

The Project Gutenberg eBook of Proof of the Pudding, by Robert Sheckley

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world 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.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Proof of the Pudding

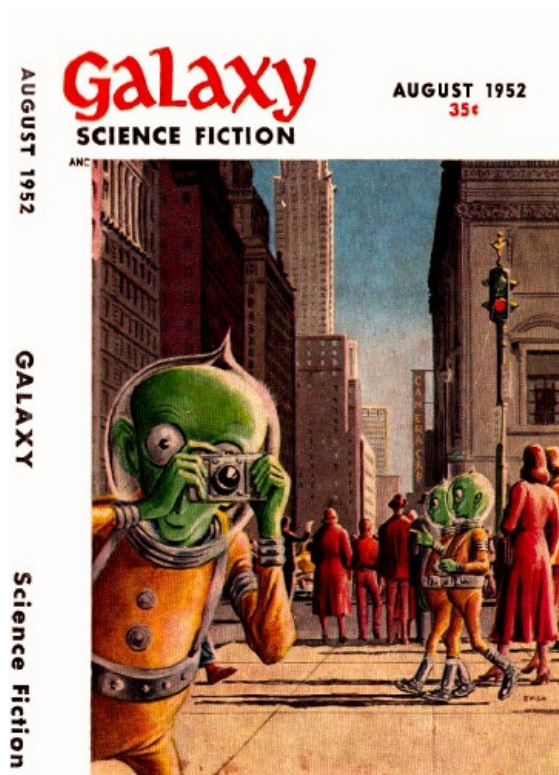
Author: Robert Sheckley
Illustrator: Ed Emshwiller

Release date: January 4, 2016 [EBook #50844]

Language: English

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

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PROOF OF THE PUDDING ***



Proof of the Pudding

By ROBERT SHECKLEY

Illustrated by WILLER

**[Transcriber's Note: This etext was produced from
Galaxy Science Fiction August 1952.
Extensive research did not uncover any evidence
that the U.S. copyright on this publication was renewed.]**



***One man's fact is fantasy for another—except
the man whose fantasies become solid facts!***

His arms were very tired, but he lifted the chisel and mallet again. He was almost through; only a few more letters and the inscription, cut deeply into the tough granite, would be finished. He rounded out the last period and straightened up, dropping his tools carelessly to the floor of the cave. Proudly he wiped the perspiration from his dirty stubbled face and read what he had written.

I ROSE FROM THE SLIME OF THE PLANET. NAKED
AND DEFENSELESS, I FASHIONED TOOLS. I BUILT AND
DEMOLISHED, CREATED AND DESTROYED. I CREATED A
THING GREATER THAN MYSELF THAT DESTROYED ME.

MY NAME IS MAN AND THIS IS MY LAST WORK.

He smiled. What he had written was good. Not literary enough, perhaps, but a fitting tribute to the human race, written by the last man. He glanced at the tools at his feet. Having no further use for them, he dissolved them, and, hungry from his long work, squatted in the rubble of the cave and created a dinner. He stared at the food for a moment, wondering what was lacking; then, sheepishly, created a table and chair, utensils and plates. He was embarrassed. He had forgotten them again.

Although there was no need to rush, he ate hurriedly, noting the odd fact that when he didn't think of anything specific, he always created hamburger, mashed potatoes, peas, bread and ice cream. Habit, he decided. Finished, he made the remnants of the meal disappear, and with them the plates, utensils and table. The chair he retained. Sitting on it, he stared thoughtfully at the inscription. *It's fine*, he thought, *but no human other than myself will ever read it.*

It was fairly certain that he was the last man alive on the Earth. The war had been thorough. Thorough as only man, a meticulous animal, could make it. There had been no neutrals in this war, no middle-of-the-road policy. You were on one side or the other. Bacteria, gas and radiations had covered the Earth like a vast cloud. In the first days of that war, invincible secret weapon had succeeded secret weapon with almost monotonous regularity. And after the last hand had pushed the last button, the bombs, automatically guided and impelled, had continued to rain down. The unhappy Earth was a huge junkyard, without a living thing, plant or animal, from pole to pole.

He had watched a good part of it. He had waited until he was fairly sure the last bomb had been dropped; then he had come down.

Very clever of you, he thought bitterly, looking out the mouth of the cave at the lava plain his ship rested on, and at the twisted mountains behind it.

You're a traitor—but who cares?

He had been a captain in the Western Hemisphere Defense. Within two days of warfare, he had known what the end would be. Filling a cruiser with canned air, food and water, he had fled. In the confusion and destruction, he knew that he would never be missed; after a few days there was no one left to miss him. He had raced the big ship to the dark side of the Moon, and waited. It was a twelve-day war—he had guessed it would last fourteen—but he had to wait nearly six

months before the automatic missiles stopped falling. Then he had come down.

To find himself the only survivor....

He had expected others to recognize the futility of it, load ships and flock to the dark side of the Moon also. Evidently there had been no time, even if there had been the desire. He had thought that there would be scattered groups of survivors, but he hadn't found any. The war had been too thorough.

Landing on the Earth should have killed him, for the air itself was poisoned. He hadn't cared—and he had lived. He seemed to be immune to the various kinds of germs and radiations, or perhaps that was part of his new power. He certainly had encountered enough of both, skipping around the world in his ship, from the ruins of one city to another, across blasted valleys and plains, scorched mountains. He had found no life, but he did discover something.

He could create. He realized the power on his third day on Earth. Wistfully, he had wished for a tree in the midst of the melted rock and metal; a tree had appeared. The rest of the day he experimented, and found that he could create anything that he had ever seen or heard about.

Things he knew best, he could create best. Things he knew just from books or conversation—palaces, for example—tended to be lopsided and uncertain, although he could make them nearly perfect by laboring mentally over the details. Everything he created was three-dimensional. Even food tasted like food and seemed to nourish him. He could forget all about one of his creations, go to sleep, and it would still be there when he awakened. He could also uncreate. A single concentrated thought and the thing he had made would vanish. The larger the thing, the longer it took to uncreate.

Things he *hadn't* made—valleys and mountains—he could uncreate, too, but it took longer. It seemed as though matter was easier to handle once he had shaped it. He could make birds and small animals, or things that looked like birds and small animals.

He had never tried to make a human being.

He wasn't a scientist; he had been a space-pilot. He had a vague concept of atomic theory and practically no idea of genetics. He thought that some change must have taken place in his germ-plasm, or in his brain, or perhaps in the Earth. The "why" of it all didn't especially bother him. It was a fact and he accepted it.

He stared at the monument again. Something about it bothered him.

Of course, he could have created it, but he didn't know if the things he made would endure after his death. They seemed stable enough, but they might dissolve with his own dissolution. Therefore he compromised. He created a chisel and mallet, but selected a granite wall that he hadn't made. He cut the letters into the inside of the wall of the cave so they would be safe from the elements, working many hours at a stretch, sleeping and eating beside the wall.

From the mouth of the cave, he could see his ship, perched on a level plain of scorched ground. He was in no rush to get back to it. In six days the inscription was done, cut deeply and eternally into the rock.

The thought that had been bothering him as he stared at the gray granite finally came to the surface. The only people who would come to read it would be visitors from the stars. How would they decipher it? He stared at the inscription angrily. He should have written it in symbols. But what kind of symbols? Mathematics? Of course, but what would that tell them about Man? And what made him think *they* would discover the cave anyway? There was no use for an inscription when Man's entire history was written over the face of the planet, scorched into the crust for anyone to see. He cursed his stupidity for wasting six days working at the useless inscription. He was about to uncreate it when he turned his head, hearing footsteps at the mouth of the cave.

He almost fell off the chair getting to his feet.

A girl was standing there. He blinked rapidly, and she was still there, a tall, dark-haired girl dressed in a torn, dirty one-piece coverall.

"Hi," she said, and walked into the cave. "I heard your hammer from the valley."

Automatically, he offered her his chair and created another for himself. She tested it gingerly before she sat down.

"I saw you do it," she said, "but I still don't believe it. Mirrors?"

"No," he muttered uncertainly. "I create. That is, I have the power to—wait a minute! How did you get here?" While he was demanding to know, he was considering and rejecting possibilities. Hidden in a cave? On a mountain top? No, there would be only one possible way....

"I was in your ship, pal." She leaned back in the chair and clasped her hands around one knee. "When you loaded up that cruiser, I figured you were going to beat it. I was getting tired of setting fuses eighteen hours a day, so I stowed away. Anybody else alive?"

"No. Why didn't I see you, then?" He stared at the ragged, beautiful girl, and a vague thought

crossed his mind. He reached out and touched her arm. She didn't draw back, but her pretty face grew annoyed.

"I'm real," she said bluntly. "You must have seen me at the base. Remember?"

He tried to think back to the time when there had been a base—centuries ago, it seemed. There *had* been a dark-haired girl there, one who had never given him a tumble.

"I think I froze to death," she was saying. "Or into coma, anyhow, a few hours after your ship took off. Lousy heating system you have in that crate!" She shivered reminiscently.

"Would have used up too much oxygen," he explained. "Just kept the pilot's compartment heated and aired. Used a suit to drag supplies forward when I needed them."

"I'm glad you didn't see me," she laughed. "I must have looked like the devil, all covered with frost and killed, I bet. Some sleeping beauty I probably made! Well, I froze. When you opened all the compartments, I revived. That's the whole story. Guess it took a few days. How come you didn't see me?"

"I suppose I never looked back there," he admitted. "Quick enough, I found I didn't need supplies. Funny, I thought I opened all the compartments, but I don't really remember—"

She looked at the inscription on the wall. "What's that?"

"I thought I'd leave a sort of monument—"

"Who's going to read it?" she asked practically.

"No one, probably. It was just a foolish idea." He concentrated on it. In a few moments the granite wall was bare. "I still don't understand how you could be alive now," he said puzzled.

"But I am. I don't see how you do that—" she gestured at the chair and wall—"But I'll accept the fact that you can. Why don't you accept the fact that I'm alive?"

"Don't get me wrong," the man said. "I want company very much, especially female company. It's just—Turn your back."

She complied, with a questioning look. Quickly he destroyed the stubble on his face and created a clean pair of pressed pants and a shirt. Stepping out of his tattered uniform, he put on the new clothes, destroyed the rags, and, on an afterthought, created a comb and straightened his tangled brown hair.

"All right," he said. "You can turn back now."

"Not bad," she smiled, looking him over. "Let me use that comb—and would you please make me a dress? Size twelve, but see that the weight goes in the right places."

On the third attempt he had the thing right—he had never realized how deceptive the shapes of women could be—and then he made a pair of gold sandals with high heels for her.

"A little tight," she said, putting them on, "and not too practical without sidewalks. But thanks much. This trick of yours really solves the Christmas present problem, doesn't it?" Her dark hair was shiny in the noon sun, and she looked very lovely and warm and human.

"See if *you* can create," he urged, anxious to share his startling new ability with her.

"I've already tried," she said. "No go. Still a man's world."

He frowned. "How can I be absolutely sure you're real?"

"That again? Do you remember creating me, Master?" she asked mockingly, bending to loosen the strap on one shoe.

"I had been thinking—about women," he said grimly. "I might have created you while I was asleep. Why shouldn't my subconscious mind have as much power as my conscious mind? I would have equipped you with a memory, given you a background. You would have been extremely plausible. And if my subconscious mind *did* create you, then it would make certain that my conscious mind would never know."

"You're ridiculous!"

"Because if my conscious mind knew," he went on relentlessly, "it would reject your existence. Your entire function, as a creation of my subconscious, would be to keep me from knowing. To prove, by any means in your power, by any logic, that you were—"

"Let's see you make a woman, then, if your mind is so good!" She crossed her arms and leaned back in the chair, giving a single sharp nod.

"All right." He stared at the cave wall and a woman started to appear. It took shape sloppily, one arm too short, legs too long. Concentrating harder, he was able to make its proportions fairly true. But its eyes were set at an odd angle; its shoulders and back were sloped and twisted. He had created a shell without brains or internal organs, an automaton. He commanded it to speak, but only gulps came from the shapeless mouth; he hadn't given it any vocal apparatus. Shuddering, he destroyed the nightmare figure.



"I'm not a sculptor," he said. "Nor am I God."

"I'm glad you finally realize that."

"That still doesn't prove," he continued stubbornly, "that *you're* real. I don't know what my subconscious mind is capable of."

"Make something for me," she said abruptly. "I'm tired of listening to this nonsense."

I've hurt her feelings, he thought. *The only other human on Earth and I've hurt her*. He nodded, took her by the hand and led her out of the cave. On the flat plain below he created a city. He had experimented with it a few days back, and it was much easier this time. Patterned after pictures and childhood dreams of the Thousand and One Nights, it towered black and white and rose. The walls were gleaming ruby, and the gates were of silver-stained ebony. The towers were red gold, and sapphires glittered in them. A great staircase of milky ivory climbed to the highest opal spire, set with thousands of steps of veined marble. There were lagoons of blue water, and little birds fluttered above them, and silver and gold fish darted through the still depths.

They walked through the city, and he created roses for her, white and yellow and red, and gardens of strange blossoms. Between two domed and spired buildings he created a vast pool of water; on it he put a purple-canopied pleasure barge, loading it with every kind of food and drink he could remember.

They floated across the lagoon, fanned by the soft breeze he had created.

"And all this is false," he reminded her after a little while.

She smiled. "No it's not. You can touch it. It's real."

"Will it be here after I die?"

"Who cares? Besides, if you can do all this, you can cure any sickness. Perhaps you can even cure old age and death." She plucked a blossom from an over-hanging bough and sniffed its fragrance. "You could keep this from fading and dying. You could probably do the same for us, so where's the problem?"

"Would you like to go away?" he said, puffing on a newly created cigarette. "Would you like to find a new planet, untouched by war? Would you like to start over?"

"Start over? You mean.... Later perhaps. Now I don't even want to go near the ship. It reminds me of the war."

They floated on a little way.

"Are you sure now that I'm real?" she asked.

"If you want me to be honest, no," he replied. "But I want very much to believe it."

"Then listen to me," she said, leaning toward him. "I'm real." She slipped her arms around his neck. "I've always been real. I always will be real. You want proof? Well, I know I'm real. So do you. What more can you ask?"

He stared at her for a long moment, felt her warm arms around his neck, listened to her breathing. He could smell the fragrance of her skin and hair, the unique essence of an individual.

Slowly he said, "I believe you. I love you. What—what is your name?"

She thought for a moment. "Joan."

"Strange," he said. "I always dreamed of a girl named Joan. What's your last name?"

She kissed him.

Overhead, the swallows he had created—*his* swallows—wheeled in wide circles above the lagoon, his fish darted aimlessly to and fro, and his city stretched, proud and beautiful, to the edge of the twisted lava mountains.

"You didn't tell me your last name," he said.

"Oh, that. A girl's maiden name never matters—she always takes her husband's."

"That's an evasion!"

She smiled. "It is, isn't it?"

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PROOF OF THE PUDDING ***

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

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law 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™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. 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™ 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™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

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

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ 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™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ 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™ 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™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ 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™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law 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™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing

Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ 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™ 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™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than 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™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ 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 in the United States and most other parts of the world 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.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (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™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ 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™ 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™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

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™ 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™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), 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™ 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™ 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™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ 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

- 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™ 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™ 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™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ 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 works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ 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™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ 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 1.F.3. 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™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ 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™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ 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 are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ 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™ 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 information page at www.gutenberg.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. 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 business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

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

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread 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 www.gutenberg.org/donate.

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 checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

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

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright 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 website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, 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.