

THE LOCKSHIN MONSTERS

by W.W. Hodowanic

Did you happen to see the monsters? Scarier than Vincent Price, more insidious than water, and as unwanted as Dick Nixon's jowls.

The Lockshins.

The intrepid (or is that tepid?) Phil Donahue confronted these bizarre creatures.

These Lockshins cunningly appeared to the naked eye as a "normal" family — father, mother, three children.

The guile-soaked American audience was having none of it, for they knew of the Lockshins. These fiends had performed the unspeakable. Worse than crawling on the ground. The Lockshins had moved to Russia. To live.

No job transfer, no sabbatical, no moving vans for them. They had decided to kiss it all off — home, cars, VCR — taking cash on hand to Moscow.

"America! Love it or leave it!" the audience-muttering seemed to rumble. Or were they just totally unable to accept the graphic example of a whole American family going over the wall the wrong way?

Option explanation: Lockshins are aliens.

Mr. Lockshin did most of the talking. While reclining in an armchair, Lockshin persistently, and sometimes stridently, told an account of being followed, hounded, and harassed. The teenaged daughter corroborated on this.

The father complained of tapped telephones, continuing misstatements on bank accounts, credit cards, and utilities bills. For years, according to the Lockshins.

Mrs. Lockshin mentioned many obscene phone calls, only when her husband was out. It was wily of her to look pretty in an intelligent way.

Mr. Lockshin seemed to think that the CIA directed this operation and that, immediately preceding their relocation, had gotten Mr. Lockshin fired from his research position. Further, he asserted that the CIA had destroyed his research project and killed the research animals. He used the word "obscene."

The U.S. government has characterized Mr. Lockshin as "paranoid," "unbalanced," and "asocial" (could be a heavy metal musician).

Dr. Lockshin spoke of 1986 as his "most productive year" professionally, with three "papers" published and five more in various stages of publication. "You can look them up," he concluded.

The USSR had no difficulty in assigning Lockshin to head a Russian research facility.

Lockshin seemed to believe that his concerns about U.S. involvement in nuclear weaponry and "killing people in Nicaragua" had brought forth the CIA into his private life.

A "normal" man-in-the-audience stood up for American values and thoughtfully stated,



"I have no sympathy with anything Mr. Lockshin has done." Applause, loud and at length. United.

And then, late in the hour, a woman from Texas called in to say that she had experienced the same violations of her American convenience and civil rights.

Some half-hearted jeers could not settle the listeners' minds as to whether this woman had too been dogged by her own covert government or had simply gone 'round the bend. Did she

hang out at playgrounds and give copies of "Pravda" to children, or had she simply been raped by a minority, had her child stolen, buried her teenage suicides, given a ride to a serial killer hitchhiker, or been caught in the middle of a fundamentalist terrorist firebombing of a family planning clinic?

We'll not know because she was cut off for a commercial.

Following this, the audience seemed to be less contentious toward the defectors.

Had they had a glimpse of the possibility that, for an anti-nuclear yard sign or a beer-induced moment of verbal sedition ("somebody oughta hang that s.o.b.!!"), they might be next? Was there an apartment somewhere in Moscow with their name on it?

Taking into account all of the times that the Reagan Administration has been caught impersonating a kid before dinner, with his/her hand caught in a cookie jar, the audience faced some doubts.

Could privacy be taken for granted when the holy ghost of national security spoke for the government and said that there never was a cookie jar? Moreover, the chimera will assure us that its hand had never been in the cookie jar (once removed). If all else fails, without any moral qualm, admit the charge, but demand not to be named. By all means, feel good about it.

Were the Lockshins traitors, dupes, monsters, or had they opted out of being the cookies in that jar?

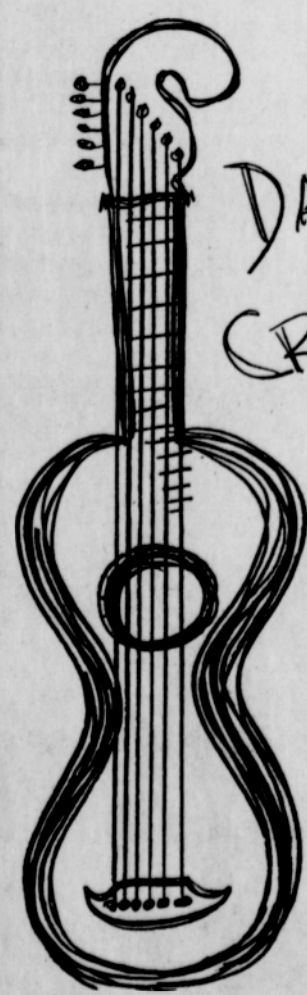
The audience rallied and repeatedly challenged the Lockshins, one and all, to appear again with Phil in one year's time. There was some feeling that "We'll see then," based on the belief that the Lockshins would come to know that the KGB computer was more evil than the CIA computer and that Russians killing Afghans was more inhumane than Americans contracting out on the lives of Nicaraguans.

The Lockshins, seemingly N.O.D.ers (Not On Drugs), heartily agreed to return in a year.

Right here! In a year! Though known to be living in the constant company of communists: the Lockshins!

But then, a year from now, if the President's spelling doesn't improve (i.e., he spells integrity "D-E-A-V-E-R" and honest "D-O-N-O-V-A-N"), there may be a fundamental movement seeking to name the dictionary as subversive literature. It could be a long year.

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