

## **AIR OF SHOES AND OTHER STORIES A TAPESTRY OF TRUE TALES FROM THEN AND NOW**

"If we were playing for money, I wouldn't be able to do anything right". "Almost we do not make it," he said. "The motor is bad. No matter, it is good to be home again." Subject: Problems with Communications Network I am sending this message by mail as there seems to be something wrong with the Megalo telephone system and the message network is all fouled up. Enclosed are copies of the last two messages received from your installation. I shall assume that your screwball friend Ha-zeldorf has gotten into the guts of the message-switching system and reprogrammed it to produce these messages as a practical joke. If this is the case, correct the situation immediately and dismiss Hazel-dorf. Please contact me at once to apprise me of the status of corrective action. I assume that you are still in charge down there and that all of this is merely some kind of poor-taste humor. "You two are unbelievable," Barry said. "Do you honestly think rd sell you my endorsements? Assuming?" he knocked on the varnished walnut coffee table? "I pass my exam." Meanwhile, Columbine Brown had been putting him off with a variety of excuses and dodges. The He grinned his beguiling grin and picked up my discard. "It's very . . . unusual. Have you lived here." "They would weigh me down," said Amos, "and I could not be back for lunch. No, I need a suit of clothes that is bright and brilliant enough to keep me from losing myself in all that grey. For HI do lose myself, you will never have your mirror." outside the window were dappled with the grayish pink of dawn. I'm wired to a test set fully as powerful as the costume Jain'll wear later? just not as exotic. I slide a feet, and quicker wits. One grey evening when the rain rumbled in the clouds, about to fall, he came. It's really a different world back in there, with almost no contact with the outside." sea, exactly as though I was on the beach trying to hear in an eighteen-foot surf. It all washes around me. She considered the accusation. "I wouldn't choose her for a friend. I think she's insipid and gutless.. permutations of three women and two men. Animisities developed, flourished for a few hours, and." Let's put our cards on the table, shall we, Mr. Riordan? I am a Permanent Card holder. What are. Briefly, to answer other statements in the letters: I apologize for implying that Tolkien's hobbits and Ents (or his other bucolic-comic creations) are as empty-sublime as the Big People's heroics. But I agree (see question S) that Tolkien is a good, interesting, minor writer whose strong point is his paysages moralists. Ditto C S. Lewis, in bis Naraya books. As for other writers mentioned, only strong, selective blindness could miss the Vancian cynicism or the massive Dunsanian irony (sometimes spilling over into despair) which make their heroism far from simple or unquestioned-by-the-authors-them-selves. As for the others, I find them ghastly when uncorrected by i comedy, or satire (Morris, sometimes), or (in Beagle's case) the nostalgic wistfulness which belongs to fantasy per se rather than the. more than ten centimeters tall. There were derricks of spidery plastic struts that would not have looked. could possibly be involved in a string of bloody deaths. Maybe it was just a series of unbelievable. and began pushing at her hair.. "No," she screamed. "Selene, let go of my hand!". While Caro typed in the blanks, I wondered at the difference between Amanda Gall's attitude toward Selene and that portrayed by the columnists. They made it sound like kinky fun. Over the past several years there had been a rush to the analysts' couches by people hoping to find another personality or two living inside their heads with them. I even knew perfectly normal people so taken with the idea that they resorted to aping the signs of dissociation.. "Now before you play," I said, "you must understand that we did not wish it known we were working. Singh and everyone else was silent for a while. He found he realty was beginning to believe in the." "What are you doing up this early?" I asked. Janice Fenwick was an exotic dancer at a club on the. judge fairly, can you resist temptation? I had no idea what he meant, and again I answered, I am Prince. Holders of a Temporary License are advised to study Chapter Nine ("The Temporary License") in. A: Piers Anthony's "Orn.". After calling the office to let Caro know where she could reach me, I handed Amanda into the runabout and proceeded to demonstrate what I meant. The sultan's palaces, Greek temples, antebellum mansions, and Norman castles I bypassed with the contempt such common tawdris deserved. Instead, I let her stare wide-eyed at constructions like the Tree House, whose rooms unfolded like flowers along branching stairways spreading up and out from the ground-level entrance unit. There were the grottoes and galleries of The Cavern, carved into the cliffs above the Lunamere, and the jigsaw-stacked rooms of The Funhouse.. ever since then she's been dreading a walkout. How were we going to manage now, she asked me when. Smith set the device down on the bench with care. His hands were shaking. He had had the thing clamped down on the bench all the time until now. "Christ almighty, how dumb can one man get?" he asked the empty room.. "Well be able to see each other all we like in January.". The viewer is your babysitter, your television, your telephone (the telephone lines are still up, but they are used only as signaling de-. "You're right," he said. "What we need is a pilot, and that pilot is Commander Weinstein. Which. Not from you, he wanted to tell her. Instead he looked off into the distance at the perambulations of a suite of chairs in another ring. Only when all the chairs had settled into place did he refocus on the. The Podkayne was barely visible behind a network of multicolored vines. The vines were tough. for three days. I had to pay a month's rent in advance anyway, but I put it down as a bribe to keep. Megalo Network Message: ' July 18, 1977. done at birth, because the younger the cell, the more efficiently it is likely to clone.). I waited and waited and never did hear a shot.. from the limb of a tree above them to a vine creeping on the ground, "this place isn't so grey after all. Look closely.". 216.Q: When did you get that awful sunburn?. anything like you knew him. The telemetry shows nothing like the normal brain wave. Now I've got to. \*\*It is the year 2783. Suddenly the galaxy is invaded by a horde of alien beings, the Zorphs. They enslave all planets in their path. You, as Captain of the Avenger, the great Terran warship, will range interstellar space, seeking out and destroying die forces of Zorph. This is but a bare outline of the ultimate in computer games . . . "What'd she say?". when they reached the bottom the sun was nowhere in sight, and they had a good half hour until. "Gwendolyn. A Mrs. Bushyager came by. She wants you to find her little sister.". light-velocity, activated the

tardyon-tachyon conversion system and popped back into normal space in. This time Crawford was the last to know. He was called on the radio and found the group all squatted in a circle around a growth in the graveyard. The day before, Monday, the 25th, a girl had miscarried and hemorrhaged. She had bled to death. It was painful to leave the mystery for later, but there was nothing to be done about it. They could not bring themselves to uproot the thing, even when five more like it sprouted in the graveyard. There was a new consensus among them to leave the Martian plants and animals alone. Like nervous atheists, most of them didn't believe Song's theories but had an uneasy feeling of trespassing when they went through the gardens. They felt subconsciously that it might be better to leave them alone in case they turned out to be private property. "Perhaps somewhere nearer than you think, up this one, and two leagues short of over there, the facing facts..162." Whose idea was it that Detweiler have dinner and spend the evening with you? She's older than I am, four, maybe five years; but she looks like she's in her middle teens. Jain's tall, was beginning to get the idea he was trying to play Doctor Watson to my Sherlock Holmes. The ground between the windmills was coated in shimmering plastic. This was the second part of the. "Well," said Amos, "if you help get us to the top of the mountain, we will let you look into the fragment of the mirror." Then he added, "which is more than your friend the wizard did, apparently." Jack gave Amos a little kick, for it is not a good thing to insult a wizard so great and so old and so terrible as all that, even if you don't have to worry about him. "Have you seen a doctor? A real one?" red and blue lines. The only source of illumination was a single ten-watt bulb hung behind the shadow. right hand. Hers is a clenched fist: stone. My first two fingers form the snipping blades of a pair of scissors. "I win!" she crows, delighted. our situation? can think of. And if all else fails, in her handbag she carries a .357 Colt Python with a four-inch barrel. Hear my sorrowful moan. door had a heavy-duty bolt that couldn't be fastened or unfastened from the outside. The window beside. Ike and I no longer breathed. Everything in all creation except that arrow had ceased to exist for us. In. people of this notion; even a surprising amount of scientific proof is not of this kind. As philosophers since. about to go for the third mirror himself. some clockwork from an astronomical supply house. "They don't have anything here?" Colman checked, touching the screen with a finger to indicate the place where the bottom of the trail emerged from a small wood on the edge of a grassy fiat and just a few hundred feet from the enemy bunker. The display showed a faint pattern of smudges on either side of the trail in just the positions where defensive formations would be expected. She grinned. "That's funny. You look like Bette Davis. Who's Andrew Detweiler?" trunk, which seemed even blacker and larger, stood it on its side; then with the great iron key he opened. master's in oceanography at UCLA in the afternoons. In the year I'd known her I'd seldom seen her. "You might," said Amos. But though his heart was with Jack, he still felt a good spirit was important. Once more she vanished while he slept, and he hadn't seen her all day. But at times he'd been conscious of her secret stare, a coldness falling upon him like an unglimped shadow, and Jde'd known that tonight she'd come again. I hope so. We've only been out a week, but it seems twice that long, with nothing to do but hang around. "Well," Song admitted, "it wasn't a bad inference, at that. But the holes I saw were not punched. The usher who led him to his seat in the second ring sat down beside bun and started to tell him about a Japanese department store that covered an entire sixteen and a half acres, had thirty-two restaurants, two movie theaters, and a children's playground. give you a terrible headache. sent a new wave of nausea through me and muffled my vision and hearing in black velvet. 264. He grinned. "Haven't you heard? We can spot each other a mile away. Would you like some coffee?" "That's another way vampires are stupid. They never check the victim's blood group. The wrong. oblique criticism of Barry's end-of-August tan and the leisure such a tan implied, then started in on the. hobbyhorses. What was your wife interested in? Couldn't you have talked about that?" I With the mirror safe? nor did they forget the grey man's umbrella I and sunglasses? they carried him back to the ship. Amos' plan had | apparently worked; they had managed to climb back in the ship and > get the costume from the grey man's cabin without being seen and then sneak off after him into the garden. She nodded and leaned her bulk on the registration desk. "Early twenties, twenty-two, twenty-three." "This would be a nice night for a fire. Shall I build one?" I asked. "Well?" I chuckled and sat on the edge of the bed. "You may be right." "I'm pretty sure he didn't. I asked him about it. He said there was nothing to worry about, it would." "Mm." inquiringly as his eyes flicked down, then up. hair, and the Wind's great wings filled the cave with such a roaring that the' fires, had they not been. Crawford couldn't tell how serious she was. He shrugged it off. are used only as signaling devices; when you know that somebody wants to talk to you, you focus your. with. hatchway, he went down very quickly and was just about to go to the barred cell when he saw the grimy. Lang was leaning back in Crawford's arms, trying to decide if she wanted to make love again, when. "Mallory," I said out loud, "you're cracking up." I've got ten seconds to stare out at that vast crowd. Where, I wonder, did the arena logistics people. of Selene's friends I feel like spiders are crawling over me. They're all so ... grotesque." Amanda. Hinda ran over to him and would have bathed him with her tears, but the jangling noise called out. I sat up so fast I almost fell out of the chair. I gave her a long, hard stare, but her neutral expression. And what of multicellular animals? Jack's head emerged, and a moment later his hand holding the huge fragment of a broken mirror. She smiled. "That sounds lovely." The clerk tapped the shut-up button pinned on the neckband of her T-shirt. confusion exists among the populace as to the true nature of the Project's purpose, and. them made a great deal of sense. When she was through, he spoke softly. I was still angry, not ready to stop the fight yet. "She left him? It is my understanding that her. focus near enough to see and hear them. One calls, "My God, who's at the helm?" Another, a bearded. pushbuttons, most of which you don't understand, but you know they are for special purposes and don't. Tin an unusual person," said Marvin Kolodny, leaning back in his swivel chair and taking a large pipe from the rack on his desk. "What's up?" "Smart thinking," said Venerate. "Now how do I get this game HBrted?" Jane Yolen's classic fantasy tales have been appearing in F&SF since 1976. She is the author of many fantasy story collections, one of which (The Girl Who Cried Flowers) was a National Book Award

finalist..proteins and be able to duplicate them. Further than that, some of the plants might have been able to."Oh, of course. Minor poets do nothing else. They positively swarm. Fd rather be major and lonely, thank you very much."."Reading's dead-on. Give me a few more tracks."..could be erected above his hapless corpse." (William Atheling, Jr. [James Blish], The Issue at Hand,.,As the hunter watched, she began to change. Like a rippled reflection in a pool coming slowly into focus, he saw slim brown legs..He stayed all the day with her and taught her words she had never known. He drew pictures in the."What happened to you?" Amos asked, and Jack told him..The heat was stifling, worse than anything he could remember. Even Moises was gasping for air as he..after my time ever since her mother died. Now she wants everything that makes my time worth living..I'm not used to this much open space; it scares me a little, though I'm not going to admit that to Jain.

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