

Clink! . . . steel against steel . . . big steel being hit by little steel . . .

"Say! . . ." Brown Pants shoved me, seeing the raped lock.

Whack! The leather stick came down again. This time higher than before . . . at the base of the skull—where the neck and head join. Hit high enough, and you can cripple a man . . . maybe even kill him.

Voices again . . . walls moving nearer, farther away voices calling, going to tell me something. Cool, quiet voices . . .

—*Marve Benson, Sci. So.*



What a Gandy Likes

THE FOUR MEN sat by the handcar on the shoulder of the right-of-way and finished their lunches. They sat in the sun by their tools on the dusty cinder and limestone roadbed and ate heavy homemade sandwiches and drank steaming coffee, although the day itself was a haze of heat. They did not speak, but looked out across the corn beneath them and watched the waves of heat come up from the fields. There was no breeze or promise of breeze, and the summer lay heavy and oppressive on the men and the miles of railroad. One of the men stood up with the slow, grinding motion of a man who is hot and tired, looked over into the meadow beside the right-of-way, and mooed. There was a cow in the meadow which promptly mooed back, and then wandered across the meadow and up to the fence beside the railroad.

"What's he fixing to do?" asked the Young Man.

"He's a gonna bus' da cow," said the Man from Naples.

"Going to do what?" asked the Young Man.

"He's gonna nail the cow there wit a clinker," said the man from Chicago.

The standing man selected a stone with deliberation, languidly wound up and threw it, striking the cow on the rump. The cow tossed her head and trotted away in the way that only an old cow can trot when she has been startled on

a heavy, tired summer day. She went to the other side of the meadow and regarded the men with bovine disgust. The man sat down again.

"What did he do that for?" asked the Young Man.

"What da you tink?" answered the Man from Naples. "Look, kid, a man he's a not a gandy until he can shoot the bull, moo like a cow, and race on a shovel!

"Why does he want to moo like a cow?" asked the Young man.

The Man from Naples studied him with scorn. "Why goddam, so's he can get by da fence."

"Oh, you mean so the cow will come close enough to the fence so he can hit it!" said the Young Man.

"Sure," answered the Man from Naples. "What the hell you tink? Why else you wanta get a cow by da fence? Crazy keed!"

"I don't get it," said the Young Man.

"Look, kid," said the Man from Chicago, "Terry's seen a lot of hot and cold days on the railroad . . . he's a gandy from wayback. Sometimes old gandies just get so they like to throw stones at things . . . it's relaxing, sort of. When you spent as many hot and cold days as Terry has, you'll want to relax, too. See what I mean?"

"I guess so," said the Young Man . . .

—John B. Madson, *Sci. Sr.*



Brother

THE DIM evening light, fighting its way through the dusty pane, is almost lost in the drab, boxlike room. It is not reflected by the greasy kerosene stove, the orange crate cupboard on the three-legged stool.

Under the tiny window, bending over a rough hewn table sits a huge bulk of a man. Stripped to the waist, the sweat making tiny rivulets on his tensed black muscles, he works feverishly. Slap-tick. Slap-tick. His knotty hands carefully sharpen a stained kitchen knife.

"Yes, suh. Yes, suh," he rythmically moans as he moves the knife up and down a broken strip of crocking. "Yes, suh-