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# COSMOPOLIS

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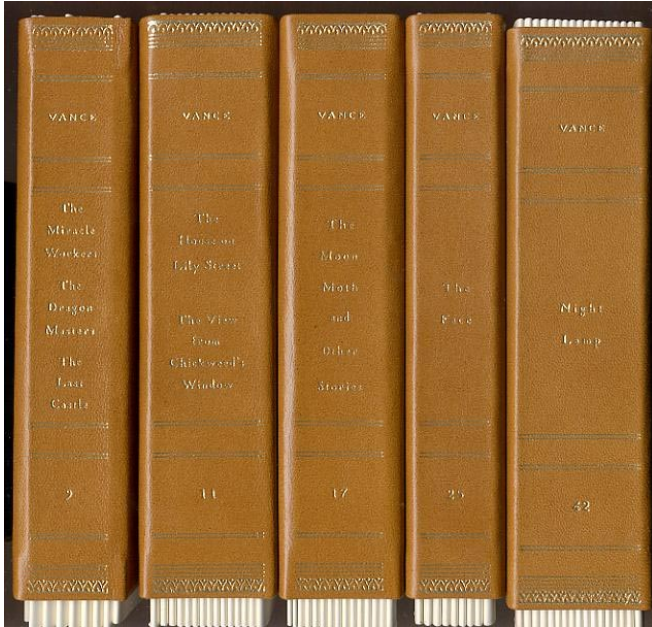
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Number 36



March, 2003

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Scan of spine-only 'foil-stamp' samples of some Wave 1 covers, with un-cut, sewn and unsewn proofs inside.

## Work Tsar Status Report

as of Feb. 28, 2003

by Joel Riedesel

### WAVE 1

Wave 1 is all but complete. One volume has a final errata check to undergo and will then be ready for printing. Packaging and mailing are on schedule. I'm confident we will see these books soon.

### WAVE 2

Work is progressing nicely. We still have one text in special handling and have started contingency planning on how to deal with it. This special text is *The Stark*. Once we get that text input, TI will be straightforward. If anyone has a copy of it, please let me know; we are having some difficulty obtaining a copy for input.

There are only 2 texts left in the Monkey phase and they are in process. The final pre-TI step is Techno-Proof and there are only 7 texts currently in that step.

TI continues to rapidly complete one text after another. There are 9 texts in TI that are not yet assigned while 27 texts are in-process. Of those in-process texts special thanks go to Linnéa for completing her TI work on *Tschai*.

Board Reviewers are also busy trying to keep up with TI. There are 9 texts in BR. Four texts are undergoing Implementation and one text is in Security Check.

Composition also has their plate full. One text, *Throy*, is in initial composition while 7 texts are in various stages of Composition Review.

Post-proofers have been ramping up as well. There are currently six texts in Post-proofing and four texts in post post-proof composition updating and review.

Two texts, *Where Hesperus Falls* and *The Deadly Isles*, have completed all stages and are ready for volume composition.

To sum some of this up, there are 10 texts that have not yet entered TI. 36 texts in TI and 32 texts that are post-TI. And 2 texts that are complete.

It is my sincere hope that we see the Wave 1 volumes before Wave 2 volume composition begins! (Of course, if

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that doesn't happen, I can only presume it means that we excelled in our Wave 2 work.)

Subscriptions to the 44-volume VIE are still available, as an extra printing of Wave 1 books will occur after Wave 2 printing. So it's not too late to order your set!



## The Milan Packing Caper

*by Patrick Dusoulier*

The Wave 1 volumes will be ready within a few days, as I'm writing this (9th March 2003). They will still have to be carefully packed and sent to our subscribers. This is the objective of the MPC, which will take place near Milan, from Monday 23rd till Friday 27th March. See the details below . . .

### 1/ Participants

Eleven Volunteers, six nationalities, coming from five countries:

England:

John Edwards  
Luke McMath  
Tim Stretton

France:

Patrick Dusoulier  
Paul Rhoads  
Thomas Rydbeck

Germany:

Andreas Irle

Holland:

Henri Gooren  
Evert-Jan De Groot

USA:

Brian Gharst  
Billy Webb (with wife Gail)

Three of these Volunteers will stay until Thursday; the eight others will stay until Saturday morning.

### 2/ Accommodation

Travelling expenses will be subsidized by VIE for five of the Volunteers, the other six will pay out of their own pocket.

A reasonable hotel accommodation has been selected, within walking distance of the bindery where the work will take place, in Cologno Monzese. The daily cost for a double room is 60 USD (breakfast included . . .). This will be subsidized by VIE. Some of us prefer sleeping alone (or at least, prefer a single room) and will pay for the necessary upgrade (20 bucks/day).

### 3/ Work Organization

The objective of the week is quite simple: Sfera is producing 490 sets of Wave 1 (435 Reader's, 55 Deluxe), which means 10,780 books to pack in 490 crates, making sure those crates are sent to the correct destination. As I said, very simple . . . 100 crates a day, roughly. But things are usually very simple until you get into the details of how to do them . . . As the Chinese proverb says: "Things are always simple for those who don't have to do them."

So we've gone down into the details, through vast exchanges of mails, during which I have found myself being 'promoted' to Work Organizer. Here's how we see things currently, fully aware that, just as in military affairs, nothing ever works exactly according to plan . . . Plans are useful, though, to try and cover as many angles as possible, and be prepared for adjustments once on the battlefield.

#### 3.1/ Preliminary work

To ensure a maximum protection of the VIE volumes, each set will be packed into 4 distinct boxes, those boxes then being put into a single crate (with styrofoam lining on all sides, top and bottom). We need to divide the 22 volumes in 4 piles of equal height (as equal as possible, let's say), with the best distribution possible in order to minimize the average weight borne by the volumes. I will be using a simple heuristic approach to do this:

a/ Take a complete set, and sort out the 22 volumes by decreasing thickness.

b/ The thickest one goes to pile 1, second thickest to pile 2, third to pile 3, fourth to pile 4 . . . and the fifth also goes to pile 4, sixth to 3, seventh to 2, etc. The ninth goes into pile 1 as well as the eighth. I call this 'the boustrophedon allocation' . . .

c/ You then end up with two piles of five volumes, and two piles of six. They may be of slightly different heights, but it's easy to adjust them with two or three swaps between piles.

Here's a dummy example (volume thickness indicated here is relative, not absolute . . .)

Volume Thickness	1st attempt	Box 1	Box 2	Box 3	Box 4
22		22	22	20	19
22		15	16	19	19
20		14	12	12	12
19		10	10	10	10
19		9	9	9	9
19				9	9
16					
15	Total	70	69	79	78
14					
12					
12	Reshuffled	Box 1	Box 2	Box 3	Box 4
12		22	22	20	19
10		19	19	15	16
10		14	12	10	12
10		10	12	10	9
10		9	9	10	9
9				9	9
9					
9	Total	74	74	74	74
9					
9					
9					
296					

Once this is done, we have the volume numbers to go into each separate box, and in which order they have to be set.

### 3.2/ Boxing

Putting the volumes in the Boxes is a task for 4 teams of 2 Volunteers, each team for a Box, working at a single table. On each table, we will tape as many sheets of papers as there are volumes to be Boxed (i.e. 5 or 6), with the Volume number written on each sheet, set side by side, in decreasing volume thickness from left to right, as worked out in the preliminary. The volumes to be processed will be set in front of those sheets. This is an important precaution: relying simply on people's memory gives a real risk of putting the wrong volume in a Box, or the wrong order. The initial process will work as follows:

a/ The Boxers go to the Storage Area, where the individual volumes are set on pallets (10 of them), and fetch 6 of each required volume number, laying them on their table in front of the corresponding sheet. This walking back and forth at regular intervals will do the

Boxers a lot of good: they will need to un-crimp their legs and straighten their backs from time to time. Why 6? Because less than that is of course less efficient . . . and more than that can be dangerous: the more volumes you carry at a time, the more risks you take of dropping them; and the higher the pile on the Boxing table, the more chances it has of being accidentally pushed down to the floor, damaging the books. Still, 8 might well do also. This is something we will adjust on the spot if we are below target rate.

b/ Each Boxer takes a volume, starting from the left, checks it (general aspect, printing inside . . .), wraps it in paper, and puts it in his current Box.

c/ When all volumes have been set in the Box, the Box has to be marked. Each table will have a number (1 to 4) and the two distinct editions are simply flagged as: DLX for Deluxe, and RDR for Reader's. So a completed Box will typically carry the indication:

DLX-3, or RDR-1, etc.

This marking, done with a felt pen, will be set on a side of the Box, and on the top as well. Since it doesn't take any additional time to do this, the DLX markings will be done in green, while the RDR markings will be done in red . . . It's not too sophisticated, and will facilitate immediate identification.

### 3.3/ Crating/Packing

A fifth team of two will be in charge of this. 'Crating' means unfolding the crates (they're flat initially), building up the crates and padding them inside with styrofoam sheets.

'Packing' means putting 4 Boxes in a Crate, whereby you end up with a Package . . . With the markings put on the Boxes by the Boxers, there should be little room for error at this Packing stage: take 4 Boxes DLX-1 to DLX-4, and you have now a DLX Package . . .

The Packers will mark each completed Package with the same code: DLX (green) or RDR (red), on the top-left corner(s) of the Packages. We will see on the spot if it's really necessary, convenient and not too time-consuming to mark all 4 sides . . . and the top!

### 3.4/ Allocating/Dispatching

Here comes what is now called 'The Bookie' . . . That's me!

Now that we have a reasonable amount of Packages, duly marked with the Edition they contain, and with utmost confidence that each Package contains 4 distinct Boxes with the same Edition (DLX or RDR), we must make sure they reach the right person at the right place. For this, a full list of Subscribers (including non-subscribers, you will see in a minute) is being prepared by Suan Yong. It contains:

Subscriber's VIE Account Number  
Subscriber's full Name and 1st name  
Delivery Area (see below)  
Edition Category (DLX or RDR, as above)

\* There may be several lines for one Subscriber, since some people have ordered several sets. The VIE account number is correspondingly suffixed by a letter (033A, 033B, etc.)

\* There are Non-subscribers too... Surprising? Not really.

First, we have Library Donations: they all have the same 'dummy' VIE account = 999. Since there are more than 26, the suffix will run into double lettering (999AA, 999AB, etc.)

And we have spare sets (21 RDR, 5 DLX) which will have to be divided between the US zone (John Foley) and the European zone (Paul Rhoads). A single dummy VIE account number has been allocated = 000, followed by a single letter. The division between the two recipients will be worked out in the Delivery Area coding...

The Delivery Area corresponds to the various means of expedition, with some sub-categories strictly for help at a later stage. Here goes:

a/ PKU: some subscribers will come to Milan to pick up their stuff.

b/ FDX: for the European Subscribers, expedition will be made using FedEx.

c/ The rest goes into a large container, which will eventually reach the blessed State of New Jersey, there to be dispatched to US subscribers, 'Foreign' subscribers (i.e. non-US, non-European...) and a small part to stay with John Foley. So, to help Bob Lacovara when he has to sort all these out, we will have three distinct markings, although they go to the same destination:

ULC: US Container for Local USA

UFR: US Container for Foreign subscribers

UNJ: US Container, to stay with John Foley (the spares)

UNA: US Container... address not available. Yes, we have currently two such cases...

Here's a rough breakdown by destination:

Europeans:

FDX + PKU: 126 RDR / 7 DLX

US Container:

ULC + UNA: 241 RDR / 41 DLX

UFR: 47 RDR / 2 DLX

Spares (to be divided between UNJ and PKU Subscriber 999): 21 RDR / 5 DLX

For a total printed: 435 RDR / 55 DLX

The Bookie's job will then be:

a/ Pick a Package, check the Edition Category (RDR or DLX).

b/ Pick a line in the list requiring this Edition Category. Mark the Package, after the EC marking, with the Delivery Area and the Subscriber number. For instance:

DLX - ULC - 086

or

RDR - PKU - 011

or

RDR - UFR - 000D

or whatever.

c/ Tick off the line in the list. Allocated. Well and good.

Additional work is then required:

\* in the case of PKU, the full name of the subscriber will be added to the marking.

\* in the case of FDX, a Return Address Label must be pasted (with Sfera's address) and the FDX special tag must be affixed, with the Subscriber's address. All this can be done at a later stage, as batch processing, since the Packages already carry all the necessary information.

\* in the case of UFR/ULC, we may also have to paste a Return Address label (with John Foley's address). I'd like to have full assurance of our global performance before undertaking additional tasks that could also be done in New Jersey.

Same for the UFR Packages: we might have to stick the Subscriber's address at this stage, and then again, we may be pressed for time.

#### 4/ Possible Adjustments Required

Again, we have to be realistic: facts are stubborn, and any plan has to bow to reality... Adjustments will have to be made. I have a few in mind already:

a/ If some Boxing tables fall behind the others:

This is most likely to happen, since two Boxing tables will have 6 volumes to Box, the others only 5... One solution is to transfer, from time to time, one of the 5-volumes Boxers to a six-volume table. Another solution is to swap Boxers between tables: move a faster Boxer from a fast table to a slower one, and vice-versa...

b/ If the Boxers are faster than the Craters/Packers:

If this is not the case already, the Boxers will take some of their time carrying their Boxes to the Packing Table... If they're already doing that, the slowest Boxer will move to the Crating/Packing table to lend a hand (and we will adjust the Boxing tables accordingly).

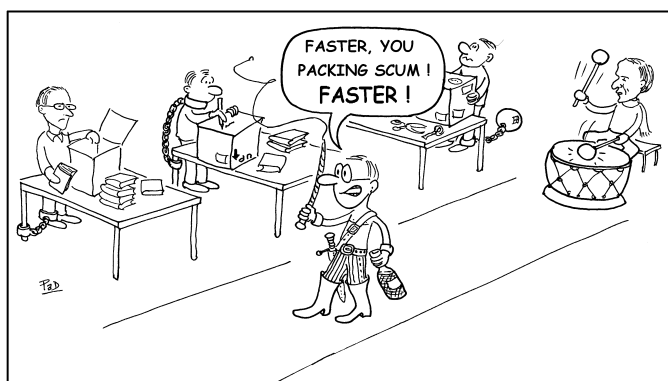
c/ If the Craters/Packers are faster than the Boxers:

If this is not the case already, the Packers will go and fetch the Boxes themselves. If this is the case already, one of the Packers will take some of his time fetching Volumes and bringing them to the Boxers.

d/ If Boxers and Packers are working smoothly at the same rhythm, but below target anyway...

This is called 'Shit Creek'... But we have paddles! We can reduce the number, and length, of coffee breaks, cigarette-breaks, restroom-breaks, and lunch-breaks... We can also increase the working hours. We can improve motivation (a prize for Best Boxer of the Day, Best Packer of the Day...). And there's always the good old method, the one that has worked wonders since the beginning of History: the *whip!* Being the Bookie, I will handle it myself...

Overall, I am confident that we will cope, the 11 of us. I am also quite aware that the way we will handle this operation eventually will be somewhat different from what we initially planned, but this is not a problem at all: at least, we are prepared to face the unexpected. This is the best we can do. I will probably write a short piece for COSMOPOLIS when all this is finished, describing how we actually worked... and we will all have a good laugh about these ludicrous plans anyway!



## A Note on *The Narrow Land*

by Richard Chandler

With Rob Friefeld as my second I completed TI work on *The Narrow Land* about the middle of last fall. Steve Sherman recently sent me a file named narro6-fin-v1-bis-ti.doc (containing a list of questions about the text which the PP team had raised) and asked me to check it for TI issues. All issues but one were examples of simple Jack-inconsistency (e.g., should we change <Preceptor of the Dark-Chill> to <Preceptor of Dark-Chill>). Clearly Board Review items. The one exception proved to be very interesting.

Let me backtrack a little. My TI evidence for *The Narrow Land* was just about as good as it gets: virtually every published edition (except the Coronet) of the story, including its original publication in *Fantastic* as well as the *Andromeda* comic book. Additionally there were two typescripts from the Mugar Library which I labeled MT1

(clearly the earlier, bearing Jack's original title, *The Clutch of the Careless One-Woman*, hand-corrected to *The Narrow Land*) and MT2. The only thing missing was the original holograph and MT1 was practically that, given how extensively it had been hand-corrected.

MT2 was fairly clean, sufficiently so that I was able to digitize it using the techniques honed by extensive DD work. I also digitized the *Fantastic* version. Thus I could easily use Word's 'Compare Documents' function to definitively determine where the various versions differed. They were fairly consistent. Oh, I had a couple of interesting 'saves'. For example, all published versions described the storm wall as <a *roll* of rain and a thick vapor lanced with lightning> while MT2 had <a *roil* of rain and a thick vapor lanced with lightning>. The choice is nuncupatory.

The interesting issue the PP team raised was Jack's apparent use of the word <marvelous>. Now all we Vance enthusiasts know the preferred spelling (as in *Rhialto the Marvellous*) and, in fact, I had caught this 'misspelling' during TI work, dismissing it because all published versions and MT2 unequivocally had: <"Who used these *marvelous* objects? Were there many Threes?"> (This passage occurs near the end of the story when Mazar the Final is showing Ern some of the artifacts of the earlier 'Three' culture.) Spurred by the PP question, I did what I should have done earlier: consulted MT1. The passage was typed: <"Who built these marvels? Were there many Threes?"> and then hand-corrected to <"Who used these *marvellous* objects? Were there many Threes?"> *Sacre bleu! Nom d'un chien!* (Julie, in *The Flesh Mask*)

Once again we have confirmation of the utility of our methods. I say: Without the obsessive nitpicking© imposed by our esteemed Editor-in-Chief we would simply be publishing another edition of Vance. To the members of the Post-Proofing team (David Reitsema, Gabriel Stein, Rod MacBeath, Chuck King, Fred Zoetmeyer, Greg Delson, Per Kjellberg, and Michael Mitchell) I say: Great catch, guys! You make us all look good!



## A Note on *The Houses of Iszm*

by Rob Friefeld

There are over 500 changes to the ACE text in the TI'd version. Most of these are a restoration of Jack Vance's phrasing and punctuation, which has been thoroughly conventionalized by the ACE editor:

ACE: The *Lhaiz* sailed up to the pier and two of the crew passed lines ashore while the others furled sail and cradled booms.

MS: The *Lhaiz* sailed up to the pier; two of the crew passed lines ashore; the others furled sail, cradled booms.

Not a startling difference at first glance. And yet, the original has the flavor of efficiency and expertise, whereas the ACE sounds like a bunch of guys fooling around with a boat. Multiply this effect by 500. The story is the same, but now it is sharply focused, as if you had just put on your glasses!

Here is a bit from the raid at Tjere Atoll, where the ACE is clumsy, almost illiterate. A sizzling bolt of energy from the raider mole has struck one of the great Iszic tree homes:

ACE: The tree toppled. The great pods, the leaf-terraces, the tendrils, the careful balconies—they whistled through the air and crashed in pitiful tangle. Iszic bodies hurled from the ruins, kicking and twisting.

MS: The tree toppled; the great pods, the leaf-terraces, the tendrils, the careful balconies—they whistled through the air, crashed—a pitiful tangle. Iszic bodies hurtled from the ruins, kicking and twisting, others limp.

Finally, here is Jack Vance on social engineering, circa 1951. The Earthman, Farr, wants the Iszics to sell seeds for their pod houses, which the trees produce by the millions, to cheaply house the masses on Earth. The Iszic are uninterested in commercializing the very essence of their soul:

Omon Bozhd spoke. "You really are irrational, Farr Sainh, if I may invest the word with its least offensive aura of meaning. Let me expatiate. On Earth you claim that a need exists for housing. On Earth there is also a surplus of wealth—a surplus so great that vast projects are generated by the impounded energy. This wealth could solve the problem of deficient housing in the twinkling of an eye—if those who controlled the wealth so desired. Since you understand this course of events to be unlikely, you turn your eye speculatively upon us relatively poor Iszics, hoping that we will prove less obdurate than the men of your own planet. When you find that we are absorbed in our own interests, you become resentful—and herein lies the irrationality of your position."

Farr laughed. "This is a distorted reflection of reality. We are wealthy, true enough. Why? Because we constantly try to maximize production and minimize effort. The Iszic houses represent this minimizing of effort."

This passage seems mild, but cuts to the heart of the matter. This wealth that some, with the best of intentions, are eager to redistribute: where does it come from? Would it be produced at all if bled off into futility? This

passage seems a classic expression of Yankee post-war dynamism.



## The Rouch Report

by Robin L. Rouch

*CRT Goddess of the Universe, Head Verifier, and Muffin Diva*

The Composition Review Team (CRT) and Correction Validation Team (CVT) have been mighty busy since Wave 2 started rolling into shore!

The CRT has reviewed 12 texts and are working on 5. The 'Few, the Proud, the CRT' is composed of Chris Corley, Marcel van Genderen, Brian Gharst, Charles King, and Bob Luckin. We are always searching for new members with VIE Composition knowledge.

The CVT has verified updates for 14 texts and are working on 2 more. Thanks to Rob Friefeld, Charles King, Bob Luckin, Robert Melson, and Marcel van Genderen. It is ever-amazing to me how fast these guys work!

Everyone on the teams has been putting forth extraordinary effort to keep the Composition pipeline full and Composition has been doing an incredible job keeping us on our toes. Special thanks must go to Marcel van Genderen for helping me compile CRT reports when I just cannot keep up. Without you, Marcel, I'd be exposed as the lazy bonbon eater that I am. Also gotta thank Charles King who must be outed as an alien from a superior race (is there anything that Chuck doesn't do?). Sometimes I send him extra work because I have a perverse desire to see him yell "Uncle!" Hasn't happened yet.

Alas, my Clam Muffins PP team has only worked on one text this wave, but that is only because Chris Corley is a mean, stingy, and obviously jealous striver (for whom I have a secret and burning passion—don't tell the Czar!).



## Why Do We Review?

by Steve Sherman

The VIE's processes include a number of review phases at each step in the work on a given text. One of these is performed by the Composition Review Team (CRT), which is headed by Robin Rouch and receives the PDF that comes out of Composition and does a quick review. Members of the CRT are not proofreaders: they are not expected to read the text, rather they look for obvious glaring errors like missing page numbers, bad paragraphing and the like.

I completed the TI work on *The Pleasant Grove Murders* around the end of November last year. Since then it has been through TI review, Implementation, Security Check and Composition. The CRT members who worked on the text following Comp were Brian Gharst, Marcel van Genderen, Charles King and Bob Luckin. Each of them, I am told, found and raised individual issues that were raised by none of the others. One of the things we have learned as the VIE has progressed is this: it is not possible for too many eyes to examine any given text.

In this particular case, the CRT raised an issue of considerable interest to me from the standpoint of TI. In the passage in question, Sheriff Joe Bain is interrogating Mrs. Betty Taylor, who lives on the street on which the first of the murders has occurred. Here is the text:

"Did you know Ken Mooney to speak to?"

"Not really. I know what he looked like, and he seemed a pleasant young man."

"Did you see anything Tuesday morning which was at all out of the ordinary?"

"With my four boys, Sheriff, I never see anything else. But aside from the usual cyclone, I didn't see or hear a thing."

"Your husband was at work, of course. What about your boys? How old are they?"

"There's Jeffery ten, Miles eight, Peter six and Craig three. Craig is just starting to run with the others and that means I have to run too. Although I must say that Jeff and Miles are very responsible. Peter is a little stinker when it comes to Craig; he senses competition."

Joe asked, "Did they see anything out of the ordinary on Tuesday?"

"I don't think so. They were business operatives Tuesday with a lemonade stand. I believe they said that the man who was killed owed them a dime and now they'll never collect; heartless little brutes. That's all they could think of: not poor Mr. Mooney or how terrible his wife must feel, but where was their dime?"

"They're just acquiring the business point of view," said Joe. "Maybe I'd better talk to them. Are they anywhere nearby?"

"I think they're out in back building something."

Jeff and Miles were summoned: sturdy auburn-haired boys in T-shirts and blue jeans. "This is

Sheriff Bain, boys. He wants to ask you some questions; please listen carefully and tell him exactly what happened."

"You mean about the guy that got killed?"

"Just answer Sheriff Bain's questions."

"I understand," said Joe, "that Ken Mooney died in debt."

The boys looked at Joe, frowning and doubtful. Jeff, the oldest, said, "He owed us a dime."

The story reached Joe as a rhetorical contest between Jeff and Miles, refereed by Mrs. Taylor. On Wednesday morning they had set up a lemonade stand on Madrone Way opposite the country club entrance. On entering Madrone Way Ken halted the van to rearrange his deliveries and Jeff had shouted a solicitation across the street.

Did you spot the error in continuity that was missed by four proofreaders, including two members of the Proofreader Support Team, as well as by me? It's in the last paragraph, where all of a sudden, after lengthy discussions of the events of Tuesday, we are told that the boys set up their lemonade stand 'on Wednesday morning'. I don't know offhand how many times I read that passage in the course of TI work, but I never noticed it.

Thanks to Bob Luckin of the CRT for saving my cookies.



## You Have Done It!

### VIE Work Credits

*Compiled by Hans van der Veeke*

Yes, we are back with the volunteer work credits... While Wave 1 is nearing completion (I can almost smell the books!) people haven't been idle and work progresses with Wave 2 texts. Here are the first texts which have been completed.

Check your name! A misspelling here may indicate a misspelling in our database, and thereafter in the books themselves. We don't want to spell your name wrong, or leave off a Jr. or Esq., or to overlook you altogether! For corrections contact Hans van der Veeke at: [hans@vie.tmfweb.nl](mailto:hans@vie.tmfweb.nl)

*The World Thinker*  
Finished 13 November 2002

Digitizer:  
John A. Schwab

Pre-proofers:  
Rob Friefeld  
Per Kjellberg  
Lyal Simmons

DD-Scanner:  
Richard Chandler

DD-Jockey:  
David Reitsema

DD-Monkey:  
David A. Kennedy

Technoproofer:  
Karl Kellar

TI:  
Paul Rhoads  
Jeffrey Ruszczuk  
Steve Sherman

Implementation:  
Mike Dennison  
Damien G. Jones

Composition:  
John A. Schwab

RTF-diffing:  
Charles King

Composition Review:  
Christian J. Corley  
Marcel van Genderen  
Paul Rhoads  
Robin L. Rouch



Post-proofing:  
"Sandestins"  
Jeffrey Ruszczak (team manager)  
Michael Abramoff  
Deborah Cohen  
Jeffrey Cook  
Michael Duncan  
Ed Gooding  
Erec Grim  
Jason Ives



*The Deadly Isles*  
Finished 31 December 2002

Digitizer:  
Gan Uesli Starling  
Special reformatting:  
Lori Hanley  
Pre-proofers:  
Michel Bazin  
David A. Kennedy  
Jody Kelly  
DD-Scanners:  
Richard Chandler  
Jurriaan Kalkman  
Billy Webb  
DD-Jockey:  
David Reitsema  
DD-Monkey:  
David A. Kennedy  
Technoproofer:  
Bob Moody  
TI:  
Patrick Dusoulier  
Paul Rhoads  
Tim Stretton  
Suan Hsi Yong  
Implementation:  
Derek W. Benson  
Hans van der Veeke  
Composition:  
John A. Schwab  
RTF-diffing:  
Charles King  
Composition Review:  
Christian J. Corley  
Charles King  
Bob Luckin  
Paul Rhoads  
Robin L. Rouch

Post-proofing:  
"Spellers of Forlorn  
Encystment"  
Till Noever (team manager)  
Malcolm Bowers  
Harry Erwin  
Ed Gooding  
Peter Ikin  
Chris McCormick  
Bob Moody  
Bill Sherman



*The Narrow Land*  
Finished 26 January 2003

Digitizer:  
Michael Shulver  
Pre-proofers:  
Peter Ikin  
Per Kjellberg  
DD-Scanners:  
Richard Chandler  
Joel Hedlund  
Peter Strickland  
DD-Jockey:  
David Reitsema  
DD-Monkey:  
Charles King  
Technoproofer:  
Fred Zoetmeyer  
TI:  
Richard Chandler  
Rob Friefeld  
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*Noise*  
Finished 16 January 2003

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*Where Hesperus Falls*  
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# About the CLS

by Till Noever

Tim Stretton, the stalwart soul, has just saved the COSMOPOLIS LITERARY SUPPLEMENT from extinction by starting serialization of a new novel. So, please treat yourselves to CLS 19, which should be out with this issue of COSMOPOLIS. Provided Tim keeps up his monthly installments we should be going strong for a while yet. Jeremy Cavaterra is rumored to work on another story, and there are others, yes? Yes?

As for me, I have some soul-searching to do. Not that I haven't enough writing lying around to fill several years' worth of CLS, but the 'influenced-by-Vance' label is the killer here. There are a lot of significant other influences lurking in my writing, and I'll have to sort out what is what. Hopefully, by the time Tim delivers his next installment, I will have done so, and the CLS forges ahead with monthly issues.

Keep your fingers crossed.



## Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: Any Letters to the Editor received which have also been posted to a BBS or anywhere else in advance of the intended publication in COSMOPOLIS will not be accepted for publication. And, any Letters which are also CC'd as private e-mail to other parties will not be published.

If the author of a Letter to the Editor wishes to make such a Letter available on forums and other public places, or distribute it to other persons, this will simply have to wait until one of two things happens:

- a/ the Editor accepts to publish, and publication is made.
- b/ the Editor notifies his refusal to publish.



Dear Mr. Lacovara,

If what I've heard is true, and Mr. Rhoads agreed not to propagate his religious views in COSMOPOLIS any more, then my efforts to introduce some decency into your publication were successful. It is a highest possible praise in itself. It also would suggest that Mr. Rhoads found in himself, finally, some semblance of self-respect and restraint becoming a leader of a serious literary project.

If there will be more religious propaganda of any kind associated with Jack Vance's work, I will have to roll up my sleeves again, and to resume my efforts. My conscience prevents any other choice of action. Since I

have as much right to express my views as Mr. Rhoads, there cannot be any rational objection to my activity.

There is nothing wrong in individual religious faith per se, provided that it is not imposed on others in inappropriate or involuntary ways. There is a clear distinction between preaching in the church and proselytizing before an audience that has gathered for a completely different purpose. The inability of VIE management to make this simple distinction is astonishing, especially taking into account the fact that Jack Vance is essentially an author who despises and ridicules religion and mysticism of any kind. One could only wonder as to the latent motives for such moral blindness.

It goes without saying that I strongly disagree with much of what you have allowed yourself to say in the last issue of COSMOPOLIS. It also disagrees with much of what you have said to me in the past. How you reconcile your public and private behavior, however, is your business. My struggle is not with you, and I leave you alone to face *your* conscience—as long as it lasts.

Best regards,

Alexander Feht



Reply to Alexander Feht:

My thanks to Mr. Feht for his insight in this letter and others: those who read this reply should know that Mr. Feht spends a remarkable amount of time sharing his visions, and his note here is but a small part of the season of his discontent. Alas, I am an engineer, not an intellectual: my tools are rationale and tape measure. I build things, such as the works of Jack Vance in a decent and fitting format for his great work. Mr. Feht, on the other hand, is apparently an intellectual, and like some others of this breed, includes in his tool box rhetoric and bombast. I have no idea what he builds with such tools. Perhaps he has applied them in his analysis of COSMOPOLIS.

One must be especially appreciative of Mr. Feht's efforts and judgements since they are not only unpaid, but unsolicited. I am especially grateful to Mr. Feht for his assistance in censorship of COSMOPOLIS, a task for which he seems to feel particularly gifted. He has special feelings for matters which touch on the religious, almost as though he were afraid that others, reading any articles which incorporate theological matters, might corrupt or distress less hardy souls. Happily, they need not fear while Mr. Feht scrutinizes each issue: everyone has a right to their religious views, but woe to that person who forces anyone else to read an issue of COSMOPOLIS containing proscribed ideas! But I am unsure that his expertise is limited to determining when a religious

discussion is part and parcel of a literary criticism, and when it is a blatant proselytization. No, I suspect that there are a great many topics on which Mr. Feht holds an opinion with great firmness, and he is willing and able to assist anyone who might need an extra opinion or two.

Mr. Feht's input on the content of COSMOPOLIS has been of such value that I can only hope that he turns his attention, soon, to other individuals and organizations in need of his particular brand of common sense. I might suggest Mr. Saddam Hussein, or the folks who run North Korea. For a warm up though, he might consider advising the Democratic Party.

I am prostrate as I read Mr. Feht's last paragraph. He does not call me a liar and knave outright—that would not be his way—but he seems to imply something dark and shameful. Regrettably, I am one of those people who has things on his conscience: would that I were one of the elect, and had never committed an act which I later regretted. Readers must form their own opinion. For my part, I am happy to stand by the contents of my article in the last COSMOPOLIS, and should anyone feel that I took the effort to defend a friend from statements made by Mr. Feht and others, to that I must plead guilty. It's okay though: my conscience is fine on that score.

Mr. Feht closes his note with "Best Regards", but I suspect that this is an error in translation, and not what he means at all. It is likely to be some other common two-word phrase which he intends.

To the readers of COSMOPOLIS, for whom I have worked for and with over the years, best regards, and in the best sense of the phrase.

*Bob Lacovara*

- ❁ -

To the Editor,

I am appalled that Paul Rhoads should need any support.

I have already taken a subscription to the Rhoads Integral Edition in spite of the fact that I think no more of his political and religious opinions than he thinks of mine—as I mentioned once upon a time, I am a card carrying anarcho-syndicalist, a practicing atheist and a Frenchman living in the USA. (*He* of course is all wrong.)

The reason I did is that I feel quite capable of separating what I want to read from what I am quite willing not to. And much of what I have read by him has caused me to appreciate Vance even more than I did even though I first started to read him some thirty-five years ago.

I find it in fact quite intriguing that, holding the political and religious opinions that he does, Rhoads should have such wonderful insights into Vance. So, after all, somehow, these opinions of his have *some* merit.

I hope one day to become personally acquainted with Rhoads. Should he ever be anywhere near Philadelphia, it would be a great pleasure and a great honor for me to have him as our houseguest and to argue with him politics and even religion at our dinner table, and to listen to him speaking on Vance.

As for Rhoads trying to leave his mark on Jack Vance's work, this is indeed laughable. That it could have been even 'suggested' is enough to make one cry.

Regards,  
*Alain Schremmer*

- ❁ -

To the Editor,

For some months, I have been reading COSMOPOLIS, while trying to learn more about the VIE, and to make up my mind about those individuals who comprise this effort to see Jack Vance's oeuvre in print. In COSMOPOLIS 35, I read R. C. Lacovara's article on the criticisms of Paul Rhoads, which was something of a watershed for me. People who aren't afraid to defend someone's right to speak from such unfashionable points of view as Roman Catholicism, good old fashioned American patriotism, and capitalism can't be all bad. It is a mystery to me how people who are constantly yapping about 'diversity' in other venues can be so intolerant of diversity that they don't agree with. Yet, if it weren't for these idiocies, it would be a far less interesting—and amusing—world.

*John Avelis Jr.*  
White Heath, IL

- ❁ -

To the Editor,

I particularly enjoyed COSMOPOLIS 35—the fabulous news about *Lurulu* helped! I was very moved by the short essay about the *Columbia* tragedy and wanted to offer my support to your support of Paul Rhoads and Free Speech! I have found his writing stimulating and enjoyable. So what if I do not always agree with something, diversity is the spice of life! How anyone can love Vance and be intolerant of divergent viewpoints is a total mystery.

Warmest regards,  
*Amy Harlib*

- ❁ -

To the Editor,

COSMOPOLIS contributors have been skirting the current political issues with some deftness, and so apologies for putting a big foot into the wrong place, but here it is: *SPLAT*—for I am disgusted, dismayed, and upset. That doesn't happen too often, especially when it

relates to things I had expected and even predicted, but for some strange reason that doesn't seem to make a shred of difference in this case. So I'm going to break my self-imposed vow of silence and apparent neutrality on the subject.

I am dismayed and disgusted by large portions of the citizenry of the United States and Europe, plus that of a few more nations elsewhere that should know better and of whom one should have expected more. I am sickened by the abuse of the word 'peace' by politicians and agitators on *all* sides of the current debate as to whether the US should complete the job they didn't finish during the first Gulf War.

I'm not quite sure whether I should be more disgusted with the folks in the US or in Europe. Somehow, in the 'stupidity' ratings at least, the average US citizen who marches in peace-rallies may be higher on the list.

I am not an American, and have not a shred of patriotic fervor for that nation—or any other. I think that President Bush is a moron of inferior intellectual capacity, and dubious moral and ethical judgement. I also feel that war is a really, really bad thing; and that the worst thing about it is that innocent people get hurt and/or killed, either directly, or because they end up seeing someone they love or cherish or know, being hurt or killed. War is a terrible thing. *Any* kind of brutality is a terrible thing. I feel deeply about this, and you have no idea *how* deeply.

But . . .

Despite all this—or maybe because of it—I think that the worst thing a lot of American citizens have done in the last few weeks is to go out and join in the hysterical shouting and screaming against 'war'. In doing so they have sealed the inevitability of the war, which they, in their self-righteous fervor, are supposedly trying to prevent from eventuating. For, whatever dim chance there was for the nations of the Middle-East to get so scared that they did something really drastic (though covert) to avoid their region from being plunged into open conflict, whatever dim chance there was for the self-interest of Saddam Hussein's minions to prompt enough of them to dispose of him and his male offspring: with half of America chanting 'peace' there's little hope of that now. Congratulations, oh assorted peace-lovers: you have done your worst to bring that about which you profess to hate most!

It's ironic, isn't it? It's also very unfair to your boys, who are out there now, doing the job they signed up to do. Of course, they are all professional (!) soldiers, and when they signed up they knew—as did their loved ones, or at least they *should* have, and if they hadn't, let them blame nobody but themselves; decisions and consequences and all that!—that they signed up for the job of, if necessary, killing or be killed, maiming or be maimed, dropping bombs or lobbing artillery shells, and doing

whatever it takes to finish the job they were hired for; a job which usually involves various forms of violence. Still, America, they're *your* boys, and whether you think it's right or wrong what they're doing, ultimately they're doing the job for *you*—and for the Europeans of course, who are quite willing and happy to reap the benefits of whatever may eventuate, screaming bloody murder and anti-Americanisms all the way (forgetting all the way that the two most vocal anti-war nations, France and Germany, stand to lose most in terms of billions of Euros if Saddam is deposed, and have most to gain if he isn't—for the time being anyway, until he screws them over royally . . . who said corporate-governmental cupidity isn't driven by as much stupidity as your average peacenik protester?).

*'But this war is all about oil!'*

So? *Of course* it is, and no more so than for the European nations whose corporations stand to lose majorly from Saddam's demise. And the same is true for the US. But it's also about 'security'. If I were an American today I'd sell my soul to support every single of the boys at the 'front'. If that means supporting Bush then so be it—no matter if I think he's a moron. I still wouldn't vote for him if you paid me for it, but right now let him do his damn job! Sometimes we *need* these guys to get done what needs to be done. Let us try to assume a wider perspective than 'war and peace' and see what would happen if Saddam Hussein is allowed, not just to continue his brutal regime (which we could just pass off as an 'internal matter'), but to act as a destabilizer of the region, playing his games as he always has. There are enough troubles in that part of the world without having a nation smack in the middle of it, run by people who make a mockery of the word 'civilization'.

*'But it's none of our business!'*

*Everything is everybody's* business today. The world, for all practical, if not political or cultural, purposes, is *one*. 'Isolationism' is an oxymoron. It may appear, of course, to be so much easier to let things go on as they do and hope for the best. Don't send in the boys to get killed and maimed, or kill and maim. Avoid the slaughter of innocents—for the slaughter of innocents will happen: it's as certain as night following day. Light candles. Hold prayer vigils for peace. Cross your fingers. Chant until you're blue in the face. Yeah . . .

*'But it's immoral!'*

Maybe it is. Maybe it isn't. Maybe it's 'moral' because Saddam is a brutal dictator and mass-murderer (nobody will dispute that, yes?), and it would be an ethical and moral act to get rid of him. Maybe it's 'immoral', because this whole conflict is driven by US corporate self-interest, using weapons to kill a lot of innocent people who would be much more appropriately killed by their own government.

As for me, I don't know about 'morality'. I am very suspicious of it, because people tend to use the word when they either want something or when they want to justify something they've done or are about to do. The only 'morality' I understand is the one that has to do with looking after your own; with caring for the safety of those who depend on you, or whose care you have, for whatever reason, assumed.

So, I'd like to suggest to you peaceniks that you get off your high moralistic horses and take a good look at your kids. Try to ignore *why* you think Bush and his cronies are apparently wanting this war, for the truth is, ultimately it doesn't matter one whit. Think about your kids instead. Ask yourself if the world for them would be safer if Saddam Hussein were removed from his pivotal position in the Middle-East. If the answer is even a 'maybe', then stop screaming 'peace' with the rest of those hysterical morons, and start writing letters of support to the soldiers who are going to die for you; honor the survivors who return; and do your best to look after those who have been injured in body and/or mind, instead of marginalizing them as you did so many times in the past.

*'The price is too high.'*

It always is. And it always has to be paid.

*'Iraqis love their children, too.'*

Exactly. Let's play a brutal numbers game here. Suppose N non-combatants get killed in the process of the deposition of Saddam Hussein. Let's suppose M people get killed *by* Saddam Hussein and his minions during the course of the next year or two. I think it's not unreasonable to suggest that N and M are pretty close to one another, with a distinct possibility of M being larger than N.

M souls murdered for no purpose whatsoever. N souls killed, but with Iraq probably a better place afterwards than it is now (does anybody really doubt it would be??). It doesn't matter to the dead, of course: they will have lost the most precious thing they could ever possess. It may matter to the survivors.

Remember Afghanistan! Despite the mess, at least now there's some hope. There wasn't before. How can we forget that? How can we possibly forget that?

To the Europeans I want to say this: while I consider the wave of anti-war feeling in the US just plain stupid (and disloyal to their soldiers at the front), I think of your carry-ons as hypocritical, opportunist and generally despicable. I'm glad to see that, most significantly, the leaders of Britain and Spain appear to have taken a different view of the world, but their populaces appear terminally gripped by the wave of fervor sweeping the continent. Just remember, Europe, when this is over and done with, and Saddam Hussein is just another brutal footnote in history (and a cautious reminder to those capable of reading between the lines of history, and

seeing written there: 'finish the job the first time!') and you benefit from his demise, (as you will!) and you sit back on your self-righteous butts and pontificate upon the evil of war and the colonialist US—remember then that the only reason why you feel just that little bit safer (though you'd never admit it!) is because someone else did the dirty, but necessary, work for you, and you were too hypocritical and spineless to lend them your support.

OK, now I've got that out of my system, I'll put on my asbestos underwear and sit tight.

Regards,  
*Till Noever*



## Closing Words

Thanks to proofreaders Rob Friefeld and Jim Pattison.

COSMOPOLIS Submissions: when preparing articles for COSMOPOLIS, please refrain from fancy formatting. Send plain text. For COSMOPOLIS 37, please submit articles and Letters to the Editor to Derek Benson: [benson@online.no](mailto:benson@online.no) Deadline for submissions is March 28.

*Derek W. Benson, Editor*



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