

An Infocom publication

September 1984 \$1.25

TRUE TALES *of Adventure*



**MIXMASTER OF THE GODS??
MAN CLAIMS HE LOCATED LOST TREASURE OF ATLANTIS!**

RAMBLING WITH JACK A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

In the brotherhood of true adventurers, no name was more revered than that of Moose "Moose" Lasko. I say "was" because it saddens me to report that "Moose" has passed into the Great Beyond, a victim in a hopeless wrestling match with a giant octopus who attacked his underwater bagpipes quartet.

I always admired "Moose" because in many ways he reminded me of myself. Like him, I wasn't exactly born with a silver spoon in my mouth. Oh, no. A kid growing up in Hell's Kitchen learns pretty early about survival of the fittest. Or he doesn't survive. I remember, for instance, the time in kindergarten when I dropped my crayon and little Danny Esterhazy kicked me in the teeth. And then there was the time when I was holding the ball for a field goal in the Thanksgiving Day game, and Danny Esterhazy deliberately missed the ball... and kicked me in the teeth. But most of all, I recall my senior prom. And how my date and I snuck outside the rec hall for a little necking. There was a light, cool breeze in the air, and the fragrance of the river was in our nostrils, and I could feel the wet grass through the holes in the soles of my two-tones. It was a magic moment indeed—and then and there, gazing into my girl's eyes, I made the most important decision of my life. I knelt down on one knee, and began stammering my proposal. And she kicked me in the teeth. I later found out Danny Esterhazy had paid her to do it.

I learned a lot from those childhood experiences in Hell's Kitchen. I learned that life is a jungle. I learned that after a certain point, all the reconstructive dental surgery and expensive braces in the world won't make a bit of difference. And I learned the real survivors are the ones who end up in the NICE UPTOWN OFFICE BUILDINGS with GORGEOUS SECRETARIES and jobs which let them SEE THE WORLD and WRITE WIDELY READ EDITORIAL OBITUARIES about their FAMOUS FRIENDS! Think about that while you're peddling papers at your corner newsstand, Danny Esterhazy, you bum.

Anyway, this issue is dedicated to Moose "Moose" Lasko, a real nice guy.

'Til next month,



Jack "Jack" Zumwalt
Managing Editor

OUR READERS' OWN TRUE TALES OF ADVENTURE

Steaming in the Tropics

The Mogga Beast is dead. None of the natives dared brave its poisonous tentacles and lashing spiked tail, so they hired me to do the dirty work for a cool million clams. After chumming the water near the Great Reef to stir up the creature's bloodlust, I dove in and watched from beneath a coral arch. Not one minute after I'd reached my hiding place, I saw Mogga slithering through the murk, all fifty horrifying feet of the brute. And he saw me—my bubbles had given me away.

It was do or die. The beast was almost upon me before I'd uncapped the dart. He took a swipe at me with his anterior tentacle, but in his frenzy, he missed by a hairbreadth. And that gave me the split second I needed to pump 20 cc's of strychnine into his gaping maw. That night, I delivered Mogga's head to the chieftain.

My problem is this: Does anybody have any suggestions on where I can unload 1673 bushels of cherry-stones? Fishmarkets, rush your orders now! These things are starting to stink up the joint.

(Name withheld by request)

P.O. Box 3

Lesser Wug-Iukka Atoll

Near Mindanao

Dune Buggies

The name has been bandied about in the press to such an extent that I need not identify the subject of this letter. Suffice to say that this great explorer boldly threw caution to the wind and championed my effort to locate the phantom pyramid whose existence my father had postulated. That the quest ended in indescribable horror is the world's tragedy. In the words of The Bard: "Sleep well, heroic soul, O! let/ Not dread Isis' sandfleas in thy khakis get."

Ms. Rose Ellingsworth

(Address withheld by request)

Requiem for a Lightweight

The rat had it coming! Commandeered MY expedition, and cut me completely out of the action. Don't believe one word of that sob story the Ellingsworth dame is leaking to the media. And if anyone's interested in an assistant's job for an exploration outfit, you can shove your resumes! From now on, I go it alone.

Craig

(Address withheld by force)

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVES.

Ray Lilly and Bill Burroughs knew there was a fabulous treasure lying somewhere below the dark waters off Pagu Reef.

All they had to do was find the right natives to lead them to it.

"IT'S TRUE!" say the intrepid adventurers in unison. "We won fame and fortune in the South Seas!" Today, Ray and Bill live a life of opulence in their Florida Keys compound. And, as Bill says, "We earned every bit of it!"

For 10 years prior to their Pagu adventure, the two had run a marginally successful salvage business in the Florida Keys. Then one day, Ray decided they should return to the South Sea island of Pagu where he had been stationed as a Merchant Marine just before the Korean War. Thirty years ago, Ray had heard Pagu's Pug Pap tribesmen talk of rare gems that were trapped in ancient sunken wrecks off Pagu.

"Luckily, I believed every word of it," Ray said, "and I knew that the only way to get a crack at that treasure would be to 'go native.'"

Lilly recalls: "After life in America, it was tough becoming a native again. But we learned to adjust to the Pug Pap ways—the hammocks, the Yik Fish Stew, the roast grubs and the 'dress.' Of course, Bill and I weren't trying to be Margaret Mead-type anthropologists; we were strictly in it for the money.

"After about eight months of acculturation, we were able to recruit two Pug Pap guides who would take us out on the reefs to some of their sacred fishing grounds. 'Magic Lim' and 'B.C.,' as we called our two companions, proved to be able, if somewhat superstitious, partners. They refused to dive. But they did



Bill and Ray had plenty to smile about on their arrival back in the States. After their press conference, they were hustled off to a nasal surgeon for reconstructive surgery.

show us where some of the wrecks 'might' be found.

"We worked some of the world's most treacherous waters in those two years. Deep cuts between islands where the current came through like a freight train. Underwater cliffs. And shark-infested reefs where no man had ever dived before.

"Finally, in our twenty-first month, we started finding some giant rock outcroppings that looked like the hulls of ships. After eight dives to one

particularly promising site, we hit pay dirt. Bill went down about nine fathoms, and I was up top on shark watch with B.C. Suddenly, Bill burst to the surface holding a fiery red rock about the size of a golf ball in his hand. When the sun hit it and it sparkled, my heart nearly came out of my throat. It was the biggest ruby I had ever seen.

"The rest, as you know, is history. We spent the next three months hauling gems out of the belly of the old boat and ferrying them back to the island. Eight million dollars worth. We unloaded most of the take in Hong Kong, then flew back to Pagu with a team from the Natural Graphic Society. They had hoped to bring the old stone boat up. It was too heavy. But Bill and I had what we wanted. We were millionaires!"

Editor's note: Burroughs and Lilly have established a Trust Fund for the native tribes of Pagu and neighboring islands as thanks for their unflagging assistance throughout the operation.

DANGER AT FIFTY FATHOMS!

by **Hoble Brinston**



"IT'S TRUE!" THE NATIVE SHRIEKED. "BIG PEARL—BIG LIKE A MONSTER!" Sure, I'm a deep-sea diver. Who isn't? Have been almost all my life. But that doesn't mean I've ever run into a 2,000-pound oyster wrapped around a 400-pound pearl. I mean, gimme a break!

I stared at the pitiful native and narrowed my eyes. I tried to imagine a pearl that large and how I could get a photograph of it for this issue of TRUE TALES OF ADVENTURE.

"Yeah, sure," I quipped in true adventurer's fashion. "And where did you see this pearl?"

The wretched native shuffled his feet and stared at the sand, digging his big toes into the gleaming white silica. "You pay, and I take you out there," he said.

Sounded fair to me. I had the underwater camera, some unused film and some dough from a risky but

profitable raft trip up the Congo, so I was halfway there already. I figured I'd better outfit myself for the dive, though, since cameras don't help you breathe underwater. And the first thing I needed to know was what kind of equipment I would need.

"A Diver without Equipment is like a Fish without Gills"

"It's true," I thought as I wandered over to the marina and checked out what they had. The standard stuff, scuba equipment, was something I was very familiar with. I knew what kind of tanks I'd need, and I also knew that I'd need fins and a wet suit.

Scuba gear, as all you divers know, has its limits. You wouldn't want to go mucking about in the deep blue sea deeper than 250 feet or so in scuba gear. You'd use up your air so fast, you wouldn't even have time to blink!

The marina had a complete line of deep-sea diving gear, too, which included diving suits, air compressors and those cute metal helmets.



Anyway, I figured since the native diver had spotted the pearl in the oyster and he'd done it without deep-sea diving equipment, all I'd need for a successful dive was the scuba stuff.

I made sure my tanks were fully charged (no sense running off half-cocked) and loaded the stuff onto the boat. The native arrived at just the right time for us to catch the tide, and we took off onto the ocean blue, whitecaps just starting to form.

If I'd been much later, we would have had to put off the whole expedition, but he seemed to have an intuition about when the tide would be in. At low tide, it would have been treacherous and downright suicidal to depart from the tiny harbor, possibly puncturing our bottom on the coral reefs, in the attempt.

"Cocktails for Two"

"It's true," the person in the marina warned. "Dive too deep in scuba gear and you can end up in more water than you can shake a stick at." Well, I sure found myself over my head on this fateful day, and if it wasn't for... well, if it wasn't for my quick thinking and decisiveness, I wouldn't be relating this true story right now.

Anyway, it seems I stayed down a little too long. Or maybe I dived a little too deep? But there I was with my camera on the ocean floor, with this huge mother-of-pearl staring me right in the kisser. I quickly unfolded the camera and set it up, getting just the right angle.

I had been fiddling with the focus and the exposure setting quite a while when I suddenly got this creepy feeling that I was being watched—that I was not alone! I looked around, but all was still. Suddenly, something moved about 20 feet in front of me! It was big—too big for me to ignore. Could have been a barracuda, or a shark, or any one of a hundred horrible things. I dared not move, but the bubbles from my air tank continued to rise and made my location a dead giveaway.

A few more minutes passed, and nothing happened. Nothing in front of me moved. I shook my head, figuring my imagination was playing tricks on me. I realized that the huge oyster was there before me, mouth starting to open wide, and the time for taking the picture I'd carefully planned for was now.

As I looked through the viewfinder, something strange happened. From behind me I heard a voice, a woman's voice, humming! I turned around as quick as a dart fish, but only in time to see the colorful caudal fin of some large fish swimming away.

By now I was sure that I was hallucinating; nitrogen narcosis, perhaps, was setting in. I figured I had only

five more minutes underwater before I ran out of air completely. Once again, I looked through the viewfinder and saw the incredible pearl in perfect focus. I reached for the shutter release. "Now," I coached myself. "Take the picture and go up."

"Focus in and find the finest," a voice said behind me.

I whipped around and there, smiling at me, head tilted coyly, was a beautiful mermaid! I stepped back in wonder and awe; I vaguely recall bumping into my tripod and watching my camera fall onto the pearl. The oyster closed up, and my camera was gone!

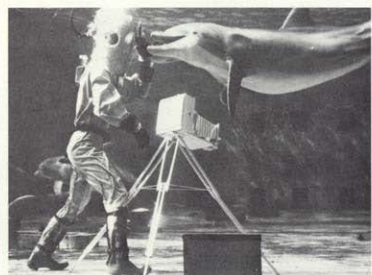
The mermaid laughed. "Specially focused with a narrow, even beam," she said.

My initial shock turned to curiosity—and fear. Was this magnificent underworld creature trying to tell me something, or warn me of some danger? If so, I could not decipher her cryptic messages. But before I could think of something to say, she sang, "Compact, efficient and rechargeable." Then, with a wave of her hand and a flip of her tail, she was gone!

Oh, how I wish I could have followed! But as Fate would have it, I had barely enough oxygen to get to the surface. Sadly, I looked one last time at the closed oyster, which contained my expensive equipment and a much more valuable gem. Longingly, I looked toward the shadows into which the mermaid had disappeared; but there was, of course, nothing to see, and I started up. I began my ascent not a second too soon, for my tanks were empty when I reached the surface.

"The pearl!" the native shrieked. "Did you see it?"

I nodded my head. I had seen it all, and it's all true.



I. C. Weadeter (left) won our recent STRANGE UNDERWATER ENCOUNTERS contest with this entry, entitled, "Fish Say the Darndest Things!" Claims Weadeter, "It asked me for an 8-by-10 glossy. Honest!"

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Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish to receive a list of the winners. All entries become the sole property of Infocom, Inc. Employees of Infocom, Inc., and its advertising agency not eligible. Contest ends December 31, 1985.

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UPDATE

In our last issue, we reported that Stan Newberry was offering Photo Safaris in and around Whaler's Cove. TRUE TALES OF ADVENTURE has learned that Stan drowned last month; apparently a defective regulator is to blame. Stan's son Skip will now lead the underwater safaris.

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