typed?
ALL: Till it's typed, till it's typed,
Till it's typed, typed, typed,
Till it's double-spaced on bond and typed!

UMPKIN:

It is the opinion of me, the slushpile reader, that we can't
even consider this story until she supplies us with a
legible copy!

COLOPHON:

UMPKIN" Hey! I'm illegible on account of I'm illegible!
So, take her to a Kelly Girl.

COLOPHON (to UTILITY BILL):

My penmanship is lousy
My spelling's rather punk
I write when I'm inspired
Which mostly means when drunk;
Type me a clean copy
This one is a wreck
And I'll pay you
When I get the check!

UTILITY BILL: Heck!

Editor Bova, you better not fail
This fan don't need a typer, just an Analog sale;
It's not just the status--it's really much more--
Mundanely speaking, she is poor!

COLOPHON:

ALL: I am poor!
We are poor, we are poor,
We are awfully poor,
When the dues are due you'll find we're poor!

UTILITY BILL: In my opinion, this fan does not need a typist so much;
what she really needs is to find an agent what will
agree to represent her.

COLOPHON: Hey! I'm reprehensible!

UTILITY BILL: So, take her to Scott Meredith!

COLOPHON (to BACKSPACE):

Dear kindly Madame Agent
I've gotta pay the rent
So get me a fair wage and
I'll give you ten per cent.
I won't submit to Ted White--
I can't afford two bits--
Try Ben Bova!
Sell and we'll go splits!

BACKSPACE:

NIX!!
Editor Bova, in spite of the hype,
This story's not a classic, just a bucket of tripe!
Not even on Elwood would I wish such pap
Typed or in longhand--this is crap!!

ALL:

It is crap!
It is crap, it is crap, it's appalling crap,
It's been done before, and always crap!!

UMPKIN:

The trouble is her characters.

BACKSPACE:

The trouble is her prose.

UTILITY BILL:

The trouble is she's plagiarized from STAR TREK, and she
knows.

MUNCHY:

The trouble is her setting.

EGO SCAN:

The trouble is her science.

ALL:

Bova, can't you read between the lines!
Dear Editor Bova she's begging you so--

COLOPHON:

Publish my story and make me a pro!

ALL:

You can take it for pennies, or take it for free,
Please, Editor Bova--

PUB ME!!!!!!

((Two Con Fans enter right and put up sign on
back wall saying BOZOCON PARTY SUITE NOW OPEN--
ROOM 666 with a big arrow beneath. Con Fans leave.
CHARLIE and MICKEY, seeing sign, close up registr-
ation and carry off table and contents right,
following arrow.))

BOVA (seeing sign): Excuse me; something important---just came up!

((BOVA follows arrow off right, followed by UTILITY
BILL, UMPKIN, EGO SCAN, and BACKSPACE. MUNCHY and
COLOPHON follow more slowly; COLOPHON is dejected.))

MUNCHY: Don't worry about it; somebody will buy it. Here's a quarter. Go on; send it to Ted White.

COLOPHON: Or maybe I could take out the plot and submit it to ORBIT...

((COLOPHON and MUNCHY exit. MARIA, forgotten, is left alone. She turns; sees party sign. A long, slow take, as her eyes follow the arrow offstage. As she turns to face off right, a sound comes from right:))

ALL (bffstage): SMO-O-O-OTH!!!

((MARIA exits right. Lights out.))

ACT TWO

Scene Two

((Party noises begin and grow in the dark. Lights up. The scene is the hall outside Room 666, the BozoCon party suite. The wall is covered with dodos and such. Con fans are wandering on from both sides and from the back center door to the suite itself. The group includes FAUNCH, FILK, COMEBACK, MICKEY, and two or three others. Others including the ALIEN enter the suite door, thus exiting the stage. The above mentioned fans are obviously in the early stages of developing a hall party. Enter from left PETER PRETENTIOUS, mundane media meathead in ultrastraight clothes, clutching tape recorder.))

PP (trying to be With It): Hi, guys. I'm looking for some sci-fi nuts. Do you know where any are, ah, "hanging out"?

COMEBACK: I saw some hanging out the windows on the seventh floor--

FILK: Who wants to know?

PP: I'm Peter Pretentious of Newspeak magazine. Here's my card.

((FILK takes card, shrugs, hands to FAUNCH.))

FAUNCH: One no trump.

((FAUNCH hands card to COMEBACK.))

COMEBACK: Gin!!

((One of the other fans hands COMEBACK a drink.))

FILK: What is it you said you were looking for?

PP: Well, my magazine has assigned me to cover the sci-fi conference. Do you guys know anything about it?

FAUNCH: Never heard of it.

FILK: Must be a different room.

COMEBACK: Must be a different floor.

MICKEY: Must be a different hotel.

((Pause. PP whips out notebook and checks notes.))

PP: No, I'm sure this is the hotel. Maybe I'll try another floor. Which way is the elevator?

((Everyone points off in a different random direction. Exit on right PETER PRETENTIOUS, looking puzzled.))

FAUNCH: Boy, he was really weird.

((ANTIFAN enters from party suite--backstage center--wearing black clothes, black cape, black glasses, and an allegedly Australian accent.))

COMEBACK: Yeah--a real mundane creep.

ANTIFAN: I am not mundane!!

FAUNCH: Ah, it's AntiFan--we weren't talking about you.

COMEBACK: This time.

ANTIFAN: Well, why weren't you talking about me?

FILK: All right. I suppose we could--Comeback?

COMEBACK (pushing imaginary mike into AntiFan's face): Hi!! I'm Peter Pretentious, mild-mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper. I'm looking for sci-fi nuts, but I guess you'll have to do. What are you doing here?

ANTIFAN (grabbing "mike"): I'm glad you asked me that. I'm the Australian delegate from the League of Fannish Villains, but you can just call me--ANTI-FAN!!!!

((TA-DUM! Everyone cowers; lights flash on and off, etc.))

ANTIFAN: And well may you cower! Nyahh-ha-ha-ha!!

COMEBACK: Yeah, we cower pretty well.

FILK: I minored in Covering at Miskatonic U.

MICKEY: Well, Miskatonic you too, buddy!

ANTIFAN: I was sent here by the Acronym Fund to, ah, "take over" the Australia in '75 worldcon bid. I'd like you all to come to Australia for a loo-o-o-ong visit. ((aside to audience:)) Longer than they think, nyah-ha-ha-ha!!

ALL: Oh, Villanous One....

((Genuflect as lights flash and thunder rumbles.))

COMEBACK: What is there for us in Australia?

ANTIFAN: Foster's Lager, for starters. Plus, Australians throw real bang-up parties. I can guarentee you a genuine blow-out.

((ANTIFAN flahse open cape at audience, revealing bombs, dynamite, etc.))

FAUNCH: Ah, it'll probably be a real bomb.

((ANTIFAN does double-take; closes cape.))

I think I'll just go to the MiniCon instead.

ANTIFAN: After my Aussiecon, you'll never go to another Minicon!

((Con fans, tired of playing along, stand up one at a time as they say their lines:))

FILK: AntiFan, you're being silly without being amusing.

FAUNCH: We don't need Foster's Lager--we got Grain Belt.

COMEBACK: We don't need AntiFan--we got Doctor Dodd Clegler.

MICKEY: We don't need Aussiecon....

ALL: We got Minicon!!!

SONG: MINICON

ANTIFAN: I like the city of Melbourne
ALL: So get on an airplane and return!
ANTIFAN: Cons too exciting to want sleep.
ALL: But if you do you can count sheep!

FILK: I like to go to a Minicon
Fnnns that I know at the Minicon
Movies they show at the Minicon--

ANTIFAN: Trudging through snow at the Minicon!

ANTIFAN: Fly to the next con on Quantas
ALL: But the koalas don't want us!
ANTIFAN: So many voters we can't lose--
ALL: Half of your voters are kangaroos!

FAUNCH: Ken Fletch cartoons at the Minicon!
Hot air balloons at the Minicon!
Orgy in room at the Minicon--

ALL: Read it in RUNE at the Minicon!

ANTIFAN: Come on down under, have fun, chum--
ALL: But it's too far to walk home from!
ANTIFAN: Come taste our meat pies and strong beer--
COMEBACK: We'll take McDonald's and stay here!

ANTIFAN: Bouncing potatoes at Minicon
Searching for waiters at Minicon
Slow elevators at Minicon--

ALL: Australian traitors at Minicon!

COMEBACK: Fanning at parties is so nice--
ANTIFAN: In the hotel there is no ice!
COMEBACK: Drinking the blog and the free beer--
ANTIFAN: Your reservation is not here!

MICKEY: Drinking a lot at the Minicon
Eyes are bloodshot at the Minicon
Switching to pot at the Minicon--

ANTIFAN: Communist plot at the Minicon!

ANTIFAN: I'll fly back home from this crud-con
ALL: We know a zeppelin to get on!
ANTIFAN: All of you here will wave bye-bye--
ALL: All of us here will be too high!

ALL: Big fannish throng at the Minicon
Coming on strong at the Minicon
Singing folksong at the Minicon--
(to AF) You don't belong at the Minicon!

ANTIFAN: CURSES! They can't sing at me that way! I'll have me
revenge. . . . I think I'll go unplug the ice machines!

((ANTIFAN exits stage left, cape swirling and
mustache-twirling, frightening MARIA, who enters
stage left as he goes out. Most of the CON FEN
exit stage right as TONY enters from back door
with a can of Grain Belt beer. He passes this
around among the remaining confen, who go through
the Tucker/Jim Beam routine with it.))

TONY & CONFEN: RO-O-OU-U-GH!!

((GITTAR enters bearing guitar.))

GITTAR: Filksinging, anyone?

((Exit everyone but Tony and Maria))

MARIA (glitzy-eyed): Are you Bob Tucker?

TONY: No--not yet. . . .

MARIA: Well, when will you be? I've been dying to meet him.

TONY: Are you serious? You've really never met Tucker?

MARIA: I've corresponded with him for years. I'd recognize his typeface anywhere, but I've never actually met him.

TONY: But he's at just about every midwestern con. How could you miss him? How could he miss you?

MARIA: I've never actually been to a con--I've just read about them.

TONY: No wonder I haven't seen you before.
((reads her nametag))
But your name is familiar. Where could I have seen it?

MARIA: I don't know, but I've seen your name too. Maybe you're on my mailing list. I'd check it, but my address file is back at the Bozo Bus Building.

TONY: Oh--are you staying at the Bozo Bus?

MARIA: I live at the Bozo Bus.

TONY: You're kidding! So do I! Apartment 5C.

MARIA: I'm in 5D. We're just around the corner from each other.

TONY: We must share a common wall. And several uncommon ones.

MARIA: I think your south wall is my kitchen floor!

((Both laugh.))

TONY: How come I haven't seen you around?

MARIA: I don't get out much. My fanzines keep me pretty busy.

TONY: Oh, is that how you pronounce it? Like magazine.

MARIA: Only crunchy....

TONY: Say, I got one of those the other day. It was called STEEL SPRING SURPRISE.

MARIA: Oh, I write a column for that one.

TONY: That's right--I remember glancing through it. You write pretty good.

MARIA: Thank you. I enjoy writing it.

TONY: You must enjoy it if you spend so much time at it. I hear your typewriter going day and night.

MARIA: Yeah--now if only I could teach it to use the litter box.... Typing fanzines keeps my fingers off the street. Actually, I do like to write. And I get free fanzines in trade, so that even though I rarely meet other fans in person, I get to know them in print. Fanzines keep me in touch with fans all over.

TONY (leering): All over?

MARIA (embarassed): Oh dear, look at that. It's ten o'clock already. I have to get home and start my con report.

TONY: You can't leave yet. It's still early.

MARIA: I have to write up the first day before I forget it.

TONY: But the first day isn't over yet. In fact, the real con is just beginning.

MARIA: What do you mean? The programming was over at eight.

TONY: The programming is just incidental. The real reason we're here is to be with other fans.
(urgently)
All those fans you've met in print--here's your chance to finally meet them in person.
((Offstage voice of all: SM-O-O-OTH!))
I can probably even introduce you to Tucker--besides, we were just starting to get to know each other.

MARIA: Well, if you really want me to stay--even though it is awfully late. . . .

TONY: Late? Why, it's just beginning!

SONG: TONIGHT

TONY: Tonight, tonight,
The con begins tonight,
Tomorrow is a light-year away.
Tonight, tonight,
It all begins tonight,
What we see, what we drink, what we say!

MARIA: Today, I went through registration,
I sat and watched the program,
I thought it was all right.
But I was wrong, there's much more going on
At the con!
Tonight!

BOTH: Tonight, tonight,
The con suite's all in light,
With suns and moons and beercans in place.
Tonight, tonight,
NASA's at its height,
And I feel like a rocket in space!

Today the world was very earthy,
I almost thought space travel
Was growing dull and trite.
But here you are
And what was just a world is a star,
TONIGHT!

((Enter ANITA from stage left))

ANITA: Maria! There you are! I've been riding up and down
the elevator looking for you for the past two hours!

MARIA: I'm sorry, Anita. Did you have to search every floor?

ANITA: Actually, this is the first one. I had to wait in the
lobby for an awfully long time. Then when I did get
an elevator, you won't believe this, but there was this
party going on in it and I couldn't squeeze my way out
again.

MARIA: Oh, Anita--a real party in an elevator?

ANITA: Well, it wasn't a big one--but they had set up a cash
bar and were showing slides on the wall. It was
terrible! I knew you wanted to get home early and
start your con report, and I was afraid you'd be standing
around bored. . .

((trails off as she notices TONY))
...now that everything is--over?--for the day.

MARIA: Ah... well--

((RIFF ENTERS FROM OFFSTAGE LEFT, CARRYING A WASTEBASKET.))

RIFF: Tony! Sorry I'm late with the ice!

((TONY looks into basket; splashes hand and dribbles a bit of water.))

TONY: Ice?

RIFF: Well, it was ice when I started, but I got sidetracked on this really great party in Elevator A.

TONY: Why didn't you take one of the other elevators?

RIFF: Well, I tried to get on the Filksining Elevator, but it was too crowded, and the SCA Tourney Elevator was too dangerous, and I couldn't get onto the Skinny Dipping Elevator without taking off my clothes--and then in Elevator A, Ken Konkol started up his slide show and I had to serve blog for that.

ANITA: Who is "Blog"?

RIFF: Huh?

TONY: Why, you know--blog! Radioactive punch!

ANITA: Radioactive punch--that sounds dangerous. Is it like a laser?

TONY: Huh?

RIFF: I don't know; I never read Lasers.

MARIA: Huh?

TONY: I can't read a Laser without blog by my side.

ANITA: Huh?

RIFF: Hey, that's right! I had ice for blog!!

ANITA: Blog is a woman?

MARIA (to TONY): Did you ever have eyes for Blog?

TONY: Oh, sure, we all have at one time or another.

RIFF: I did, but it melted.

((COMEBACK staggers on right, beer in hand))

ANITA, MARIA,
AND TONY: HUH?

((Pause.))

RIFF (intently): What-are-we-talking-about?

COMEBACK: And how does he make his voice do that?

((COMEBACK staggers off left.))

MARIA: Some woman named Blog.

ANITA: Who's got a radioactive punch.

TONY: Oh, no. Blog is something to drink. You must have drunk
blog--it's served at all the parties.

MARIA: Parties? What parties?

RIFF: The parties at the con.

ANITA: We don't go to the parties--just the programming.

TONY: Programming? I've never been to any programming.
How's the program going here?

MARIA: Oh, you can read all about it in my report. I'll send
you a free copy of my fanzine?

RIFF (using long "i"): Fanzine?

TONY: No, that's "fanzine"--Maria just told me how to pronounce
it.

RIFF: Tony! What's happening to you? What do we care about
fanzines or "fanzines" or programming or any of that
stuff? Come on with me. Let's go get some more ice
for our party!

ANITA: Your party?

TONY: Just a minute, Riff. I'm sort of curious about how the
program is going. After all, I am the con chairperson.

MARIA: You are?

ANITA: Maria! What's the matter with you? What do we care
about parties or conchairing or any of that stuff? What
would the people in your apa say if they could see you now?

RIFF: Her apa?

MARIA: Wait a minute, Anita. I've got to learn about this if I'm going to do a proper con report for the apa. After all, I am the O.E.

TONY: You are? . . . What's an apa?

MARIA: Oh, it's sort of like a party in print.

RIFF: I thought you people didn't ever go to parties.

ANITA: We don't have to "go" to one--it comes in the mail.

TONY: Is it an open door party?

MARIA: Sure--all you have to do to attend is to put in a fanzine.

RIFF: Some party. It's illegal to send booze through the mail. What can you send, potato chips?

ANITA (looking darkly at MARIA): It's been done. Come on, Maria; the doors may be open, but some parties have their minds closed.

RIFF: Come on, Tony, we have to go look for an icepick--this water seems to have suddenly frozen solid.

((Starts to drag TONY off left.))

TONY: But Riff, it's just getting really interesting! And besides, where could we find an icepick at this hour?

((UTILITY BILL's voice is heard momentarily offstage right))

UTILITY BILL: ...hacked my way through a wall of human flesh...

((Exit TONY and RIFF stage left))

MARIA AND ANITA: How could you!??

ANITA: How could I? How could you! I warned you against his type. And the con chair, no less. The worst of the worst!

MARIA: Oh, I don't know. He seemed kind of nice. And he was interested in my apa.

ANITA: You're dumber than I figured if you believe it was only your apa he was interested in.

MARIA (smiling): Loosen up, Anita. He's a fan too.

ANITA (sputtering): But, Maria--

SONG: A FAN LIKE THAT

ANITA:

A fan like that
Is not one for you
A fan like that
He ought to bore you
One of your own fen,
Stick to your own fen!

A fan like that
He'll pawn your typer
And spend the proceeds getting hyper
One of your own fen,
Stick to your own fen!

A fan who cons cannot write,
A fan who cons cannot LOC,
He cannot spell, he cannot type, only talk,
What a shock, Maria, what a shock!

A fan like that
Goes where the pros go--
He'll never worry 'bout your repro--
You'll miss your deadlines,
You'll gafiate--
Just wait and see--just wait Maria--just wait and see--

(which segues into)

SONG: I AM A FAN

MARIA:

Oh, no, Anita, no.
Anita, no.
That isn't all--
Now I've seen
Fanac's not just a zine--
I'll drink blog, I'll meet Tucker, I'll meet Bloch
For I grok, Anita, now I grok--
They're all fans
You should know better--
You are a fan--and FIAWOL--you should know better.

I am a fan
And that's all that I am
Zine or con--it's our way of life--

He's fannish--as I
We never say "sci-fi"
We're trufans.
We are both fans
Though of variant clans
Zine or con--neither is taboo
There's one dream we share
That fandom's everywhere
There's so much we can do.

MARIA AND ANITA: When fanac's to be done
It can be zine or con--
A fan is a fan!

MARIA: Anita, if you ever want me to give you any mailing
comments again, you'll go find Tony and his friend
and apologize to them.

ANITA: Maria, you've gone completely off the deep end.

MARIA: Well, if I'd gone off the shallow end I might have
hurt my head.

ANITA: You still could get hurt.

MARIA: GO, Anita. I'll be waiting for you . . . right here.

((ANITA exits left, shaking head etc. MARIA
watches until she's sure ANITA has left. Her
head swivels toward the con party door. A big
smile lights up her face as she opens the door
(rear wall). PETER PRETENTIOUS, drink in hand and
arm around the ALIEN, is leaning against the door
and falls out as it opens. His suit and tie are
thoroughly rumped; he's obviously been partying
for some time. He looks up at MARIA.))

PP: Shay--are you a sci-fi freak?

((Lights out.))

ACT THREE

Scene One

((Lights up on hall outside TONY's room--1313. Enter RIFF from right; crosses to room, knocks on door.))

RIFF: Tony?

((No answer. RIFF turns away. A sudden burst of high-speed typing comes from the door. RIFF spins back to door again, as ANITA enters from left.))

ANITA: So I finally found you. Is Tony around? Maria sent me with a message for both of you, and I'd just as soon not have to repeat it.

RIFF: I don't know--he doesn't answer the door, but there's noises coming from in there.

ANITA: What kind of . . . Ohhhhhh--

RIFF: What could he be typing? We finished the program book days ago.

ANITA (smugly): Maybe he's doing a -- con report?

RIFF: Don't be silly. There's a party going on.
((knocks on door again. Typing continues.))
Tony! Tony!

ANITA: Or maybe he's LOCing a genzine, hacking out a perzine, pubbing an apazine--

RIFF: Wha??!!

ANITA: Or putting out a oneshot.

RIFF: Maybe he's just repairing his typewriter.

ANITA: What's the matter with it? Is his asterisk a little wobbly? Maybe his colon was a bit loose?

RIFF (knocking): Tony!

ANITA: But probably he's just doing a con report.

RIFF: Tony isn't that sort of person.

ANITA: What do you mean by "that sort of person"?

RIFF: Well, you know--that sort. The kind that--uh--well, there are people who--the sort that don't--they type--instead of--you know--uh--that sort of people that--uh--that can't communicate with people. Sort of.

ANITA: Say--I never noticed this before, but you're cute when you blither.

((RIFF does doubtetake; dawn of fear; returns to the door.))

RIFF(pounding): Tony! Tony! Tony!!

ANITA: You're also pretty cute when you're cornered.

RIFF: TONY!!!

ANITA: But I think you're cutest of all when you're hysterical.

RIFF (sudden calm): But seriously, he said, anxiously, but not, repeat not, hysterically, we've got to talk to Tony. There are all sorts of problems coming up with the con.

ANITA: What kind of problems?

RIFF: Well, for starters, some fiend unplugged all the ice machines in the hotel. Next, we're running out of blog fixings and Tony's got the mustard. And worst of all, the hotel might close us down. There's mundanes complaining about the noise from our party on the sixth floor.

ANITA: Why did the hotel book any mundanes on the sixth floor?

RIFF: They didn't. They're complaining from the fifteenth floor.

ANITA: Oh--well, I know where you can get some mustard.

RIFF: You do?

ANITA: Ask at the party suite for a guy named Utility Bill.

RIFF: And he knows where to get mustard at this hour?

ANITA: Carries it with him. Always carries it with him. Always carries everything with him. Just don't ask him why!

RIFF: Gee--he sounds fannish. Where's he from?

ANITA: Afghanistan. Or St. Paul. I can't remember which. And he's just as fannish as you are.

RIFF: Oh--you mean he's. . . .

ANITA: Yes. He's "that sort of person."

RIFF: Oh, look, Anita. I didn't mean that the way it sounded.

ANITA: It's all right. I've always thought of con fans as "that sort of person" too. Maybe we were both wrong. You're not quite the way I expected a con fan to be. For one thing, you're sober.

RIFF: You're not quite the way I expected fanzine fans to be either. You can talk. You know, I've never read a fanzine.

ANITA: Well, you're welcome to come over to my place some time and I'll show you some.

RIFF: That sounds nice. And as long as you're here, I could show you around the hotel and introduce you to some people.

ANITA: Maybe we could go around and plug in the ice machines.

RIFF: But we're liable to be melting the ice while we're making it. Uh--the ice, that is.

ANITA: I see--you're pretty good with puns. I'll bet you could put out a damn fine fanzine if you tried. How's about doing a con report for my fanzine?

((At some point above, the typing has stopped. Audience now hears sounds of mimeo ca-chunk-ca-chunking. RIFF and ANITA, preoccupied, fail to notice.))

RIFF: Oh no--I couldn't. I wouldn't even know where to start.

ANITA: Well, then, we could do it together.

RIFF: You know, that's not a bad idea. How about if I take you around the convention and let you in on what running a con is really like?

ANITA: I'll bet there's a lot more to cons than I ever thought there was.

RIFF: I guess there's a lot more to fandom than either of us ever thought there was.

SONG: MAKE OF OUR CON

RIFF: Make of our con, one con
 Make of our zine, one zine
 Make of our dreams, ome true dream--
 Monday cannot part us now.

ANITA: Make of our groups, one band
 Make of all fandom, one land
 Make of our worlds, one universe--
 Entropy can't part us now.

BOTH: Make of our fanac, one way
 Make all our deadlines, one day--
 Now it begins, now we start
 One shot, why not?
 Gafia can't part us now!

RIFF: Gee--you're cute when you're sercon.

ANITA: Want to go look for those ice machines?

RIFF: Ah, who cares if the party's out of ice?

ANITA: The party... the party! Riff, I left Maria standing in
 front of the party suite!

RIFF: Oh yeah. What was it she wanted you to say to Tony
 and me?

ANITA: I think I've already said it to you. But I'd better
 go give Tony Maria's message.

 ((They turn and, hand in hand, start for
 TONY's door. The door bursts open and
 TONY runs out through them, stacks of paper
 in his hands and sliding off him to the floor.))

TONY: I've got it! I'VE GOT IT! THIS IS IT! What the world
 has been waiting for!

ANITA AND RIFF: Huh, what?

TONY: I knew I could do it! Unique! Wityy! True-to-life!
 NATIONAL LAMPOON, move over!!!

 ((Enter FILK and COMEBACK from right, attracted
 by the loud blither. TONY crosses to them.))

TONY: I've created it! The ultimate!

((Enter from left PETER PRETENTIOUS, who crosses to the others and tries to get a look at the fanzine.))

FILK: The ultimate what?

TONY: The ultimate fanzine! Here, everybody take a copy. The first issue's free.

COMEBACK: The first one's always free.

TONY: I've given this zine the best hour and a half of my life!

COMEBACK: Yeah, but your life isn't over yet.

FILK: Yet.

((FILK and COMEBACK accept zines.))
The ink isn't even dry.

COMEBACK: I noticed. My hand has more words on it than page three.

FILK: More interesting, too.

COMEBACK: Hey, your hand has show-through.

TONY: Tomorrow's issue will have the next four chapters of my novel.

((FILK and COMEBACK trade off issues as PP keeps circling, trying to get a look. He eventually spots one on the floor and takes that, spoiling the CON-FEN's fun.))

COMEBACK: "It was a dark and stormy night..."

FILK: "It all began in a small..."

COMEBACK: "Call me Gzornabplutschk???"

FILK: "The universe will little note nor long remember..."

COMEBACK: You said it.

TONY (from audience, where he has gone to distribute copies): Hey, no, that's my editorial!

COMEBACK: "And then the sun went nova."

FILK: Where can he possibly go from there?

COMEBACK: And when does he leave?

PP: So this is a fanzine. I think you've got something here, kid.

TONY: And that title! Possibly the very greatest inspiration of all the ones that I had. What a title! Why hasn't anyone thought of it before? It's so--cosmic!!!

ANITA: What title?

TONY: IDEA!

FILK: IDEA?

RIFF: IDEA?

SONG: IDEA

TONY: IDEA!
I've just pubbed a zine called IDEA!
My fingers seemed to blur,
This zine'll cause a stir,
You'll see!

IDEA!
I've just typed a zine named IDEA!
And suddenly the sound
Of typing seems profound
To me!

IDEA!
LOC it now and receive the next issue,
If you wait, the next issue might miss you.
IDEA!
You'll never stop LOCing IDEA!

IDEA!
I've stapled a zine named IDEA!
Each staple was a joy
The postman can't destroy
Or lose.

IDEA!
I won't fold this zine named IDEA!
I'll buy some envelopes
And send it out with hopes
Unmanned!

IDEA!
Read it fast add the beauty's stunning,
Read it slow and you catch all the punning.
IDEA!
You'll never stop reading IDEA!

RIFF: So that's what publishing a fanzine does to a person?

ANITA: But Riff, this is a crudzine.

RIFF: I don't care what it is--it's awful!

PP: Great stuff, and there's no copyright notice! It's in the public domain!!

((PP rushes out stage left, waving fanzine over his head. He collides with CHARLIE, who is rushing on, and drops the fanzine. PP exits without noticing. CHARLIE grabs the fanzine in midair, glances at it, shrugs, and tosses it.))

CHARLIE: Tony! Jerry Pournelle was just sitting on the windowsill at the party and he fell out!!

RIFF: Is he all right?

CHARLIE: Well, so far--
((points off right))
There he goes now!

COMEBACK: Don't worry; he's an engineer. He'll invent something.

((MICKEY runs on from right; FAUNCH and GITTAR from the left.))

MICKEY: We lost the second reel of ZARDOZ!

COMEBACK: How can you tell?

MICKEY: And we lost the last reel of PLANET OF THE APES!

COMEBACK: Who cares?

((RIFF is moving from person to person, trying to cope; ANITA following him, trying to regain his attention; TONY preceding both, passing out copies of IDEA.))

FAUNCH: We've run out of Beam's Choice!

GITTAR: The night manager is threatening to roll up the lobby!

CHARLIE: And the All-Night Restaurant just closed. How were we to know that "Ailknight" was the owner's last name?

RIFF: Tony, listen to these people!

CHARLIE (pointing): Hey, Jerry Pournelle just fell up past the window. He did invent something!

ANITA: Riff, listen to me.

TONY: Everybody, listen to me! If you'll just give me your addresses, I'll be glad to add you to my list.

FILK: You can have my address--it's in a lousy part of town.

RIFF: Tony, you can't be serious. Not about this! Look at this article on...

((And RIFF's voice trails off as he begins reading IDEA, becoming absorbed in it and remaining immobile for most of the rest of the scene, except for turning of pages.))

MICKEY: But what about those missing reels?

ANITA: Run ZARDOZ and PLANET OF THE APES together! See if I care!

MICKEY: Hey--right! Who would care? That might work!

((MICKEY runs off right.))

TONY: Ah, Riff, what do you mean? This is brilliant. I poured my soul into this.

RIFF (without looking up): Needs more Grenadine.

FAUNCH: What about the Beam's Choice?

CHARLIE: Tony! Jerry Pournelle says he likes the fresh air! He doesn't want to come back in!

ANITA: Tell him to fly over to the liquor store.

CHARLIE AND FAUNCH: RIGHT!

TONY (to FILK): Don't you agree? Hey, tell him! It's great, huh?

FILK: Well, Tony, I don't know much about fanzines--but I know what I like--

TONY: Yeah, see? Listen to this man! He knows what he likes! What about you--

MICKEY (re-enters): HEY! The zeppelin has pulled loose from its moorings!

ANITA: When Pournelle gets back from the liquor store....

MICKEY: RIGHT!!!

((CHARLIE, MICKEY, FILK, COMEBACK, FAUNCH, and GITTAR all run to form semi-circle around ANITA, whose arms are seen waving above, pointing, assigning tasks. TONY attempts to pull away the nearest fan--GITTAR--who returns to huddle between answers.))

TONY: Isn't this a fanzine to remember?

GITTAR: I'll never forget it...

TONY: Yeah, yeah, but isn't this a fanzine I can be proud of?

GITTAR: If you want to--it's a free country...

((The huddle breaks up with a clap of hands and unison shout of "RIGHT!" The ConFen run off in various directions to solve problems; TONY stops FAUNCH momentarily before she can exit.))

TONY: Hey, look--before you go, tell me--uh, what did you like best about my fanzine?

FAUNCH: Your stapling shows great potential. Gotta go now, bye!

((EGOSCAN and UTILITY BILL enter right as FAUNCH exits, walking across. TONY thrusts copies of IDEA at them, which they glance at.))

TONY: How about you?

EGO SCAN: Read, but no comment hooks.

TONY: Be honest with me--what did you think of my fanzine?

UTILITY BILL: In cosmic terms--it sucks Galactic Moose!

((Exit EGO SCAN and UTILITY BILL. TONY, shattered, sinks to a seat on the floor. ANITA dusts off her hands and zeros in on RIFF.))

ANITA: Well, when's the next con?

RIFF: Gee, I never realized Tony was so--deep. . . .

ANITA (taking zine): Dense, maybe. He's got so much ink on here everybody who read it must have a hernia by now. Let's go up to my place and I'll show you some real fanzines.

RIFF: Uh--isn't that supposed to be "etchings"?

ANITA: Don't worry. I'll find some with etchings in them....

((Exit ANITA and RIFF left. TONY is left alone on stage, as the lights begin to fade. He begins to rip remaining copies of IDEA in half. Lights continue to fade to sound of ripping and the beginning of sobbing.))

((Lights out.))

ACT THREE

Scene Two

((Lights up on the hotel lobby near the front desk. It is Sunday morning. Stage left/center is a sofa, with CHARLIE and MICKEY collapsed thereon with terminal hangovers. A potted plant, a folding chair or two, and miscellaneous con debris complete the scene.))

CHARLIE: It's Sunday already. The con's almost over and we're still alive. We must not be having a very good time.

MICKEY: Oh, I don't know. Those were some parties last night, huh, Charlie.

CHARLIE: My God--thankfully, I've forgotten. How many did you make it to?

MICKEY: Oh, ten or twenty. Did you get to the big one in Room 812?

CHARLIE: I tried, but I couldn't even squeeze onto the 8th floor. That sort of bothered me.

MICKEY: Why?

CHARLIE: I was booked into 812. So I spent some time in the filksinging elevator instead.

MICKEY: You did? I was booked into that. How was it?

CHARLIE: Not much of a view. . . .

MICKEY: I guess the hotel must be booked pretty solid.

CHARLIE: Yeah. You know, it seems like there's a lot more neos this time than there were last year.

MICKEY: There were a whole herd of those "fanzine" fans here Friday night. Did you notice them?

CHARLIE: Who could miss them? Huddled together like scared rabbits--I felt kind of sorry for them.

MICKEY: Ah, you don't have to worry about them. They seemed to be starting to loosen up a bit by last night's parties. Give them a year or two and they'll probably be real fans.

CHARLIE: I must be a real fan--I've got a real enough headache.

MICKEY: Anybody seen Tony this morning?

CHARLIE: Tony Who?

MICKEY: Tony! You know, our con chairperson! The guy that's keeping this con running?

CHARLIE: Is that what it's doing? As long as it doesn't wake me up, I don't mind. Ahhhgghh--I can't imagine anybody partying longer than I did last night.

((Enter from right COLOPHON, UMPKIN, EGO SCAN, BACKSPACE, and MUNCHY, looking loose, grungy, and happy: Mpls. in '73 tee-shirts, buttons, bottles, beer cans, etc.))

COLOPHON: Hey, they just closed down the stairwell party! You guys want to come up to my room? All we've got left is sloe gin and cherry kool-aid, but after a while you get used to it.

((MICKEY gags and runs offstage left, hands to mouth. CHARLIE falls back upon the couch, head in hands.))

CHARLIE: I hope I never live that long. . . .

UMPKIN: What was the matter with them?

BACKSPACE: I don't know. I guess some people just can't handle the excitement of conventions.

UMPKIN: Takes a lot of stamina to go the distance.

MUNCHY: Yeah, next year I'm going to go into training two weeks ahead of time.

COLOPHON: Me too--I'm going to skip classes to practice avoiding the programming.

BACKSPACE: I'm going to practice mixing drinks with one hand while drinking with the other.

COLOPHON: You know, we don't have to wait for the next worldcon. How about going to some regionals?

UMPKIN: Like where?

COLOPHON: I don't know--there's a lot of them, though. How about if we just drive around until we run into a city someplace and see what's happening?

UMPKIN: No, I think I'll save up my money--and my liver--for the next worldcon.
((unfolds a large map))
I figure we can take my van, and if we're all ready on time, we can make maybe 5-600 miles the first day, crash overnight, trade off the driving, and at that rate we should be able to make it there in three days.

EGO SCAN: Make it where?

UMPKIN: Wherever the next worldcon is.

EGO SCAN: What if it's in Australia?

UMPKIN: Well--
((flips map over and studies it))
Four days then.

BACKSPACE: No--Australia's bidding for two years from now.

MUNCHY: I don't know if I'd want to go to another con with that AntiFan fellow. I don't quite like him.

BACKSPACE: Well, the Con Committee certainly must. Wasn't it touching last night when they took up a collection to add to the Acronym Fund and send him on to Greenland?

UMPKIN: Yeah, and they said that someday they might even have enough money to bring him back.

COLOPHON: Maybe in Flushing?

BACKSPACE: What?

COLOPHON: The next worldcon, of course. What else have we been talking about? Where's it going to be?

BACKSPACE: I don't know--it could be anywhere.

COLOPHON: Orlando?

EGO SCAN: Could be.

UMPKIN: Miami Beach?

BACKSPACE: Could be.

MUNCHY: Cuba?

COLOPHON: Well--could be.

SONG: WORLDCON'S COMING

COLOPHON: Could be
UMPKIN: Ghu knows
BACKSPACE: There's a con
Looking for
EGO SCAN: Any open hotel door
MUNCHY: Everyone goes!

UMPKIN & COLO.: It may come rocketing down through the clouds
Drawing the crowds
ALL: Do you suppose?
Who knows?

MUNCHY: It's only one year away
Where it is who can say
It's everyone's dream
I've got a feeling there's a biddable site
Party tonight
Twelve seventeen!

BACKSPACE: Where's the con gonna be
COLOPHON: Maybe Boston or D.C.?
ALL: Just have to wait--
EGO SCAN: Worldcon's coming
I don't know
Where it is
But it is
Gonna be great

ALL: Kazoos are humming
The next worldcon is coming--
CHARLIE: WHO CARES?

UMPKIN: It's only one year away
EGO SCAN & BACK: Where it is, who can say?
COLOPHON: But I'll be there--
EGO SCAN: But I'll be there--
ALL: But we'll be there!!

((Enter from left FILK, COMEBACK, FAUNCH, and
GITTAR. FILK's nose is buried deep in a
fanzine with more stashed under each arm.))

COMEBACK: And I didn't believe her at first, but she kept on
insisting, and you know, she's right--a set of moose
antlers really does make all the difference.
((notices CHARLIE for the first time))
Hey, Charlie, what's the matter with you?

CHARLIE: Those fanzine fans over there have been talking dirty.

FAUNCH: What are they saying?

CHARLIE: "Sloe gin and cherry kool-aid."

FAUNCH: Filthy beasts.

FILK (looking up): Fanzine fans? Hey, those are the people I've been looking for!

GITTAR: I didn't realize fanzine fans talked dirty.

COMEBACK: I didn't realize they talked. Hey, wait a minute--those were the guys that threw the party last night. The wild party.

FAUNCH: You mean the one they called the hotel detective to close down?

COMEBACK: Nah--I mean the one they called in the National Guard to close down!

FILK: I've been looking everywhere for you guys! You forgot these fanzines at my party, and I thought maybe you'd want them back.

EGO SCAN: So that's where they were. I thought the lime jello had eaten them.

FILK: I was sort of glancing through them this morning, while I was waiting for my breakfast to get cold, and I found this article in yours and got to reading it. I wonder if maybe I could, uh, borrow this issue for a few days?

EGO SCAN: You can keep it if you want to--I brought some extras along to distribute at the con. Of course, if you put out a zine of your own, I'd be glad to trade with you.

FILK: Oh, gee--I wouldn't know how to even start putting one out. . . .

EGO SCAN: It's easy! Utility Bill!

((Enter UTILITY BILL from right. He reaches into backpack and pulls out a typewriter, stencils, a stapler, and a collating rack, each of which he loads in turn into the arms of the bewildered FILK.))

EGO SCAN: You see, now all we have to do is to find a table without a body sleeping on it, and I'll get you all started. The next apa deadline is only two weeks away, so I'd suggest that the first thing you. . .

((Voice trails off, as EGO SCAN and the other FANZINE FEN have by this time ushered FILK and the other CON FEN off right. CHARLIE remains alone on stage for a moment.))

((Enter TONY, suitcase in hand, looking dejected and furtive, from stage left.))

CHARLIE: Tony?

TONY: Charlie!! Please pretend you haven't seen me.

CHARLIE: I'm not sure I can see anything this morning. But why? What are you doing?

TONY: I'm trying to check out.

CHARLIE: But you're our con chair! You can't leave! Tony-- what's the matter.

TONY: I'm really down, Charlie. My life just seems so--I don't know--meaningless. I was up all night thinking about--well--

CHARLIE: Tony--you don't mean--

TONY: Yes, I'm open to suggestions for amusingly fannish ways of committing suicide.

CHARLIE: Suicide? What a relief! I thought you were going to garfiate!

TONY: I haven't been able to really concentrate on this convention. I spent all Friday night putting out a fanzine instead of running things, so I had to work my beanie off all Saturday to put the con back together again. Now I'm just exhausted. For all I know, the SFRA could be planning to take over the parties tonight and spend the evening counting split infinitives. And the worst part of this whole mess is that my fanzine wasn't even a good fanzine. You saw it. You know. I've given up any right I ever had for you to respect me.

CHARLIE (sincerely): Tony--if it's any consolation--we never did, you know. . . .

TONY: I was tempted and I fell--and I didn't even fall gracefully. So much for my sensitive fannish grace. I've made my decision, Charlie. I've failed as a Minneapolis fan. I can never go back. I've decided to take the Ultimate Step.

CHARLIE: Tony--oh, no. . .

TONY: Yes. I'm moving to St. Paul. None of you will ever see me again.

((MARIA, suitcase in hand, enters from right, unseen by TONY.))

TONY: I'll drop out of fandom--try to live down my past. Maybe I'll even try reading science fiction again. Anyway, I'll never run another con. One day into my worldcon and I went off the deep end.

MARIA (quietly): If you'd gone off the shallow end, you might have hurt your head.

TONY (turning): Maria! What are you...
((turns back to CHARLIE))
Charlie, would you please leave for a moment?

CHARLIE: Hell, no! I can get a great filksong verse out of this situation!

MARIA: Sloe gin and cherry kool-aid, Charlie. Rum and strawberry yogurt. Creme de menthe and near beer. Everclear and iced instant coffee. . .

((each suggestion increases CHARLIE's discomfort; by the last, he is staggering rapidly off, hands over mouth, gagging.))

Hello, Tony.

TONY: Hello, Maria. I was hoping I wouldn't see you again.

MARIA: I know. I didn't want to see you again, either.

TONY: It's not that I didn't want to see you. I just thought it would be easier this way.

MARIA: You're cute when you blither.
((Smiles. No reaction from TONY.))
It's supposed to work. What are you doing with that suitcase?

TONY: If you were listening, you know. I'm checking out and I'm leaving fandom. I didn't want to run into you--didn't want to have to face you. Because you showed me I don't quite belong in fandom.

MARIA: I'm sorry, Tony, I don't know what you mean.

TONY: Why do you have your suitcase?

MARIA: The same reason. . . . Two days of worldcon is enough. I thought I'd better leave fandom before I become too hopelessly silly. After all, I did just come for the programming, you know. And if I go home now I can always catch it later on the video tapes. . . . Goodbye, Tony.

((Turns to go. TONY calls out hesitantly.))

TONY: Maria--I believed what you said about fanzines. . . .

MARIA (turns back): And I believed what you said about parties. But it seems you didn't tell me everything.

TONY: I even tried putting out a fanzine of my own. But everybody told me it was a crudzine. I didn't mean to put out a crudzine--What exactly did I tell you about parties?

MARIA: I thought I would meet Tucker, and he would give me an article for my fanzine. And I did meet him, but all he gave me was a taste of this bottle he was passing around--What did I tell you about fanzines?

TONY: I thought it would be an instant party--only people would never run out of booze, and I wouldn't have to make an ice cube run or put on a lampshade or anything. But it wasn't much of a party.--What was wrong with Tucker's bottle? We bought them for him ourselves.

MARIA: It made me totally lose control! I got--Silly!! I didn't really mean to. I'd intended to wait right there by the door until Anita brought you back to me. I guess I forgot. . . . Tony, where is Anita?

TONY: I don't know. I haven't seen her since she took over running my con on Friday night. She's probably still out SMOFing at the coffee shop. She didn't even look at my fanzine!

MARIA: Let me look at your fanzine, Tony.

((A long pause. At last TONY opens his suitcase; takes out an attache case which he opens, removing a file folder which he opens, removing the last copy on earth of IDEA--which he hands to MARIA, who reads it as TONY repacks and resnaps and relocks.))

TONY: And?

MARIA: Tony--this is a crudzine.

TONY: That's what everybody already said. Thanks, Maria.

((Turns again to go. MARIA continues.))

MARIA: But--as crudzines go--it's not too bad. You spelled several of the shorter words right, and you remembered to put fluid in your mimeo; and you didn't get any Brad Parks artwork. Tony, for a first try, this is dreck--but it's almost mediorre dreck. I'm very impressed.

TONY: Uh--you are?

MARIA: Absolutely. Do you have fifty extra copies of this? I'd like to run it through my apa.

TONY: Well--I'm a little short on extra copies right now. I suppose I could run some more off. But what do you mean by your apa? You just said you were dropping out of fandom.

MARIA: That's right--I forgot for a moment.

((another pause))

Tony--is there something about that bottle that Tucker drinks out of that makes people psychotic?

TONY: Well--Robert Bloch thinks so, but what would he know about psychos? Why do you ask?

MARIA: At first I just tried a couple of sips, and the next thing I knew I was doing the strangest things--not like myself at all. Tony, after three swallows I was singing "Your Mother Swims After Troopships" at the top of my voice!

TONY: So?

MARIA: My mother can't even swim! And after five, I almost joined up with an expedition to go liberate the swimming pool, and I don't ordinarily get involved with any kind of politics. And then I took a few more--and after eight I started to get really silly. And that was just Friday

night! I couldn't even begin to tell you what I did last night. So I think it's time to drop out of fandom until I can live down the shame. But that doesn't mean that you have to, Tony. I think you have a lot of potential, and I'm sure whoever takes over the apa after me will be glad to have you contribute.

TONY: I'd rather you stayed around as O.E. of the apa--I don't think I could give this to just anybody. . . . I did spell a lot of the words right, didn't I?

MARIA: You've let yourself get entirely too tense about a simple fanzine--it happens to all of us, Tony. You tried, and you shouldn't worry if it wasn't just the way you wanted. So long as you remember not to send a copy to Buck Coulson, you'll probably live through this and go on to be a perfectly good fanzine fan.

TONY: I suppose I can try--but you still haven't explained why you're checking out. What could you have done Saturday night that was so terrible?

MARIA: Oh, Tony, it was horrible. And even if you could forgive me, Anita never could.

TONY: Maria--what was it?

MARIA: Tony, after my second bottle, I went around--pinching people in the elevator! And that's just not like me. I've never done anything like that before and I'm leaving before anyone else hears about it. Goodbye, Tony.

TONY: Oh, is that all? Maria, that happens at every convention! Why just last year at the library con, Riff got drunk and pinched some strange woman on the elevator! And the year before last, he got really drunk and pinched himself. You're over-reacting. When you start thinking that the elevator is pinching you, you'll know it's time to stop. You haven't even begun to get silly.

MARIA: I was sillier these last two nights than I ever thought I could be. I think it's time I leave before I change completely.

TONY: Well, if it makes you feel any better, I was more sercon Friday night that I ever thought I could be either. If I can live through it, so can you. . . . Hey--we did live through it, didn't we? It's Sunday already! We've

both changed so much? Why should we say goodbye to each other just because we've traded monomanias? Let's both run off someplace where the fans that know us will never find us!!

MARIA: No, Tony, You're right--we don't have to run from each other, but we don't have to run from the rest of fandom either. If we can grow enough to make room for each other, so can they. After all, it's Sunday morning for all of us. And if they can make it through this convention, so can we. My fandom is your fandom, Tony. And your convention is my convention.

TONY: Your fandom, my fandom, our convention--

SONG: THERE'S A CON FOR US

TONY & MARIA: There's a con for us
Somewhere a con for us--
Beanies and sercon
Mundanes who stare
Wait for us--
Somewhere!

((Enter from left ANITA and RIFF, hand in hand.))

TONY, MARIA,
ANITA & RIFF: There are tracks to guide
To a slan shack where we'll hide.
Parties and programs of all degrees--
All fans love acting parodies--
Somehow!

((Enter all cast members from both sides,
CON FEN, FANZINE FEN, and OTHERS intermingled.))

ALL: Someday!
We'll pub the zines that we'd rather!
We'll run a conbid together!
Somewhere!

There's a con for us--
Out there a zine for us--
You're a confan, that's halfway there,
You're a zinefan, that's almost there--
That's where!
Here's where!
SOMEWHERE!!!!!!!

((THE END--CURTAIN, LIGHTS, OR WHATHAVEYOU.))

APPENDIX A

GUIDE TO PERFORMING THE MUSIC

by David Emerson

The original music for WEST SIDE STORY by Leonard Bernstein is often quite complex and reflects the elaborate sort of staging common in professional Broadway musicals. This fannish version is necessarily somewhat simpler in staging, instrumentation, and demands on the singers. As a consequence, some of the musical numbers do not include long introductions, endings, instrumental bridges, dance sequences, etc., that appear in the original.

In preparing the musical numbers for performance at Minicon 12, we had to make a number of changes in the score to accommodate fannish versions. The score we used was the \$15 vocal score, with all the music--prologue dances, scene changes, incidentals, and all--arranged for piano and vocal parts (in other words, not a conductor's score with all the separate instrumental parts written out). It is published by G. Schirmer, Inc. and Chappell & Co., Inc., New York. References in this appendix are made to that score.

ACT I, Scene 1

"I Feel Fannish" to tune of "I Feel Pretty." Start on page 137 at the first measure of the bottom line. Play the section in repeats twice only. Play straight through to the end of this number.

ACT I, Scene 2

"When You're a Fan" to the tune of "When You're a Jet." The cue is Riff's line "...concentrate on the important things in life." Music begins with the second line of page 16, in this manner: after Comeback's first "Boozing!" line, play the C#-D-F of the first measure and the Bb octaves of the second, then hold the eighthnote rest while Filk says "Leching!", then play the middle of the second measure; hold the next eighth-note rest while Comeback delivers his/her second line, then play the last notes of the second measure and all but the last notes of the third. Hold the rest for the line "SMOFing!", then play the last notes of the third measure and the first (the bass octave) of the fourth measure; similarly for the line "Singing!" and the middle of the fourth measure. Comeback's last "Boozing!" line is followed by the last notes

(treble chord) of the fourth measure and the first bass octave of the fifth. Wait until Riff delivers the last line before the song proper; then play the middle notes (treble chord, bass octave) of the fifth measure, resolving to Bb octaves. NOTE: Except for holding for Riff's line, the rhythm should be very similar to the original opening of the song on page 15.

The song proceeds with the third line on page 16 and runs unaltered through page 18. Play the first measure of page 19 and then cut directly to the first measure on page 22. (Use E above middle C as the upbeat note.) In the second measure of the second line of page 22, resolve to octaves of C, just as on page 15.

Continue to the end of the song. On the last page (p.25), remove the 6/8 section entirely, skipping directly from the third measure, third line to the third measure, fourth line. This shortens the last note so that the singers won't run out of breath.

ACT II, Scene 1

"Gee, Editor Bova" to the tune of "Gee, Officer Krupke." This is played pretty much exactly as written. In the Minicon production, we found it advisable, because of the stage action during the song, to cut measures 4-8 on p. 165, measures 3-6 on page 168, measures 3-6 on pages 171, and measures 3-6 on page 174. But with different blocking and stage movements, it might be better to leave these in; this of course depends on the production.

I played this one on a Hammond organ, to give it a "calliope" sound, and the quote from "When You're a Jet" (e.g. page 168, line 3, measure 4) was done on a synthesizer.

ACT II, Scene 2

"Minicon" to the tune of "America." Begin on page 76. On the cue line, "We got Minicon!", glissando down the keyboard to the C's that begin the first measure. Play to the bottom of page 77, take the first ending, and return to the top of page 76. Keep doing this until the song is finished. On the last note of the last chorus, just hit a C major chord or a bunch of C's in octaves, and hold it.

"Tonight" to the tune of "Tonight." On the cue line, begin with the Molto Allegro on page 63. When you get to the Molto Meno Mosso on page 66, keep the rhythm and tempo going; also keep going through the following section marked "Slowly." The song ends at the Molto

Meno Mosso on page 69--I had to devise an ending somehow, and you probably will, too. What I did was to play the A major chord of measure 1, line 2, roll the bass octaves, move the right hand up to a B major chord, then an A major chord in the first inversion (continuing the bass roll). Find what sounds best to you.

"A Fan Like That"/"I Am a Fan" to the tunes of "A Boy Like That"/"I Have a Love", page 180. Same as the original until page 184, third line--the vocal line skips the F# in the first measure and the second A in the second measure. Skip the first measure of the bottom line completely. Cut directly from the end of page 184 to the fifth measure of page 187. Then continue until page 189; cut from the end of the sixth measure to the top of the next page (190). Here the two women sing in harmony to the end. End by playing a G major chord on the downbeat of the fifth measure of line 2, and hold it.

ACT III, Scene 1

"Make of Our Con" to the tune of "One Hand, One Heart." Begin with the third line on page 106. You will need some sort of introduction: possibly the previous two measures, possibly just a single Bb to give the singers the pitch; I used measures 2-4 of line 2 on page 108. Play through the fourth measure on page 107, then repeat back to the third line of 106 for the second verse. For the third verse, continue on p. 107-108. End with the fifth measure, line 2, on page 108 (don't play the stuff in the high treble). Harmonies on the third verse can be taken from p. 109-110, transposed to the proper key.

"Idea" to the tune of "Maria," page 55. Begin with the third line, playing as incidental music under dialogue. The rest played as written, except for line 3, p. 57; add a measure between measures 2 and 3 so that the following section is sung as the second verse. (An alternate way to do the same thing would be to repeat from measure 2 line 3, page 57 back to the top of page 56, then on the second playing cut from the end of the second line on page 57 to the fifth measure on page 59.)

ACT II, Scene 2

"Worldcon's Coming" to the tune of "Something's Coming," page 27. Cut from the end of line 2, p.29, to the beginning of line 3, p.32. At the end, continue to vamp the last measure while the chorus sings "But I'll be there" the second time; then play each beat slowly while the chorus sings (also slowly, in the same tempo) "But we'll be there!" The last note ("there!") is sung on an A above the D ("be"), and the piano should play a D in the bass and maybe in the high treble as well.

"There's a Con For Us" to the tune of "Somewhere," p.156. Exactly as written. Again, there should be some sort of introduction, even if just a single B natural to give pitch (which is what we used).

APPENDIX B

THE TRUE SECRET HISTORY OF MIDWEST SIDE STORY

by Denny Lien

It was ~~A dark and stormy night~~ Sunday, April 18, 1976: the last day of Minicon 11. On the evening before, Minn-STF had presented a performance of the fannish musical THE MIMEO MAN. Several months worth of rehearsals and preparation for that had just ended, and most of the cast members were relaxing, thinking they were now off the hook.

Enter Susan Ryan and Sandy Allen, two of said cast members, who had other ideas.

At the post-con party that evening in the Bozo Bus Building (yes, Virginia, there really is a Bozo Bus Building), Ryan and Allen button-holed every local fan they could find with news of the new fannish musical they had just plotted out (as good a way to spend a winding-down con Sunday afternoon as any other). Under the influence of post-con excitement--and, possibly, the remaining party supplies--various of said fans expressed interest.

And, in the nature of said fannish projects, nothing more was done about Making A Start for almost five months.

In the interim, Sandy Allen gaffiated, stoutly insisting to the last that her only contribution to the scenario had been the title and that it was all Susan Ryan's fault. Ryan cleverly waited until Big Mac to remind everyone else of their promises. Since it is hard to pretend you have gaffiated while you are in the process of attending a worldcon, further losses were minimized, and at some time in late September a hard core of crazies actually sat down and began to write.

The sessions were held every Sunday evening at the home of one or another local fan, with attendance varying from week to week. Ryan, myself, and Jerry Stearns were the most regular and/or verbose contributors, but at least ten other fans (listed in credits) had a hand or two, or at least an occasional finger, in the final product. Virtually every song or bit of dialog is a collaboration among three or more of us. (Exceptions: I will lay sole claim to "Gee, Editor Bova"--minus two words--and to the IDEA prop crudzine distributed at the performance. The later was written in three sittings with large quantities of beer consumed before each one to encourage inspiration, typos, and/or inspired typos.) The songs were completed first, after some five or six sessions, after which we went back to square one and began on the dialog. The last scene was completed on the afternoon of Saturday, December 24th. Anyone who finds the Easter-to-Christmas gestation period of the script to be Symbolically Meaningful is welcome to tell us how; we don't know.

Tryouts were held on New Year's Day of 1978 (another holiday) and rehearsals on almost every following Sunday afternoon and frequent Tuesday evenings. Sunday song rehearsals were held at David Emerson's apt. in the Bozo Bus (said apt. having two things useful for said rehearsals, viz piano and Emerson) and Sunday blocking/acting rehearsals at Scott Imes' apt. in the Bozo; evening rehearsals during the week were held mostly in the Ryan/Lien apt., which lacked either piano or much space for blocking, but did have the advantage of a dog and one or two cats to pet during breaks.

In the process of writing, the original scenario had been modified quite a bit and our more grandiose conceptions--cast of dozens! all singing, all dancing! lots of props! intricate subplots!--got scaled down to something we could--just barely, perhaps--handle without cracking up (at least not all at once). The resulting structure can perhaps be described as Stark, but with lots of silly bits festooning the scaffolding. With *The Moral* thus sticking out so blatantly ("Gee Dad, it's a ~~Waltz~~ play with a Moral"), we might have expected some disagreements with same. We got our first one when one of the local fans and cast members complained that in the play as written, the fanzine fans came off as admirable and the con fans as nerds: obviously we were subconsciously biased in favor of the fanzine fans. We worried about this for a few days and muttered about a rewrite, at which time we received out of the blue a letter from several East Coast fans who had read the script at a con and felt that we had depicted the convention fans as admirable and the fanzine fans as nerds and were obviously biased in favor of the con fans. Thus reassured that we must be doing something right, we stopped muttering about rewrites.

Final dress rehearsal was held the Sunday before Minicon 12 at a church hall in St. Paul, and a tape made of same by Minn-STF's own Captain Video, Scott Imes. Final final dress was held at 8 in the morning the Saturday of Minicon; some of the cast members were rumored to be alive in spite of the time but there was no confirmation of this except in the fact that we did indeed walk, talk, dance and sing--which by this time could have been sheer reflex action. And at last, on the evening of April 9, 1977, MIDWEST SIDE STORY had its first and only (to date, anyway) public performance to an enthusiastic audience. Captain Video again taped the show, unfortunately having some equipment problems which required splicing in of scenes from the previous dress rehearsals in the finished tape, and causing the complete loss of one song ("A Fan Like That/I Am a Fan."). Inquiries for use of the tape should be sent to Scott Imes, c/o the Minn-STF box number.

Plans to have the sale copies ready by the end of Minicon 12 turn out to have been a little over-optimistic--however, it is now only March 9th of 1978, so with luck this should be out by Minicon 13--just. (You know how it is. . . .)

And after a mere one year rest, Susan Ryan--director, producer, chief plotter and writer, and costar--is once again talking about this great idea she has for a show for Minicon 14. Old Never Again Ryan. . . .

"What, never?"

"Well--hardly ever. . . ."

ERRATA

- p. ii -- The following listing should appear under "OTHERS:"
Con Photographer ; Al Kuhfeld
- p. 35 -- Insert the following lines at the end of the song:
The most beautiful zine I've ever seen,
I-DE-A!
- p. 46 -- Insert the following line just before "It's supposed to work."
That's a line that Anita taught me for ice-breaking.



"And a vun, und a two, und a seventy-three..."



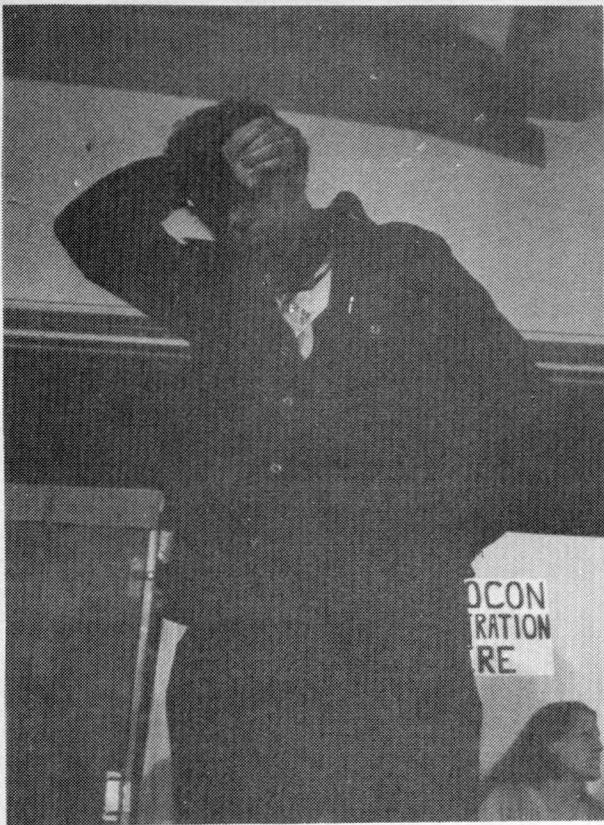
"I'm looking for some sci-fi nuts."



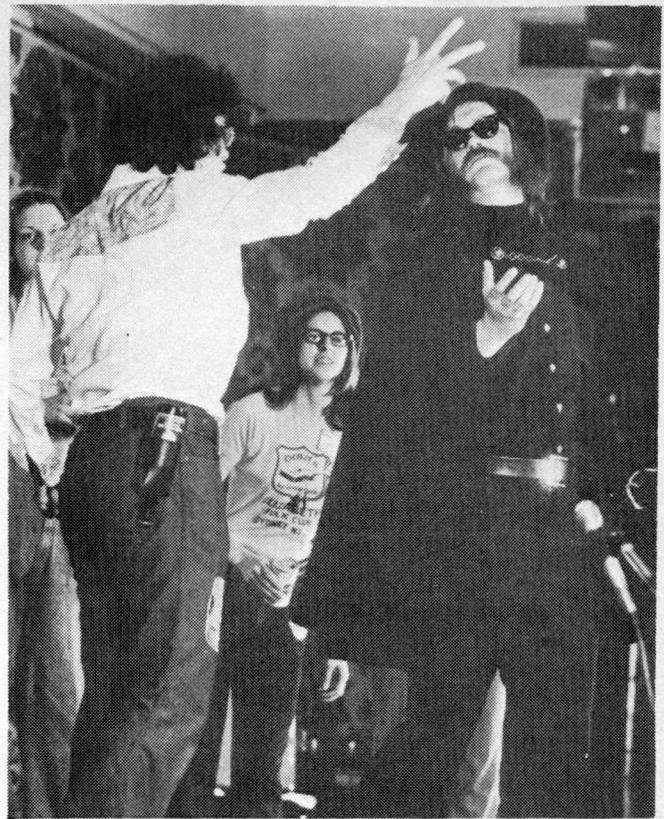
"CURSES! They can't sing at me that way!"



"Gnorzaplutschkmbke%tk'mwe..."



"Just tell it to my slushpile reader!"



"We'll take MacDonald's and stay here!"



"I have to write up the first day before I forget it."

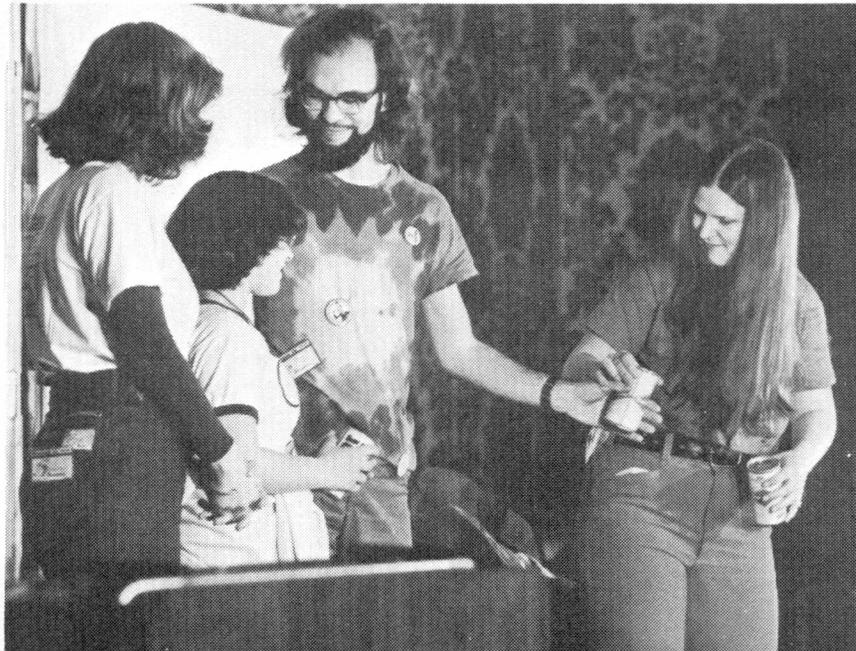


"...it was only your apa he was interested in?"

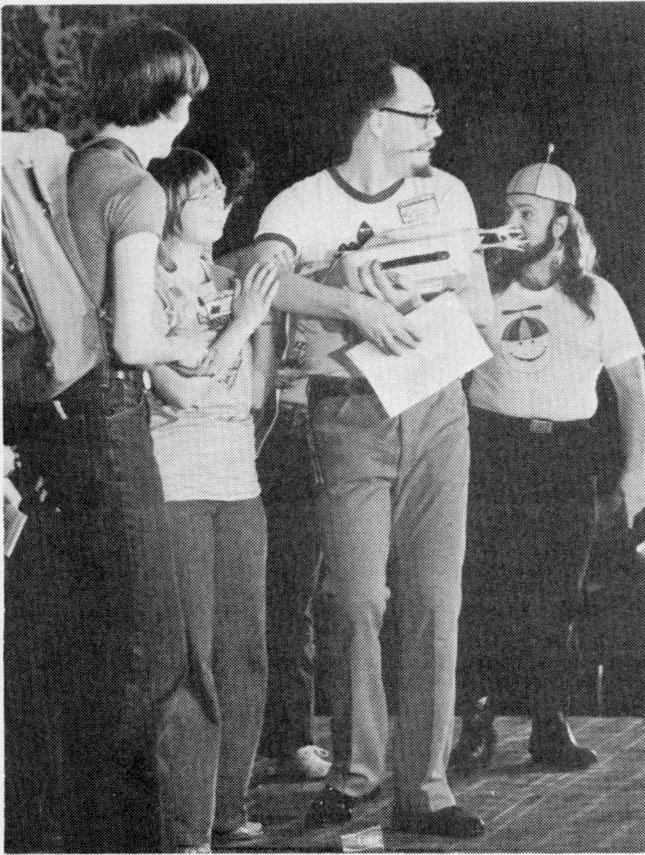


MICKEY: . We lost the second reel of ZARDOZ!

COMEBACK: How can you tell?



"I figure we can take my van..."



"...and I'll get you all started."



"I was tempted and I fell--and I didn't even fall gracefully."

So much for my sensitive fannish grace..."



"All fans love acting parodies..."

Secret Decoder Ring Page for Photos:

Page One, Top Left: Emerson
Page One, Top Right: Friauf
Page One, Bottom Left: Lien
Page One, Bottom Right: Gellman

Page Two, Top Left: LaVelle, Appelbaum, Kerr, Lien
Page Two, Top Right: Dickson, LaVelle
Page Two, Bottom Left: Hoyme, Valois
Page Two, Bottom Right: Valois, Ryan

Page Three, Top: Kuhfeld, Ryan, Appelbaum, LaVelle, Hoyme, Ketter
Page Three, Bottom: Maloney, Lessinger, Wood, Spooner

Page Four, Top Left: Digre, Johnson, Kuhfeld, Tatge
Page Four, Top Right: Hoyme, Ketter
Page Four, Bottom: Hoyme, Stearns, Ryan

Back Cover: Hoyme, Wood, Valois, Stearns, Ryan, LaVelle, Spooner?, Ketter,
Kuhfeld, Lessinger, Tatge, Kerr, Digre, Gellman, Friauf

Photo layout by Keith G. Hauer-Lowe.

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"You've let yourself get entirely too tense about a simple fanzine. . . ."

MINNEAPOLIS IN 1973!



Midwestside Story

Notes

David Dyer-Bennet
28-Feb-2017

This is *not* an electronic archive copy of the 1978 print edition. While the raw scans of that edition are available in the Minnesota Science Fiction Society archives (and probably on their website somewhere; start at <http://mnstf.org>), for *this* version I cleaned up the cover and photograph pages somewhat, including hiding staple holes and such, and I corrected such typos in the original as I noticed while proof-reading the OCR. I probably missed OCR errors, and I really hope I didn't actively introduce any new errors. Oh, I also fixed the spelling of one name in the credits (it's "Doug Friauf").

One technical note on the scanning: I scanned the front page at 300dpi in 24-bit RGB color, the photo pages in 8-bit grayscale, and the text pages in B&W at 600dpi. That seems to produce cleaner data for the OCR to work with from this somewhat age-browned "twilltone" mimeo paper that wasn't white to begin with.

DD-B