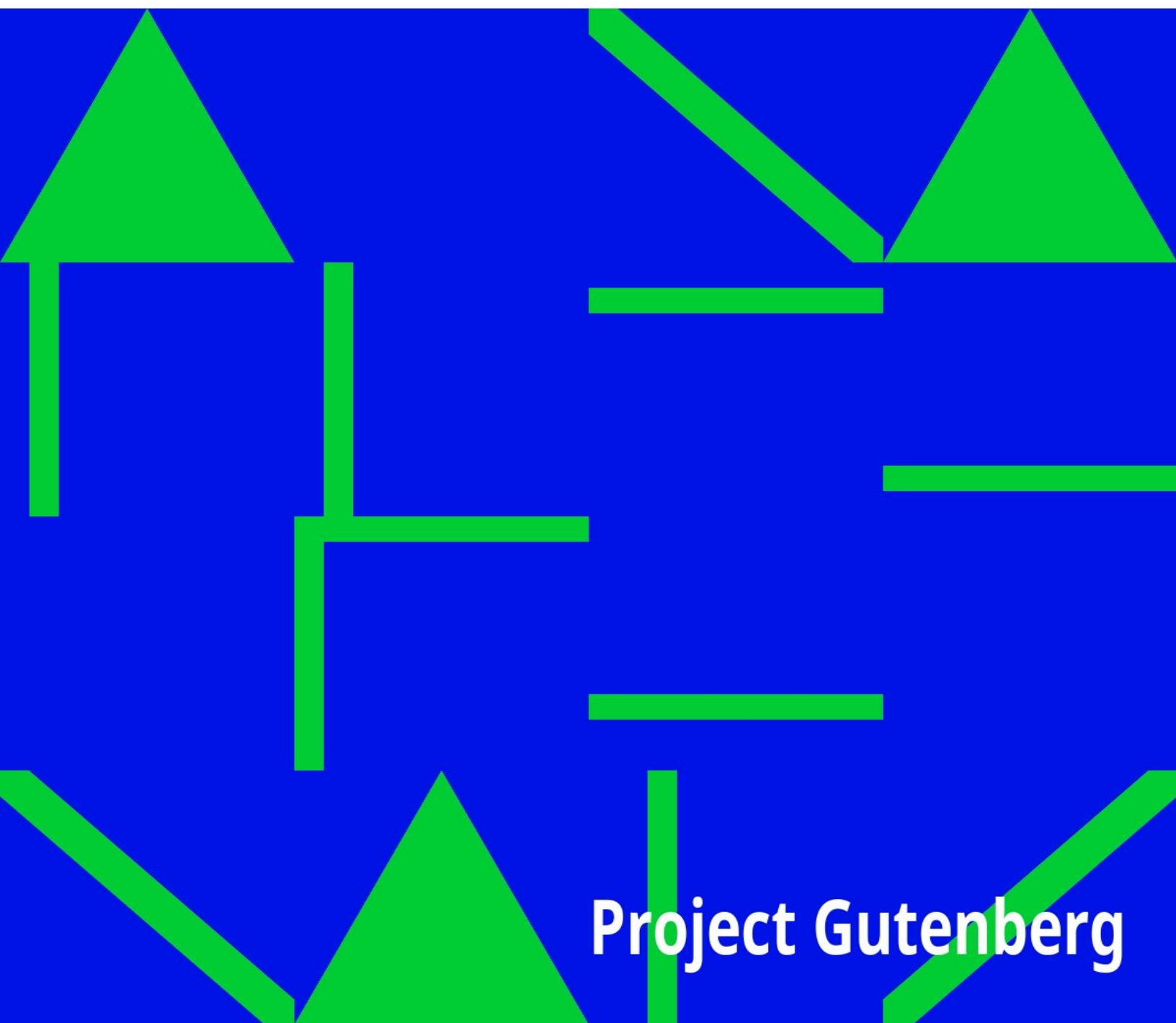


A Matter of Magnitude

Al Sevcik



Project Gutenberg

The Project Gutenberg EBook of A Matter of Magnitude, by Al Sevcik

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.net

Title: A Matter of Magnitude

Author: Al Sevcik

Release Date: March 27, 2008 [EBook #24927]

Language: English

*** START OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A MATTER OF MAGNITUDE ***

Produced by Greg Weeks, Stephen Blundell and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>

**A
MATTER
OF
MAGNITUDE**



By AL SEVCIK

When you're commanding a spaceship over a mile long, and armed to the teeth, you don't exactly expect to be told to get the hell out ...

THE ship, for reasons that had to do with the politics of appropriations, was named Senator Joseph L. Holloway, but the press and the public called her Big Joe. Her captain, six-star Admiral Heselton, thought of her as Great Big Joe, and never fully got over being awestruck at the size of his command.

"She's a mighty big ship, Rogers," he said proudly to the navigator, ignoring the latter's rather vacant stare and fixed smile. "More than a mile long, and wider than hell." He waved his hands expansively. "She's never touched down on Earth, you know. Never will. Too big for that. They built her on the moon. The cost? Well ..."

Swiveling his chair around, Heselton slowly surveyed the ship's control room with a small, satisfied smile. The two pilots sitting far forward, almost hidden by their banks of instruments, the radar

operators idly watching their scopes, the three flight engineers sitting intently at their enormous control consoles, and, just behind, the radio shack—its closed door undoubtedly hiding a game of cards. For weeks now, as Big Joe moved across the galaxy's uncharted fringe, the radio bands had been completely dead, except, of course, for the usual star static hissing and burbling in the background.

Turning back again to his navigator, Heselton smiled modestly and noted that Big Joe was undisputedly the largest, most powerful, most feared, and most effective spaceship in the known universe.

As always, Rogers nodded agreement. The fact that he'd heard it a hundred times didn't make it any less true. Big Joe, armed with every weapon known to Terran technology, was literally the battleship to end all battleships. Ending battleships—and battles—was, in fact, her job. And she did it well. For the first time, the galaxy was at peace.

With a relaxed sigh, Heselton leaned back to gaze at the stars and contemplate the vastness of the universe, compared to which even Big Joe was an insignificant dot.

"Well," said Rogers, "time for another course check. I'll ..." He jumped back, barely avoiding the worried lieutenant who exploded upon them from the radio shack.

"A signal, sir! Damn close, on the VHF band, their transmission is completely overriding the background noise." He waved excitedly to someone in the radio shack and an overhead speaker came to life emitting a distinct clacking-grunting sound. "It's audio of some sort, sir, but there's lots more to the signal than that."

In one motion Heselton's chair snapped forward, his right fist hit the red emergency alert button on his desk, and his left snapped on the ship's intercom. Lights dimmed momentarily as powerful emergency

drive units snapped into action, and the ship echoed with the sound of two thousand men running to battle stations.

"Bridge to radar! Report."

"Radar to bridge. All clear."

Heselton stared incredulously at the intercom. "What?"

"Radar to bridge, repeating. All clear. Admiral, we've got two men on every scope, there's nothing anywhere."

A new voice cut in on the speaker. "Radio track to bridge."

Frowning, Heselton answered. "Bridge. Come in radio track. We're listening."

"Sir," the crisp voice of the radio track section's commander had an excited tinge. "Sir, Doppler calculations show that the source of those signals is slowing down somewhere to our right. It's acting like a spaceship, sir, that's coming to a halt."

The admiral locked eyes with Rogers for a second, then shrugged. "Slow the ship, and circle right. Radio track, can you keep me posted on the object's position?"

"No can do, sir. Doppler effect can't be used on a slow moving source. It's still off to our right, but that's the best I can say."

"Sir," another voice chimed in, "this is fire control. We've got our directional antennas on the thing. It's either directly right or directly left of the ship, matching speed with us exactly."

"*Either* to our right or left?"

"That's the best we can do, sir, without radar help."

"Admiral, sir," the lieutenant who had first reported the signal came

running back. "Judging from the frequency and strength, we think it's probably less than a hundred miles away."

"*Less than a hundr ...*"

"Of course, we can't be positive, sir."

Heselton whirled back to the intercom. "Radar! That thing is practically on our necks. What the hell's the matter with that equipment...?"

The radar commander's voice showed distinct signs of strain. "Can't help it, Admiral. The equipment is working perfectly. We've tried the complete range of frequencies, twenty-five different sets are in operation, we're going blind looking. There is absolutely nothing, nothing at all."

For a moment the bridge was silent, except for the clacking-grunting from the overhead speaker which, if anything, sounded louder than before.

"It's tv, sir!" The radio lieutenant came running in again. "We've unscrambled the image. Here!" The communications screen on Heselton's desk glowed for a moment, then flashed into life.

The figure was clearly alien, though startlingly humanoid—at least from the waist up, which was all that showed in the screen. A large mouth and slightly bulging eyes gave it a somewhat jovial, frog-like demeanor. Seated at a desk similar to Heselton's, wearing a gaudy uniform profusely strewn with a variety of insignia, it was obviously Heselton's counterpart, the commander of an alien vessel.

"Hmmm, looks like we've contacted a new race. Let's return the call, Lieutenant." A tiny red light glowed beneath a miniature camera on Heselton's desk and almost at once the alien's face registered obvious

satisfaction. It waved a six-fingered hand in an unorthodox, but friendly, greeting.

Heselton waved back.

The alien then pointed to his mouth, made several clacking-grunting sounds, and moved a hand on his desk. The scene switched to another alien standing in front of what looked like a blackboard, with a piece of chalk in his hand. The meaning was clear.

"Lieutenant, have this transmission switched to the linguistics section. Maybe those guys can work some sort of language." The screen blanked out. Heselton leaned back, tense, obviously worried. Hesitantly, he reached out and touched a button on the intercom.

"Astronomy."

"Professor, there's a ship right next door somewhere that should stand out like King Kong in a kindergarten."

"I know, Admiral. I've been listening to the intercom. Our optical equipment isn't designed for close range work, but we've been doing the best we can, tried everything from infra-red through ultra-violet. If there is a ship out there I'm afraid it's invisible."

Beads of sweat sprinkled Heselton's forehead. "This is bad, Rogers. Mighty bad." Nervously, he walked across to the right of the bridge and stood, hands clasped behind his back, staring blankly out at blackness and the scattered stars. "I know there is a ship out there, and I know that a ship simply can't be invisible, not to radar *and* optics."

"What makes you sure there is only one, sir?"

Heselton cracked his fists together. "My God, Rogers, you're right! There might be ..."

The intercom clacked. "This is fire control again, sir. I think we've got

something on the radiation detectors."

"Good work, what did you find?"

"Slight radioactivity, typical of interstellar drive mechanisms, somewhere off to our right. Can't tell exactly where, though."

"How far away is it?"

"I don't know, sir."

Heselton's hands dropped to his sides. "Thanks," he said, "for the help."

His desk tv flashed into life with a picture of the smiling alien commander. "This is the linguistics section, Admiral. The aliens understand a fairly common galactic symbology, I believe we can translate simple messages for you now."

"Ask him where the hell he is," Heselton snapped without thinking, then instantly regretted it as the alien's face showed unmistakable surprise.

The alien's smile grew into an almost unbelievable grin. He turned sideways to speak to someone out of sight of the camera and suddenly burst into a series of roaring cackles. "He's laughing, sir." The translator commented unnecessarily.

The joke was strictly with the aliens. Heselton's face whitened in quick realization. "Rogers! They *didn't know* that we can't see them!"

"Look, sir." The navigator pointed to the tv screen and a brilliantly clear image of Big Joe shimmering against the galaxy, lit by millions of stars. Every missile port, even the military numerals along her nose were clearly visible.

"They're rubbing it in, Rogers. Showing us what we look like to

them." Heselton's face was chalk. "They could blast Big Joe apart, piece by piece—the most powerful ship in the galaxy."

"Maybe," said Rogers, "the second most powerful."

Without answering, Heselton turned and looked out again at empty space and millions of steady, unwinking stars. His mind formed an image of a huge, ethereal spaceship, missile ports open, weapons aimed directly at Big Joe.

The speaker interrupted his nightmare. "This is fire control, Admiral. With your permission I'll scatter a few C-bombs ..."

Heselton leaped for the microphone. "Are you out of your mind? We haven't the slightest idea of the forces that guy has. We might be in the center of a whole blooming fleet. Ever think of that?"

The alien's face, still smirking, appeared again on the screen. "He says," said the interpreter, "that he finds the presence of our armed ship very annoying."

Heselton knew what he had to do. "Tell him," he said, swallowing hard, "that we apologize. This part of the galaxy is strange to us."

"He says he is contemplating blasting us out of the sky."

Heselton said nothing, but he longed to reach out and throttle the grinning, alien face.

"However," the interpreter continued, "he will let us go safely if we leave immediately. He says to send an unarmed, diplomatic vessel next time and maybe his people will talk to us."

"Thank him for his kindness." Heselton's jaws clenched so tightly they ached.

"He says," said the interpreter, "to get the hell out."

The grinning face snapped off the screen, but the cackling laughter continued to reverberate in the control room until the radio shack finally turned off the receiver.

"Reverse course," the admiral ordered quietly. "Maximum drive."

A thousand missile launchers, designed to disintegrate solar systems, were deactivated, hundreds of gyros swung the mile-long ship end for end and stabilized her on a reverse course, drive units big enough to power several major cities whined into operation, anti-grav generators with the strength to shift small planets counterbalanced the external acceleration, and the ship moved, away, with a speed approaching that of light.

"Well," muttered Heselton, "that's the very first time Big Joe has ever had to retreat." As if it were his own personal failure, he walked slowly across the control room and down the corridor towards his cabin.

"Admiral!" Lost in thought, Heselton barely heard the call.

"Admiral, look!" Pausing at the door to his cabin, Heselton turned to face the ship's chief astronomer running up waving two large photographs.

"Look, sir," the professor gasped for breath. "We thought this was a spot on the negative, but one of the men got curious and enlarged it about a hundred times." He held up one of the photos. It showed a small, fuzzy, but unmistakable spaceship. "No wonder we couldn't spot it with our instruments."

Heselton snatched it out of his hand. "I see what you mean. This ship must have been thousands of miles ..."

The professor shook his head. "No, sir. As a matter of fact, it was quite close by."

"But ..."

"We figure that the total length of the alien ship was roughly an inch and a half."

THE END

Transcriber's Note:

This etext was produced from *Amazing Science Fiction Stories* January 1960. Extensive research did not uncover any evidence that the U.S. copyright on this publication was renewed. Minor spelling and typographical errors have been corrected without note.

End of the Project Gutenberg EBook of A Matter of Magnitude, by Al Sevcik

*** END OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A MATTER OF MAGNITUDE ***

***** This file should be named 24927-h.htm or 24927-h.zip *****
This and all associated files of various formats will be found in:
<http://www.gutenberg.org/2/4/9/2/24927/>

Produced by Greg Weeks, Stephen Blundell and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>

Updated editions will replace the previous one--the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from public domain print editions means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation

(and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to

copying and distributing Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for the eBooks, unless you receive specific permission. If you

do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the rules is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. They may be modified and printed and given away--you may do

practically ANYTHING with public domain eBooks. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

*** START: FULL LICENSE ***

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg-tm mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work

(or any other work associated in any way with the phrase "Project Gutenberg"), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project

Gutenberg-tm License (available with this file or online at <http://gutenberg.net/license>).

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. "Project Gutenberg" is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation ("the Foundation" or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is in the public domain in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg

are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg-tm mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg-tm works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg-tm name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg-tm License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg-tm work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country outside the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg-tm License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg-tm work (any work on which the phrase "Project Gutenberg" appears, or with which the phrase "Project Gutenberg" is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.net

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work is derived from the public domain (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase "Project Gutenberg" associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg-tm License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg-tm License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg-tm.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg-tm License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any

word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg-tm work in a format other than "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg-tm web site (www.gutenberg.net), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg-tm License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg-tm works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works provided that

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg-tm works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies

you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg-tm License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg-tm works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from both the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and Michael Hart, the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread public domain works in creating the Project Gutenberg-tm collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project

Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH F3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS' WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages.

If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg-tm work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg-tm work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg-tm

Project Gutenberg-tm is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need, is critical to reaching Project Gutenberg-tm's goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg-tm collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a

secure
and permanent future for Project Gutenberg-tm and future
generations.
To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive
Foundation
and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4
and the Foundation web page at <http://www.pglaf.org>.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non profit
501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the
state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal
Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax
identification
number is 64-6221541. Its 501(c)(3) letter is posted at
<http://pglaf.org/fundraising>. Contributions to the Project
Gutenberg
Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent
permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's principal office is located at 4557 Melan Dr. S.
Fairbanks, AK, 99712., but its volunteers and employees are
scattered
throughout numerous locations. Its business office is located at
809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887,
email
business@pglaf.org. Email contact links and up to date contact
information can be found at the Foundation's web site and official
page at <http://pglaf.org>

For additional contact information:
Dr. Gregory B. Newby
Chief Executive and Director
gbnewby@pglaf.org

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg-tm depends upon and cannot survive without wide
spread public support and donations to carry out its mission of
increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can
be

freely distributed in machine readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit <http://pglaf.org>

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg Web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: <http://pglaf.org/donate>

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works.

Professor Michael S. Hart is the originator of the Project Gutenberg-tm concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For thirty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg-tm eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg-tm eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as Public Domain in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our Web site which has the main PG search facility:

<http://www.gutenberg.net>

This Web site includes information about Project Gutenberg-tm, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.