



By His Friend, SAM HYMAN

taken up a program of physical exercise that would kill Batman—jogging, and, generally, done everything in his power to make me feel like a retarded three-toed sloth because I'm not joining in.

"Look at you," he said yesterday, as I lay in my corner with a book. "You're panting from the effort of pushing your eyes over the page. You turn a page and break out in a sweat.

"Your forearms are trembling from the strain of holding the book upright. Thank God it's not a hardcover. What are you going to do when you want to read something that weighs more than four ounces?"

I'LL BE FINE!

"I'll be all right," I snarled. "As long as they don't start printing Nancy Drew mysteries on heavy paper, I'll be just fine. Now why don't you run outside into the sun and lift the swimming pool or something?" I put the book aside. "As a matter of fact, why don't you stay here and improve your mind, while I go get into the swimming pool?"

"I'm not going to swim, though, so don't get your hopes up. I'm going to float like an ice cube or a dead moth



AH, A quiet spot to relax in—do you like our remodeled dining room?

until I want to lay down on something a little more solid, and then I'll go to bed for an hour or so."

"Ummmmmm," he said. "I don't think you'll float very well."

"I'm in good enough shape to float, David. All you need is lungs, and I've got two."

"You need water," he said.

I turned back to him, incredulous. "Do you mean," I began to sputter, "that you've drained the..." He nodded.

"It's the only way to take a wire brush to the dark spots," he said. He was still talking as I slammed out into the back yard to have a look. Sure enough, the pool looked like a big white hole waiting for someone to fall into it.

I got in my car and drove to the beach. I didn't get home until very late

that evening, and David was asleep...but that didn't mean my troubles were over.

As I entered the hallway, I smelled a funny odor I couldn't quite place. I leaned up against the wall to pull my shoe off (my balance would be no Christmas present for a high-wire walker) and when I straightened up I was surprised to see that I had apparently left my shadow sticking to the wall. "Far out," I said for lack of anything better, and then I looked at my clothes. The wall had come off on me. I recognized the smell. Wet paint.

The next morning, David offered to give me a new shirt and pair of pants to replace the ones I was burning in the fireplace when he came in from pruning the orange trees (naturally) but I didn't give him the satisfaction. And now he's a little worried. He knows *something* is coming, and he's not going to like it.

It's basically a simple matter of revenge, and I'll tell you about it because he'll find out before he can read this. Don't expect it to make sense, because it doesn't. It's just mean.

David goes barefoot all summer long, but sooner or later there will come a very important occasion, and he'll have to dress his feet up. And he'll find his shoes all lined up neatly inside the closet door, just like he left them. And when he puts them on, he'll find them full of Crisco.

And that's a lot of Crisco—three cans. When he saw me unpacking them from the grocery bag he asked what they were for, and I told him I was going to get into a little baking.

"Great," he said, "getting active huh?"

He should know.

Sam



THE PARTRIDGE crew was happy the writer's strike finally ended!