



By His Friend, SAM HYMAN

Well, when I first read these entries, I was astounded. I always carry that notebook in my hip pocket (it's a little one, the spiral kind) so when could David have gotten his spongy hands on it? I thought about it for ten minutes before the answer hit me... He was sneaking into my room when I was asleep and *taking* it. I resolved, then and there, to trap him.

That night, before I went to bed, I sneaked around the neighborhood, taking tin cans out of all the neighbors' trash. Thank the Lord I wasn't caught, because that's not the kind of thing you can explain away with a cute smile and a weak story.

I loaded up my haul in a big plastic bag and sneaked back to my room, clattering and clanging like a car with "just married" written across the back of it. Luckily, David was practicing electric guitar at his usual window-

...and awoke to a sound like a ten-car collision in the middle of an echo chamber. I snapped on the light, and there stood David in his ratty old pajamas (patched with patches his fans have sent him) looking like a rabbit who just caught a hydrogen bomb and can't figure out what to do with it.



"Good evening," I said. "May I help you?"

"Heheheheheheheheheh" he laughed lamely, "I must have the wrong door." And he turned to wade through the confusion of cans toward safety.

"Not if you're after my notebook," I said, holding it up. "It's right here."

"Your notebook," he began, trying pathetically desperately to think fast, with the echo of the cans still clamoring in his ears. "What would I want with your notebook?"

I read him one of the mysterious entries.

"That's not me..." he began, but I cut him off.

"David," I said, "your handwriting is unmistakable. No one in the whole world except you can drag the blotches from a ballpoint pen *all* the way across a piece of paper. You are, without doubt, the *sloppiest* writer since they stopped using clay tablets. If you had written the Declaration of Independence, Queen Elizabeth would be President."

"That might not be so bad," he said.

"That's not the point. And I must say, I don't know how you can stand there and tell a *lie* to your roommate and oldest friend in the world."

He looked properly guilty. "You're right," he said. "I'm a rat. I've always

been a rat."

"And who *knows*," I declaimed, waxing eloquent. "If you're willing to mess around with my *notebook*, there might even come a time when you'd add something to my *article* before I send it in!"

"No!" he said. "I'd never do *that*!" And the innocence in his eyes was so convincing that I had to conclude I'd judged him wrongly.

Anyway, that's the story. It may not be as entertaining as some I've told you, but I thought it was important to let you hear it, because *I won* for a change. That should show David. See you next time.

Love,

Sam

After I gave the peasants their Levis, I spoke to them. "Be not afraid of the Monster," I told them, "he means you no harm." But still they mumbled and even threw things, looking truly frightening in the flickering light from their torches.

And then, suddenly, David appeared in the window above me, and held out his arms, saying, "I have made a Monster, and his name is Sam." And I looked, and the monster looked exactly like me!

And the peasants turned and ran, screaming in terror, leaving behind even their prized Levis, and David turned to me and said, "Be careful of thinking you have the last word. There's many a slip between the story and the magazine."

Love,

David (he he!)



shattering amplification, so he didn't hear me.

I locked my door, took out a ball of twine, sorted my cans into various sizes and shapes (and I hate to think what must have been *in* some of them) and went to work. By the time I turned my light off and went to bed, I was completely confident that I had David by the big toe. I fell asleep like an exhausted four-year-old on the night after Christmas.