

# Fantasia



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# Fantasia

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Lou Goldstone

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# Remember?

HAROLD ELLIOT

The bartender's face seemed to be drifting gently away into undulating shadow, a nebulous white blur with indistinct features. I looked at Lorraine, cool and glowing and very beautiful, and at Bob, chalky and haggard and suffering. My own forehead was still burning with the recollection of how I had failed to recognize Bob for a moment, and had hesitated with every nerve in my body jangling, when Lorraine had first spotted him as we entered.

The atmosphere - the mellow darkness of the place was beginning to close in around me now like a soft slumber; the music was the faint tremble of elfin drums, the lights like distant fairy-lanterns dimly seen in an enchanted glade. Gradually, I felt all the sharp tenseness draining out of me; my mind and body were relaxing, and a delicious dreamy lassitude was stealing over my senses. It was a mood for reverie, the kind of a mood that claims one completely on such occasions.

When the drinks were before us on the table, I tinkled the ice absently against my glass and tried to think of something to say. Perhaps it was the semi-darkness, but Bob seemed to have changed since we had sat down together. His features were still white and drawn, as if he had been through some frightful ordeal, but his eyes, at first merely dead shadowy pits in his head, looked at me now with an intensity that was almost frightening. His eyes were burning, actually burning like two hot coals. I glanced at Lorraine, by my side. She, too, must have noticed the way Bob looked; she sat stiffly, almost trance-like, and the healthy color had vanished from her face, giving way to a stealthy pallor.

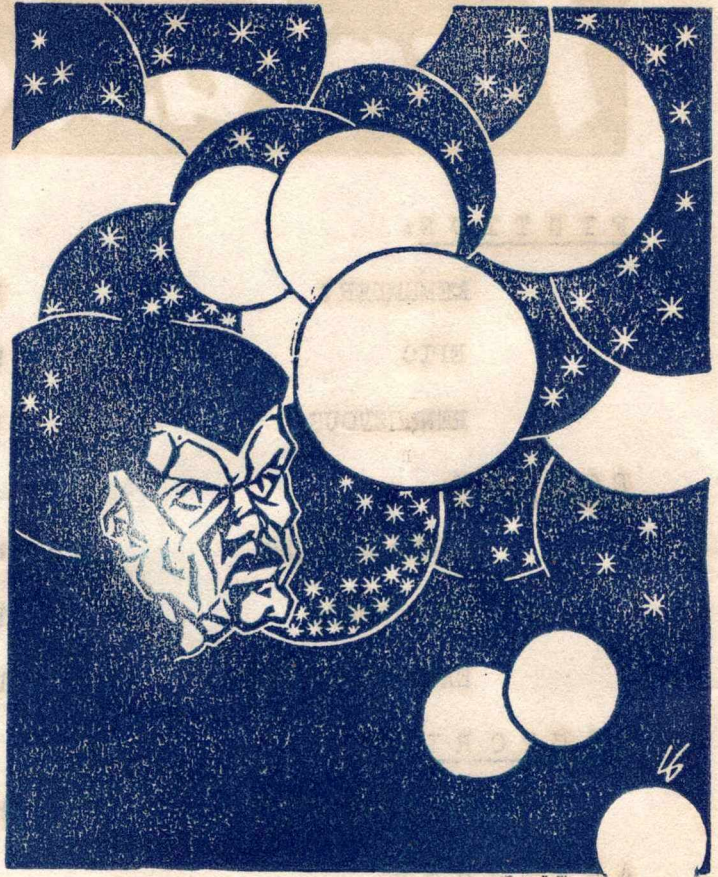
I must have laughed rather feebly, and I know my innocuous remark sounded forced and grotesque. "Well, Bob," I faltered, "it's good to see you again. You're looking well..." I failed miserably to put unfelt conviction into those words. I knew something was wrong - damned wrong.

Lorraine mumbled something unintelligible in the same general vein as my comment. Bob seemed to ignore her completely. A wry, sarcastic smile twisted his pallid lips, and he looked at me as a broken-down prospector might look at an incredibly rich deposit of gold stumbled on by accident.

"You're exaggerating, Len. I look rotten and I know it; but the - the shock of finding out exactly how things stand was pretty severe. It laid me low..."

I turned it over in my mind for a moment. Bob looked washed-out, but he wasn't plastered; that I knew. But he was talking in riddles.

I asked him if anything was wrong. I hadn't seen him in a week, and a lot can





happen in that much time. "If there's anything I can do - if there's anything either of us can do," I told him, indicating Lorraine, "we'll do it..."

He replied dryly, but the light in back of his eyes was eager, and I could feel his whole body tensing; it was in the air, like a silent electrical discharge.

"It's enough that I've found you," he said. There was a pause, and he went on, his voice higher this time. "I've been going crazy, Len. It was only two nights ago that I remembered. Suddenly; in the middle of a dream. When it hit me, my whole false, beautiful world came crashing down around my ears... I'm not the same any more, Len, and I wasn't sure until just now that there was another like me..."

For some reason, a cold blade tore up my spine, and I could feel my knuckles tingling. Bob was different, all right. I didn't know what the nature of the change was, but something deep inside my brain was howling and screaming for me to get out of that place and away. It required a physical effort to remain in my seat, but I managed it, and regarded Bob inquisitively.

"I'm afraid I don't know what you mean," I said.

Bob smiled even more broadly, and his eyes were - yes, sinister. Alarms were going off inside me. I don't think I'll ever experience that feeling again. Something about this man was arousing portions of my mind whose existence I had never even suspected, impelling them to erect defenses which are not needed in the course of an ordinary lifetime.

"Yes you do," Bob was saying. "I wouldn't talk about it to strangers, myself; I know there must be some like us - some who did talk - raving in padded cells right now. I've no such ambitions..."

I started to cut in. "Listen, Bob..."

"Wait a moment. I've been lonely, Len. All alone in a world of madmen and fools, ever since I remembered. But when you and Lorraine came in here this evening, I sensed your presence. Didn't you sense it too, Len; didn't you feel it? Don't you understand that I've remembered, just as you have? I'm not one of the others, Len; I'm like you!"

Bob was talking loud; too loud. I put my hand across the table and grasped his arm. "Listen," I whispered, "I don't know what this is all about, but keep your voice down - if only out of consideration for Lorraine!"

Then I remembered that Lorraine hadn't said a word. She was white as a sheet, and I could feel her arm trembling where it touched mine. Resentment against Bob boiled up within me.

"I think we'd better leave," I told Lorraine. She put out a restraining hand.

"No... Let's stay. I'm all right," she said. As she looked at me and then back at Bob, I thought I detected tears welling up in her eyes.

There was nothing to do but assent, and I did it grumblingly, ungracefully. I didn't want to act like a dolt, but Bob was making a fool of himself and of us, too.

He muttered an apology. "You may have remembered some time ago, Len. If you did, you've controlled yourself damned well. But - this thing has nearly killed me. You know that I took life rather seriously; I was smug and satisfied and confident. A man can take a lot of punishment, Len, but when he has the earth knocked right out from under him - when he suddenly finds that there is nothing he can have faith in, no basis for his confidence in himself and in his kind - it's enough to send him off the deep end..."

"I don't know anything about your personal affairs," I interrupted, "but I've already told you that we'll help you in any way we can." I was getting more than a bit fed up on Bob's drivel. "But, good Lord, man, talk sense!"

"You still don't believe me?" Bob's expression was one of cynical amusement.

"Believe you, hell! I don't understand you!"

"Don't you trust Lorraine?" he asked. "Don't you want her to know?"

That was almost too much. Lorraine and I were going to be married in a month. I had known Bob for six years, and Lorraine had known him for five. I felt that he was taking advantage of our friendship, making remarks that he knew no other man could



get away with. I held myself in, and reminded him cuttingly that he was overstepping the bounds of decorum, and that I didn't like it.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I'm not entirely responsible tonight. Forgive me, Lorraine."

Lorraine just looked at him. Her lips moved, but she didn't utter a sound.

"It might be a good idea if you explained yourself," I suggested.

Bob nodded, and smiled again. "I will," he said. "This is all very new to me, and although I can't imagine what you're so reticent about, I suppose you have good reasons."

"I repeat, Len, that I'm like you. I was lost and foundering - going slightly mad I think - until you and Lorraine came in this evening. Even before Lorraine called to me, I felt your presence. I knew that someone else who had remembered was near. Do you understand?"

I grinned and shook my head. "No," I said, truthfully.

A shadow of ardor momentarily crossed Bob's features. Whatever was troubling him, he was taking it very seriously.

"Yes you do," he said wearily. The old burning light came back into his eyes. "I remembered as I slept, Len. I woke up soaking with cold sweat. Oh, God! The whole world - false! A colossal lie!"

"I think it must be an ancestral memory, like instinct. The memory of insects. I think it must be in all of us, lying dormant. Not many remember at all, Len. And that's a good thing, too. If a million people awoke sweating, tonight, with the realization of what and why man is, and what and why and how the world and the universe is, there would be no more world as we know it..."

"This isn't our world any more, Len. When I saw you tonight, and realized that you had the memory, it was like finding another man on a desolate planet that you had thought totally dead!"

"Oh, hell!" I muttered. It was Greek, Sanskrit.

Bob was oblivious. He went on in a mechanical daze. "We know, now, that things are not what they seem. It's a race-memory, Len, something we never knew we had. And it's too heavy a load for one man to bear alone. To know - to know what it means! The stupid world, the senseless whirl of life, the lights of the city; the damnable, arrogant conceit of mankind! The blind, unreasoning pride of the little beasts, ignorant of what they are and why, and how they came here. The rotten, lying theories and explanations. Theories to account for everything - and all of them lies!"

Perspiration was streaming down Bob's face, and down my own. It was torture, just listening to him. There was something within me trying - trying to remember. I knew that I couldn't quite grasp it...

"All this pomp and pageantry, Len. God! If they only knew! What would they do if they all should remember; if they all should see the truth about the universe - about themselves! What of their pride! If they should remember, as you and I have remembered!"

Something burst in my brain. "Damn you!" I shouted, "I don't know what you're talking about! You're crazy!"

Bob was stunned. But Lorraine was on her feet beside me. "Len," she said, "Bob is right... Only," she turned and smiled at him, tears wetting her cheeks, "he made a slight mistake... It wasn't you, Len, who he sensed when we came in... It was me I've known for a long time; I remembered nearly a year ago..."

It was Bob's gain and my loss. He was right; a man can take a lot of punishment without folding up. Had Lorraine left me under different circumstances, I would have thought the world had come to an end... But now there is something infinitely more horrible. It is worse than the loss of a woman you love. It is the loss of my faith in the things I had always taken for granted; the loss of confidence in myself and in my egotistical world. It is the killing certainty that there is a great, terrible knowledge buried in my mind, and the constant tortured groping for something that I cannot quite remember.



## FOUND WANTING

By Lou Goldstone

All night the torture-timbrels roared and pulsed along the fen  
And echoed in the riven gorge and muttered in the glen  
And rumbled on the dusky plain and mumbled in the grove  
And thundered on the briny beach where moon-swept billows drove

All night the murder-beacons burned on eastern palisades  
And kindled in the western hills a copse of bloody blades  
And smoldered on the northern peaks in ominous array  
And lit a flickering pharos-flame above the southern spray

And serf and nobleman alike beheld the charnel glare  
And swarthy mariners at sea gave pause awhile to stare  
And moated fort and hovel trembled at the hollow sound  
And shepherds felt sepulchral drums a-throbbing in the ground

And north and south and east and west the land was all ablaze  
And proud Gondwana revelled in a wine-besotted haze  
And north and south and east and west the slaughter-signals boomed  
And bright Gondwana fed its lusts and spat upon the doomed

And forging from a bleak frontier Prince Laucon saw and heard  
And thought to hasten his return and laughed and gave the word  
And twenty thousand sabres rode behind his feathered helm  
And treasure-caravans to fill the coffers of the realm

Aye, twenty thousand fighting men that sacked a dozen lands  
And raped a dozen capitols with sword and arson-brands  
Yet as they rode there was not one that cast a glance on high  
To see the cryptic symbols wheeling in a hooded sky

And tall Gondwana rocked with mirth and dreamed a drunken dream  
And battlements and streets and pleasure-turrets shone agleam  
And torches filled its winding ways and spices clogged its marts  
And flowing gold bought silks and gems and women's velvet hearts

No merry lord nor scrawny thief nor man in brazen mail  
But wolfed his feast and had his wench and swilled his brimming ale  
And offered incense to his Gods and heard the trumpets bray  
And knew that blood would flow like wine with coming of the day

Aye, dark Gondwana thought the blood of slaves would stain the flags  
Of twenty thousand prisoned thralls in chains and sodden rags  
For none looked up the ciphered sky to see the churning runes  
And none thought Laucon's plumed crest within a dozen moons

None knew that by the noonward sun the streets indeed were red  
With gore of king and sycophant in sotted slumber dead  
None knew that on the temple steps the noonward sun would see  
Prince Laucon's banners blazing as he set the captives free



# EPIC

By GEORGE ROWSE

He sat on a lonely hill, a tall gaunt man with a face like a bony mask. His eyes caught the fire of the glowing sunset and burned in fanatical reflection. This was our Last Poet - and the last man alive on Earth.

How long has this grim figure sat staring into immensity on the crest of that mountain? Do not ask him for he could not tell. Ages, days, hours, perhaps eons - all are one now with the Last Poet.

No expression crosses his silent features except for a momentary flash of eagerness, expectancy. The Last Poet is waiting the end of the Earth, the hour of complete oblivion.

The Poet rises to his feet, his thin angular frame shadowing the blood-red earth before him. In one hand, pencil and paper which seem strangely incongruous in this wild terrain of lonely desolation; his other hand shades his eyes as he stares into that crimson sunset. The Earth is dying. The sunset is a garish pool of Earth's life blood slowly leaking into the sky. So thinks the Poet. So he had always thought since childhood.

Childhood. A dim, shadowy, non-existing memory of the past. The hour is approaching for the magnificent climax, but there is time still to think - to ponder and dream. Poetry, literature, drama - all had swept before the Poet's eyes during his lifetime. Dusty archives and hidden libraries had produced shoddy but readable manuscripts of the great writers of millions of years in the past. He had read them all, read their contemporaries; all had passed before his devouring eyes and all had left him untouched, uninspired, dull.

Then the Poet had determined to find one great poem, one savage symphony of descriptive beauty before he died; one work that would stir and move his inner soul. He had determined this, but his determination was not realized. For read he might all that had been written, all the yellowed sheets of ageless parchments, all the pitiful, striving creations of thousands of despairing writers, all - to no avail. Still he found nothing to expand and glorify the embers of his intellect.

He could remember the day the realization had come; the realization that through all these millions of years since a skin-clad giant first strummed on a rude musical instrument and hummed the barbaric strains of "Beowulf" to an entranced audience, the great poem had never been written. No poet had ever quite achieved its immortal lines, its symmetry and ruthless beauty. And none would ever write the immortal poem unless...

So he became a poet, himself. The gaunt man stirred restlessly. His nostrils quivered. His long vigil on the mountain had instilled within him some remarkable instincts. These instincts warned him of the approaching holocaust as the Earth, now a tiny, weary, dry brown ball, plunged into the fires of infinity. The end was near. His fingers clenched tightly over the stub of pencil, the rough, dirty square of paper. His knuckles shone in the flickering red glow. What had he been thinking of? How he had become a poet - oh, yes. He would write the perfect poem since the others had failed. And the Last Poet had failed also. That one great inspiration had never materialized. As the years passed, despair gradually claimed him as his pen failed to create that one great desire. Until that night...

Nightmare - a world of thunder and flame, of hissing oceans and plunging mount-



cins, of ravaged splendor and terrified spectacle - the end of the world. A dream? More than a dream to the Last Poet. Here was his subject - the end of the world; a subject of such grandeur and power, such sublimity and horror that his pen would be a flaming sword conveying his emotions as the world fell around him. He must witness the end of the world and describe it. There would be the perfect poem, the immortal work. Only the fall of the world could be a fitting subject for the great masterpiece.

The Poet lived on. The tremendous inner desire to see the final day of chaos dominated his entire being. He became gaunt, a living shadow surviving beyond the life of most men. Decades passed and the Poet lived on - lived with the urge within his heart feeding his physical being. It was really his soul that prospered and ripened as the years swept relentlessly by.

And now, the Poet was the last man on Earth. The open mountain peak became his home. Night and day he would wait, eyes glazed and feeble, lips drawn and taut, pencil and paper waiting... A shadowy, hollow shell - a living dead man on a mountain top on the roof of a dying world.

The redness of the sunset was shifting into a mottled blue - a vivid, mottled blue that cast a hideous azure shadow over the Earth.

The beginning of the end.

The Poet surged to his feet. His age-washed eyes burned with a sudden glory. Visible vitality swept over his bony form. His great poem would soon be born; his great moment had arrived.

He ran to the highest point on the mountain and gazed with excited passion over the glorious scene. Already his fingers were moving the pencil, forming words of unearthly splendor.

Now he laughed - laughed wildly and madly. Glorious! It was magnificent! The world was covered with that thick, devilish blue. Then, like gigantic ribbons of red, flaming brands of air whipped madly through the blue.

The sky was mad! A mad confusion of blue and hurtling red flame.

All were captured by the gloating Poet on his little paper. The Earth heaved and swayed. Huge sprays of gleaming lava hurled upward to tinge the blue with brighter crimson. Mountains toppled in the distance.

The sound of roaring and gashing - of rending and destruction - filled the air. A deep, ghastly under-noise of humming like the song of a thousand bees. Noise - the devilish sky with its blazing patterns.

Still the Poet wrote. He was almost through. A poem of epic beauty born of the death of a world. Now the world was a mist of whitish red, the hideous shriek of tortured earth as it twisted into nothingness whined through the smoking ozone.

A red hell of licking flames... Red, red, red...

The Poet's tortured face staring out of the smoke and flame. A tortured but triumphant face. His poem is finished. The great work is finished. A laugh of mocking glee mingles with the roar of a mad nature ripping the world to shreds.

Then realization strikes the Poet... Sudden, obvious realization overlooked in his mad desire.

No one would ever read his poem.

His great poem will never be seen by mortal eyes. He is alone - alone on a dying globe.

One mad, despairing cry hurls out of the closing mists.

The Poet screams in lonesome terror again... His dream is gone.

And he is just a man in the midst of soul-shattering destruction.

A convulsive shake of the Earth and the poet and his mountain grind into red holocaust.

The red haze burns, fades... and the Earth is gone.

A tiny piece of dirty paper, carrying the last monumental expression of a dead world, sweeps through space into eternity...



## HYPOTHESIS

In ages primeval  
A cosmic upheaval  
With force gravitational  
Wrought a sensational  
Change in the gases  
Of two stellar masses

Twin spheres juvenescent  
And quite incandescent  
With strange unanimity  
Entered proximity,  
Each unaware  
That the other was there

Bored by timeless excursions  
And spatial immersions,  
They dropped isolation  
For acceleration  
While fumes, enigmatic,  
Erupted, ecstatic

Galactic dimensions  
Allow for extensions  
But solar conjunction,  
A hazardous function,  
May often revision  
A stellar collision

But the perigee spurned  
Armageddon and turned  
As the orbs madly rocked,  
Invisibly locked  
By mass-relativity's  
Startling proclivities

By Harold Elliot

That their dual attraction  
Produced interaction  
Of fields magnetic  
Seemed hardly prophetic,  
But stresses ethereal  
Fostered material

Wild tidal waves towered,  
Burst outward and showered  
The void in those regions  
With flaming adhesions;  
A superabundance  
Of gassy redundancy

These filaments glowing  
Expanded, and growing,  
Took spiral formations  
With passing rotations  
And, motion-enthused,  
Snapped apart ere they fused

Webs of gas, fragmentary  
Left each luminary  
As laws hyperbolic  
Concluded the frolic  
And chaos subsided  
As orbits divided

That the flotsam condensed  
Has been long evidenced;  
For Number Three chunk  
Of the gaseous junk  
Is charted on maps  
Of the race Homo Saps

## EASTERN SKETCH

By Corinne Ellsworth

On the purple lines of an Araby desert,  
Where Omar's fleeting snows have lain,  
A caravan wends to an Eastern mart  
With Death and Wild Beauty riding its chain.

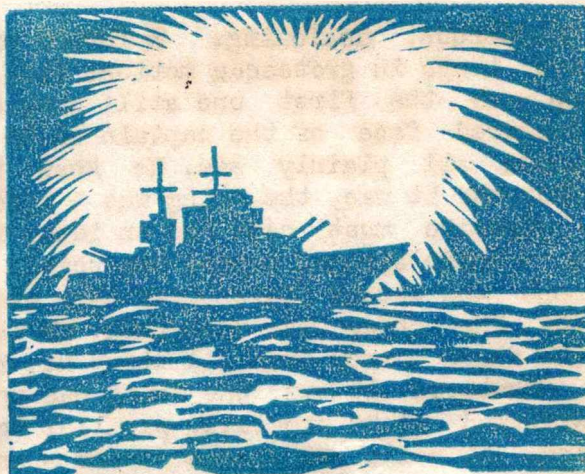
From a towering mosque in a Persian square,  
Bordered by poor rags, brocaded wealth,  
A Muezzin calls his people to prayer;  
"Allah il Allah! Think not of self."

A rich Nabob on his palanquin  
Has passed this way, but the beggars grin;  
They shall eat, for did not Ahmed, the Thief  
Of the Fat One's finger, a ring relieve?



# RENDEZVOUS

By LOU GOLDSTONE



I was standing watch on the fo'csle bridge, watching the white spume curve out from under bows, when the thing broke surface half a kilometer off the starboard beam. It lay there in the center of a wide circle of bubbling foam, heaving gently with the slight swell, wallowing from side to side. It was big; bigger than any submarine I had ever seen, and it had a smooth, lustrous outer plating that shimmered in the soft glow of a new crescent moon and a numberless host of diamond-bright stars. The call to battle-stations sounded while I still stared at the thing, and not more than half a minute later our starboard secondaries opened up with a roar. Two quick, spurting tongues of red, and two six-inch shells went whistling out. Two dull watery booms sounded simultaneously, and a pair of creamy spouts stood glistening and fell back. I heard somebody shout. Another salvo, closer this time. I looked for torpedo-tracks, because they had caught us dead, but there were none. The third burst of fire scored a direct hit. Two blazing blasts directly on the thing's side; bits of casing spanked the water for a hundred yards around, kicking up little gouts of spray.

Then I clutched the rail tightly to support myself, and my mouth must have fallen open. The thing rose and dipped calmly, trailing a small feathery wake. I had seen two six-inch shells strike it at once - enough to blow a light surface-craft out of the sea. And the thing was unharmed. The captain swore vividly at my elbow. The six-inchers didn't open fire again. We just looked at the thing sailing serenely along beside us - until, a few moments later, the first flare went up.

And it was a flare. It mounted like a rocket, red and glowing. Up, up, higher and higher, until I had lost it. A minute passed, while we craned our necks between feverish glances at the thing. Then, somewhere up in the stratosphere, a star burst. It was that flare. From horizon to horizon, the sea showed green and sparkling in a light like that of noon. It blazed up there with a light too intense to look at; a light like the sun. "Oh God!" groaned the captain. "Oh God Almighty!"

Remember that this was only two days after your light cruisers had caught us off Coronel. Remember that we were travelling with radio silent, without lights - knowing that your forces were combing the seas for us. Remember that we had escaped at all only by a miracle. Remember that we were holed from stem to stern, smashed and battered into virtual helplessness, our main armament gone, half our crew dead. Remember that we were taking the only chance we had; burning our last ton of fuel-oil in an all-or-nothing dash for a rendezvous with that tanker. What good is a pocket-battleship without guns or fuel? Well, we were taking the risk. If we could meet the tanker and refuel, there was a chance of escaping, even in our crippled condition. And now this - light! And we were two hours away from the rendezvous, with fuel in our tanks for two hours and a half at ten knots - our most economical speed.

For ten minutes it blazed, while we went mad. Hundreds of square miles of ocean must be flaring with daylight. We knew that if one of your destroyers or scouting planes saw the light, heavy forces would be concentrated on the area, and we would be lost.

I stood there dumbly and heard orders barked. Again the six-inchers opened up. An almost continuous sheet of flame stood out from the gun-muzzles as shell after shell was poured onto the thing. It was an unremitting hail of death. The noise was



thunderous, deafening. A forest of white splashes was leaping up and falling back out there in grotesque motion. Then, in the midst of the firing, another flare went up - as the first one still hung dying in the sky. I turned and saw the sweating, tortured face of the captain as he gave the cease fire order. It was no use, as we could all plainly see. We knew that this thing was not one of your vessels. But whatever it was, the thing was - ignoring us.

Someone must have had an idea, for almost immediately I saw the silvery wake of a torpedo slicing toward the thing. It struck with a colossal roar, at the same moment the second flare burst high above us. Our own ship rocked with the concussion, but the other was unscathed. We watched, then, while the intense blue radiance of the flare burned down all about us. We watched and hoped.

Whatever it was, the thing was persistent; or it might have been coincidence. It wallowed along precisely parallel to our own course, at the same speed we were making. We could not change course - and get away from it - because we had just enough fuel to take us to the rendezvous with the tanker, and that by the straight route we were following.

For two solid hours the thing plunged along beside us, while we perspired and hoped it would return to the depths it had left. Every ten minutes another flare boiled up, exploding at an unknown height and lighting up our whole watery world. White flares and blue flares and green flares and yellow and crimson and all the intermediate hues. They hung in the air, one after another, without a break - for when one was burning out, another was just bursting.

I heard shouts and looked ahead. Plainly visible in the blazing light, the tanker hove into view over the dip of the horizon. I felt the plates under my feet vibrate more noticeably as the diesels throbbed like an agonized heart. We plowed ahead.

That damned thing was still with us as they cast out floats from the tanker. In another half hour the line would be spouting fresh oil into our empty tanks. The operation was almost complete - if we had not already been detected. The thing hovered uncertainly and sent up a new flare, larger and brighter than any of the preceding ones. We squinted at the tanker, only a thousand meters away, and waited.

Now other flares were going up from the thing like roman-candles. They spluttered and popped and crackled and danced in the sky. We were in what seemed a mad dream.

The last big flare had just burned out when something else appeared overhead. It was a knife-edge of searing brilliance, racing among the stars and growing larger and more blinding. It raced down the southern horizon and turned. We caught the subtle vibration that turned into a world-shaking roar, and the light from the sky was a whitenot jet of fire that sprayed down into the sea. It was coming toward us thundering and blazing. Closer, and I caught a glimpse of a huge dark shape racing directly at us over the water, throwing out that scorching blade of flame in front of it, leaving behind it a seething curtain of steam where the blast had touched.

Screams and shouts. I dodged behind the rail as the thing flashed past, monstrous and fiery, blinding our eyes and shattering our ear-drums. A hazy jumble of sound and light as it passed directly above the tanker, its flaring jet of fire engulfing the vessel as it passed. All the oil in the tanker must have gone up at the touch of that blast. The ship simply ceased to exist. In its place was a billowing pillar of hell-fire that stood up a mile in the sky, roiling with dense clouds of black smoke. Stunned, we watched as the conflagration spread out over the water, and hissing jets of burning oil rained down all around us.

The thing from the sky had settled to the sea in a cloud of boiling steam, and the thing that had followed us was lying close alongside it, sending out strings of flares like fireworks. Slowly, with one accord, they both submerged and vanished.

We stood there, the flaming sea and that great fuming beacon-light casting flickering red shadows across our blank faces. We did not think; we just stood and waited for the end, and presently we knew the end had come. First there was a flicker of red on the horizon, then the dull rumble, then the booming whistle of the heavies, and then the towering spouts as you straddled us with your first salvo.



A speckled monster  
drew me to bottom, a grin on his face  
that in his grasp...

Beowulf

Translation of Benjamin Thorpe



A speckled monster  
drew me to bottom, a grim one held me  
fast in his grasp...

Beowulf

Translation of Benjamin Thorpe



Goldstone





# LET THERE BE ART

By HAROLD ELLIOT

Being a man of no mean aesthetic attainments myself, and circulating as I do in and about the cultural upper-crust of these regions, I quite naturally number among my acquaintances more than a few dilettantes of art.

I speak of the long-haired brethren who dab at canvas and devour Verve in rattle-trap garrets, who seek inspiration at Fisherman's Wharf, subsist on Cuba-Libres and Phillip Morris and romp through their beatific lives in sublime indifference to hell and high water.

In foraging parties of from one to a dozen fixed palates, they descend upon my penthouse eyrie on occasion, full of empyrean fervor and ready for anything. After they have looted my larder, dehydrated my liquor cabinet and rolled back the rugs to the supersonic accompaniment of Ravel's Bolero on the player, these eccentric wheels of progress figuratively pitch their tents in odd corners and launch into a midnight to dawn open forum on the why and wherefore and downwith of all things in heaven and earth.

Inevitably, though, wherever the conversation may begin, it drifts around to art. With the unconcerned bravado and easy confidence of seasoned practitioner-critics, my unshaven, frazzle-headed guests survey the science of representation down the ages in one nimble bound, and mark time on our own era, eyeing askance the more noble Romans of the contemporary scene while salivating over the rag-tail rump-school exemplified by Dali and his whole cubistic, impressionistic miscegenated mob.

When the darkest hours have passed, they arise and, not forgetting to gather up any stray cigarettes that may have survived the orgy, take their riotous departure - for greener fields, no doubt. I retire weary and disheartened, and Dali's sagging timepieces and unstrung intestines haunt my fitful dreams.

I have reached a point at which I can no longer even derive a contemptuous amusement from their crackpot antics and tastes. I can guffaw rudely and expectorate with fine disdain when they present their ridiculous nominations for artistic immortality but when it comes to a rebuttal, I'm stonkered.

There was a time when I would haul a dozen magazines from my files and present for their inspection, say, a Finlay pictorial from a not too old Weird Tales, and an atmospheric Bok, and one of Cartier's superb caricatures, and perhaps something of Schneeman's better work. Ah yes, they'd murmur, very pretty, but how about this slop here? And out they'd grab, coming up with a Bug-Eyed Brown cover of TWS, or a Planet cover abounding with buxom-bosomed wenches whose principal occupation seemed to be fleeing from horrendous monsters while at the same time losing their brassieres. And I'm sorry to say that, in my opinion, from fifty to eighty per cent. of the pen and ink atrocities of the pro field - while perhaps not so productive of abrupt regurgitation as the above horrid examples - are absolutely indefensible, on artistic grounds, even against the barbs of such mouse-bitten critics as these.

Mind you, I hold no brief for the sometimes expressed theory that fantasy illustrations should be enduring masterpieces of the artist's craftsmanship. As a matter of fact, it is not a whit more reasonable to expect great art in this field than it is to expect great literature. Nevertheless, I do believe that we have had some remarkably fine illustrations presented to us recently. Whether the works of their creators will ever be hung in the Pantheon, and their names graven in the Hall of Fame, is another matter that time will decide. At that, I'm firmly convinced that more and better artists have died unrecognized than have ever been acclaimed favorites by the inane multitude and the mentally waterlogged critics.

But the important consideration, as far as I am concerned, is the fact that in our chosen field of pulp-fiction, we have artists whose work need not be tucked away



furtively among the mothballs. On the contrary, it can be shown anywhere without the company of shame-faced apologies.

I seriously doubt the existence of comparable art-work in any other branch of the pulp-publishing field. Fantasy magazines seem to be unique in that they display any amount of artistic talent whatever.

And there's the rub! Granted, we have pro artists who are very good, whose work is a source of pride. Now, why in hell must we tolerate in the same field - yea, in the same magazines - the incoherent scribblings of bristol-board assassins whose only artistic future lies in painting goatees and buck-teeth on female portraits.

I mean the Krupas and the Lynchs and the Hammonds and the Thorps and the Binders. I mean all the rest of the bums who might pass in Terror Tales, but who don't live on the same side of the tracks as Finlay and Bok and Cartier.

The publishers are cutting their good stock with two parts of bilge-water, and I don't like it.

It certainly isn't because more good artists - artists who can at least hold some sort of a candle to the top-flighters - aren't to be had. Yet for some obscure reason the powers that be insist on rummaging through old graveyards on stormy nights and presenting their finds in black and white to a long-suffering public. A real effort, were it made, would uncover more than enough real artists for the needs of the pro field. But no. It is either cheaper, or easier, or both, to keep fooling around with old hacks who have dug their own ruts through the years and so-called newcomers in whose hands the drawing pen becomes a lethal instrument.

I don't believe the requisites for a science-fiction artist are very tough. About the only qualification necessary is the ability to draw well and treat abstruse subjects in a normal manner. A man should look like a man; not like Krupa's window-dummies, not like Morey's tight-trousered, quince-faced scarecrows, not like the assorted mummies and Tarzans and petulant effeminate and corny slickers and the heterogeneous hordes of mongrels that stalk through the pro pages in disgusting legion.

The science-fiction artist should rationalize the material he deals with into a semblance of sanity in his picture. If the story can't be portrayed in a normal manner, then it should be given to a fantasy artist, who can depict the atmosphere rather than the substance of the yarn.

Schneeman comes close to my definition of a real science-fiction artist. His work is usually simple, dignified and restrained. And it is reasonable. Remember his pic on an Astounding cover of Saturn as viewed from one of her satellites? Well, by God, he painted a mountain that looked like a mountain - not a neon anthill.

Finlay, Bok and Cartier (the latter a caricaturist), are fantasy artists. It is their job to convey atmosphere to the reader, and it's not an easy job. The only qualification here is that the artist must be an artist. There can be no application of techniques before the artist is a master of representative drawing. I believe native ability and a well-oiled imagination weigh more heavily in this field. These men are top-notchers, but they are being run into the ground and overworked. If the publishers will look around, they will find more of the same caliber.

But decent artists are needed very badly, right now, in the science-fiction field more than in the fantasy realm. From the evidence so far presented, I should say the publishers - most of them at any rate - are myopic if not totally blind. If, as must be the case, they have no eye for art, let them remember this: an art college certificate isn't enough; art colleges are business institutions. Find out first if the guy can draw.

To advise the publishers to look for new talent in the fan-field would be easy enough, but the percentage of genuine talent to be found there is no greater than that to be found among the population at large. But whether it come from within the fan-field or without, let there be art - at any cost.

I think that after fifteen years of professional science-fiction and eighteen years of pulp fantasy, it is about time good artwork became the rule rather than the exception.



# MAN THE *Space* ROCKETS !

By GRAPH WALDEYER



If you want to see an astronomer jump and claw the air just go up behind one and say: "Orson Welles".

For years I've been fitting facts together about this sky-gazing business. Merely to state them in chronological order is to prove that savants, not to mention laymen with big claims staked out on Planet Earth, have been going through life with one eye cocked apprehensively at the heavens.

The eye-cocking started late in the Eighteenth Century, when Sir William Herschel swept the skies over Britain with the first giant telescope. Sir William quickly saw that something was amiss up there. That's what made his sister, Caroline, so fidgety.

The history of the first giant telescope built in America is closely tied in with what Sir William saw. James Lick, the donor, had come to California from Peru in 1847, toting an iron box full of doubloons. Lick was a successful piano maker, but the music of the spheres wasn't his line, and he didn't know an astronomical telescope from a frigate's cannon. Yet in 1874 he suddenly drew up a deed of trust leaving over a million dollars "to construct and erect a powerful telescope, superior to and more powerful than any telescope ever yet made...and also a suitable observatory."

The last word in scientific luxury, to be planted in the midst of a recently reclaimed wilderness! It was like building a penthouse on top of a log-cabin.

Why this sudden interest in the skies on the part of this normally shrewd Pennsylvania Dutchman? This is a factual article, but we are entitled to one hypothesis, which follows:

Lick, pursuant of his craft as piano maker, one day came into possession of an antique piano. Exploring its construction, he found a wadded bit of parchment stuck in between the bass chords. The parchment was covered with faded, jumbled letter combinations.

Deciphered, they proved to be a record of Music Master Herschel's observations of the Planet Mars with his forty-foot telescope. Herschel, like other pioneer stargazers, had coded his most sensational notes as a precaution against burning at the stake for heresy.

What did the notes reveal to James Lick? They revealed military preparations on Mars, that's what they revealed. You doubt it? Take a look at Lick's stiff-lipped, puritanical portrait, then tell me how you'd like to try selling him a one million dollar telescope! Well, something sold him one, and I say it was Herschel's hieroglyphics did it.

In 1888 the great Lick telescope reared skyward from the top of Mount Hamilton, California. Do you recall the flurry of excitement as astronomers saw new evidence of a forthcoming Martian assault on Earth? You certainly don't; their observations weren't made public. It was a strictly elite flurry, blowing a cloud of greenbacks from the pockets of landowners, steelkings, oilbarons, bankers and governments. When the cloud settled, there were more nice shiny telescopes where none had been before. Today you can hardly name one large observatory without naming a Captain of Industry. (Note: The famous Lowell Observatory at Flagstaff, Arizona, has the distinction of being named after an astronomer.)





Now another factor entered the picture: wireless. Guglielmo Marconi, Nikola Tesla and other early experimenters received faint, strange signals over their primitive sets. In a letter to Ken Magazine in February 1939, Dr. Tesla recalled the weird events of forty years before: "I really did discover in 1899 faint disturbances from the Planet Mars, then in opposition, and disclosed this to the Red Cross."

Herschel sold Lick; now Tesla sold the elder J.P. Morgan on what was taking place on that red spot of light 40,000,000 miles away. A \$ 200,000 structure, referred to by the ignorant as "Tesla's Folly", was raised on Long Island to keep tab on wireless emanations from Mars.

Andrew Carnegie cocked an eye. The steel-tyrant already had one 60-inch reflector set up on Mount Wilson, California. In 1910 he journeyed there to see for himself. All one night he squinted skyward through the eyepiece while at his ear Astronomer George Ellery Hale buzzed ominously. Soon after this vigil, the Carnegie Institution at Washington provided funds for the 100-incher at Mount Wilson.

Its completion took several years, and by that time wireless was acting up again. During the 1920 opposition of Mars greatly improved receiving sets all over the world were bombarded with mysterious signals. My press clippings reveal the importance attached to them by the world's great scientists.

"The signals", wrote Marconi, "are curiously musical. They come in the form of three short raps, which may be interpreted as the Morse letter 'S', but there are other sounds which may stand for other letters. Obviously, since Mars is situated somewhere near in interplanetary space, the source of the signals might be there... Our organization is undertaking a thorough probe."

Four years later Mars was to come as close to Earth as it can get without a side-swipe. Charles P. Steinmetz, the Genius of General Electric, suggested the U.S. government appropriate one billion dollars for an attempt to establish communication with Mars during the opposition. Even more alarming, the French Academy of Sciences offered to sponsor an award of 100,000 francs to the first person talking to a planet. Frenchmen don't horse around with 100,000 francs.

And when Sir Frank Dyson, British Astronomer Royal, gave these negotiations the nod, that was Downing Street sticking in its umbrella. A Greenwich Observatory Munich seemed in the offing.

But as Mars swept by in 1924 the direst fears of the savants were realized. For the first time since Earthly wireless, no signals came through during a Martian approach. Nothing but potent, sinister silence.

What did that make of all the signals from 1899 to 1920? It was now apparent that their sole purpose had been to fish for a response. Like suckers, we bit, giving the Martians a picture of our degree of scientific achievement and hence, our probable capacity for resisting invasion.

"Man the space rockets," I'll bet the head monster yammered, "and don't fire till you see the whites of their polar caps!"

After that it's hardly surprising to find the Rockefellers acting. They have stakes sunk all over this planet, mostly tall black ones. It would be tough should they presently find themselves pining for the good old days when there was only Mexico to seize oil lands. The Rockefellers' answer to the Martian threat was the appropriation for the 200-inch mirror telescope for Mount Palomar, California. It's so huge that astronomers will be stationed right inside the tube, amidst the very images of stars, planets and Martian monsters.

The work was rushed madly to be completed in time for the July, 1939 opposition of Mars. The schedule, unfortunately, was set back two years when experiments with fused quartz for the mirror fizzled. For once the Rockefellers were late, and no other telescope was powerful enough to detect a fleet of space rockets dusting off from Mars as it swung by.

I leave you a consoling thought. Mars won't be that close again for centuries, so if the pop-eyed, tentacle-waving inhabitants are coming at all, they are on their way right now.





# Djinn Fizz

By MCKEY FENN

A disheveled, sad-eyed little man sat all alone, away out in the middle of the 4th dimension. He was trying to read the Annish of Amazing Stories, but without much success. The light wasn't so good; as a matter of fact, it was black. With a protracted sigh, the little man stowed away the magazine. Good thing the light was black, he thought to himself. The penalty for reading Amazing was ostracism from all polite society, and somebody might have seen him.

This despicable little mucker was Herman the Pixie. Still trembling at the recollection of how near he had just come to ruining his whole career, Herman thumbed furiously at a TimeScooter that buzzed by. No soap. He seated himself once more on the conveniently situated boulder and waited. Some kindly disposed time-traveler was sure to stop and give him a lift, eventually.

It had all started when Herman decided to knock off for the weekend and catch up on his science-fiction reading. Characteristically, he had hopped the rods on a fast freight hauling a load of high-voltage bug-juice to the frivolous 45th Century. But midway in the run, a brakeman had spotted the shabby stowaway, and with one expert stroke of the billy, had rolled the disreputable little tramp clear off the right of way. Hence, Herman the Pixie's dilemma.

Several more TimeScooters whizzed by before Herman's gyrating thumb brought results. With much grinding and clanking, a slick supercharged model came to a halt and a gruff voice yelled: "Hey! Want a lift?"

Herman the Pixie scuttled from his precarious perch into the waiting TimeScooter. At the wheel, eyeing the newcomer with suspicion, was none other than Falstaff the Djinn. "Well," growled Falstaff, "wherinell are you going and whatinell are you doing out here?"

"And I only wanted to get away for the weekend and read my magazines!" declared Herman tearfully, at the conclusion of his doleful recital. Falstaff the Djinn shook his head vehemently, flicking a single emerald tear off the point of his left tusk.

"But wait a minute," he snapped, glaring malevolently at the sobbing Pixie. "I don't see any magazines - unless you're storing them in that hollow space between your ears..."

"Better than that," declared Herman, blowing his nose. "I read Heinlein's And He Built a Crooked House in the February Astounding; and so..."

"I'll be blowed!" gaped Falstaff the Djinn, his saucer eyes bugging and turning a pale green in honor of H.V. Brown, "A tesseract?"

Herman exulted. "Yep," he averred, "a tesseract. Contains all the latest issues. All I have to do is give it a kick, and it'll unfold again." At this point he produced the tesseract, glued securely to the head of a pin. "Collectors please copy" sang Herman.

A road sign flashed past: Nick's Tamale Grotto - 200 Years to the Left - Kosher Cooking. The TimeScooter sped serenely on its way...



A short interval fled by, in the course of which Falstaff the Djinn almost made the disastrous blunder of stopping in the year 7750, a drum-tight prohibition era. At length, when they had decided to make their stop at the 500,000 mark - an age of peace and quiet minus anything resembling people - Herman the Pixie asked after the ManInTheBlueTopper.

"He had an important red-headed business conference last night," replied Falstaff knowingly. "And curiously enough, he showed up this morning with several long scratches on his face; says he got them shaving. We might run into him, at that. He was foaming at the mouth to get a chance to read the new Marvel Stories..."

"Adzookens!" shouts Herman, "don't he know they've cut out the strip-tease?"

"Didn't know it myself," cries Falstaff. "At this rate, maybe they'll start running science-fiction pretty soon, huh?"

With a bump that rattled their molars, the time-travelers settled down on the rugged terrain of 500,000 A.D. Waiting for them was the ManInTheBlueTopper. He was busily mixing a Brimstone Cocktail and reciting the National Debt in iambic pentameter.

"What ho, comrades!" screamed the ManInTheBlueTopper at the sight of them. "I pour a libation to the Gods! This is very potent stuff! Yea, indeed..."

"You're drunk," snarled Falstaff the Djinn.

"It must be good," suggested Herman, edging forward and slavering.

"And so I took a short-cut, and arrived in time to prepare the mess," concluded the ManInTheBlueTopper, lighting a cigarette with his breath.

"Mess?" shouted Herman the Pixie, reappearing from behind a clump of bushes a short distance away, "Well, what if I did; that stuff was awful!" The unfortunate Pixie was holding his clammy forehead, and his face was tinged with indigo.

"It sure was," declared Falstaff with a groan. "I don't mind seeing pink hippogriffs, but when they come in infra-red, I'm taking the pledge!"

"I think the first order of business is Stirring Science and Cosmic," the ManInTheBlueTopper muttered, after Herman had knocked down his tesseract. "Can we sum it up in a few words?"

"Two," replies Falstaff the Djinn. "Bok and Kornbluth."

"Check!" whispered Herman the Pixie, "even if it is on publication. I like 'em myself, and they have other good points. Mecanica was good; reminded me of Manning. Blish isn't bad, and the best thing of all is that if the story is rotten, it don't take you all night to wade through it!"

"Did you notice that Loumdes' The Other was reprinted from Polaris?" sneered the ManInTheBlueTopper. "They might have given Freehafer a credit-line, y'know."

"Here's Science Fiction and Future Fiction," cried Herman, heaving into view with the aforementioned magazines securely in tow.

"Some improvement on the covers," gibbered Falstaff, reaching for the mustard. "Next!"

"Well," admitted the ManInTheBlueTopper, with some hesitation, "there's the Quarterly..."

"Oh!" shrieked Falstaff the Djinn, making a pained face. "Which one?... Not that it matters much."

"Science Fiction Quarterly," the ManInTheBlueTopper amended. "But I disagree with you in comparing it with Amazing Quarterly. The Amazing Quarterly comes in very handy indeed; I buy it now instead of the monthlies..."

"You're still getting gypped," a grating voice was heard to cackle from the shadows. But the conversation continued, finally coming to an embarrassed stop.

"Well, go on and say it!" demanded Falstaff the Djinn, scornfully.

Herman's face grew red, and he hid his head in shame. "I-I was only going to say that I liked L. Taylor Hansen's Lords of the Underworld in Amazing. It was good."



"You've been reading Amazing?" inquired the ManInTheBlueTopper coldly.

"Don't tell anybody about it, please!" begged Herman. "I'm sorry, honestly I am."

"Well," the ManInTheBlueTopper stuttered, "to tell the truth, I read The Lost Race Comes Back in the Annish, myself."

"And I," adds Falstaff the Djinn, "deducted the cost of Amazing on my tax return under 'Charity'."

"Too bad about Fantastic Novels, what?" shouts the ManInTheBlueTopper. Solemn nods and misty eyes provide a mute reply. "Maybe they'll be able to publish FFM monthly, though," says Herman, wishfully.

"Gallop! Klystron! Is that thing still around?" The bellow of rage is from Falstaff the Djinn as the ManInTheBlueTopper produces a copy of Planet Stories.

"Beautiful Bok drawing for Treasure of Triton," says Herman, "and not a bad letter section."

"TWS, Startling and Cap Future next," screams the ManInTheBlueTopper, "And by the way, did you see the review we got in the May Startling? Startling likes us!"

"Sorry the feeling can't be mutual," Falstaff grumbled.

"Cap Future oughtta be retired to the Old Soldiers' Home," snapped Herman the Pixie. "As for TWS..." Here all three paused to hastily rinse their mouths with disinfectant.

"How about Astonishing and Super-Science?" queried the ManInTheBlueTopper craftily.

"Yeeecowww!" yelled Herman. "Chalk one up! Beyond Doubt and Our Director! Wow!"

Added Falstaff: "Genus Homo in Super-Science was simply topping."

"Will you countersign this decree banishing the editor of Weird Tales to the 7th Dimension for stretching Charles Ward into two installments?" asked the ManInTheBlueTopper blandly. A concerted rush followed, and the document was duly signed in witch blood. In the melee, Jameson's Man Who Loved Planks and Derleth's Altimer's Amulet received their share of praise.

"Here comes Comet!" Falstaff the Djinn howled. "Lie On The Beam best and where was that 'classic'?"

"Illustrations lousy throughout!" calls Herman. "Planet of Illusion okay."

There was a considerable recess, everyone washing hands and face and combing his hair. Trumpets sounded in the distance, and Herman brought forth Astounding and Unknown. Oh joy! Oh ecstasy! They all roll on the ground in raptures.

"Golly!" erupted Herman, "Mechanical Mice, Sixth Column, Masquerade!"

"Damnation!" Falstaff the Djinn exploded, "Mislaid Charm, Crossroads, They, Castle of Iron!"

"And don't forget those editorials, either," added the ManInTheBlueTopper.

"Well," breathed Falstaff, mopping his brow, "have we left anything out?"

"Fantastic Adventures!" the ManInTheBlueTopper exclaims.

"Ziff-Davis left that one out," counters Falstaff, "and I wish they'd come and get it!"

After a long pause for refreshments, the ManInTheBlueTopper arose with a momentous announcement. "Gentlemen," he exaggerated, "I think we should make some sort of award for outstanding service to science-fiction. We should do something to encourage authors of exceptional stories to write more of the same. I propose that we present the author of the outstanding story of each quarter with a year's free sub to Fantasia!" With that, he fell down in a drunken stupor. Falstaff revived him, and the three launched into a violent argument concerning the recipient of this magnanimous gift. When the dust and debris had cleared away, the battered figure of Falstaff the Djinn popped up out of the wreckage to announce the winner.

"Twins," Falstaff confides. "L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt, for The Castle of Iron. And Campbell," he continues, looking you squarely in the face, "how about kicking through with their addresses so we can send them their copies at once. Don't delay. Can't you see the suspense is killing them?"





## ODDS BODKINS !

D.B. THOMPSON    The Sage of Salt Creek, to wit: "I want to thank you for sending it to me; so much so, in fact, that I'm going to insert a couple of dimes in the envelope. I'd like the next issue. My own choice for top place in the mag, regardless of type, is Hyman's Danse Grotesque. This coming from a fan who neither enjoys nor approves of weird fiction, either professional or amateur, is rather hard to explain. Anyway, I consider it comparable to some of the better pro work in fantasy magazines. I suppose it might be classified as a "horror" story, (which is the lowest form of fantasy,

as I look at it), but it doesn't appeal to me that way. I just liked it, and that is that... Rise & Decline of Unknown is next. But I see very little reason for assuming that the quality will fall off just because the magazine is now a bi-monthly. I think that Elliot's "raspberry" for S & S is out of order; instead, he should ride the lovers of fantasy who don't buy Unknown... Plurality is a fine bit of fan fiction; quite acceptable. Witch Wine on the World makes me want to read George Sterling though I don't think I will, because I rarely enjoy weird poetry; I would rather take your word for its quality. (Shame on yez, Don) Djinn Fizz is both entertaining and thought-provoking. The spread between the best mags in the field and the poorest isn't half as great as the article makes out, though... I'm greatly impressed with your illustrations and headings. I suppose they are linoleum-block prints. (Righto) I think Little Elmo and the masthead would look better if framed in some fashion. (Do you get the effect you want in this current cover?)... In summary, I think that I would rate Fantasia well up in the first ten of fan-mags with which I am familiar. There are a lot of them I haven't seen, but I subscribe to several of the best, such as Spaceways, Fanfare, Frontier, Pluto, Futura Fantasia and VOM and have seen copies of many more... Congratulations on No. 1, and good luck for the future."

CHARLES HIDLEY  
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Fantasy litterateur, commenting: "The illustrations were surprisingly good for a fan-mag, and the illustrated poem was the hit of the issue. By all means continue the latter. (How d'you like it this time? heh, heh) The best literary item was Sterling's biography, which brought to light many interesting facts about this man of intrigue. I enjoyed the fantasy short most, because the science tale was a bit too entangled for my taste... The Unk review was informative and Djinn Fizz the added dash of caustic humor that all books should have; it was not overdone, though. Who is Little Elmo? (Rather ask WHAT he is, and the answer is still: we dunno) Keep up the standard of the first issue, and feature articles rather than stories. All fan fiction efforts do not compare as favorably as your two did. And by all means continue those unique pictorials - preferably something that Finlay has not yet drawn for WT."

BOB TUCKER  
P.O. Box # 260  
Bloomington Ill

The Skipper of LeZombie writes: "As I remarked to another editor recently, who also has just blossomed out with a "first issue", it is positively alarming the number of good first issues that have appeared. What is this world coming to? The end? Fandom is so used to rotten first issues that I believe they are being slowly spoiled by a large number of good first issues in the last few months... Fantasia rides the crest of the wave. I believe the duplication sells it. Am I right in assuming that all the



cuts in this first issue are linoleum-blocks? (All save the pic for Djinn Fizz, which was a zinc line-cut) Whatever they are, they are good, and really sell the number! Plenty of eye-catching color... Note how fan-mags are taking to color of late? It is the next definite trend (tho actually already in the past) in fan-mags. I have but one gripe to make concerning the issue at hand. Pages 15 and 16 are missing from my copy, but I never noticed that until too late. (That's odd, Bob. Sure you didn't lose it when you pulled the staples out?) Hence, I was most startled to learn that: "It is shortly thereafter that the Thief encounters the Djinn, whom he frees from... Oakland, Calif., in 1890. There, after working three years in the real estate office of his uncle..." (It's okay; we remedied the situation) Despite the latter half of the item being among the missing, I liked The Nights In Technicolor best. Second is Decline of Unknown and third, Djinn Fizz. Little Elmo delights me. I suggest you continue his adventures each issue. On the next cover it would be most delightful to find him devouring a maiden fair. Enclosed you will find forty cents for four issues, including the one I already have. Thankee." (Thank YOU, brother)

GRAPH WALDEYER Rising pro author in our own backyard, verbatim: "Thank you for sending me a copy of your Fantasia. I am enclosing two dimes as payment for this copy and the next... This certainly is a very high grade of fan-magazine, both as regards the makeup and the contents.

634 45th Ave  
San Francisco

There seems to be a great deal of talent displayed in its pages. The poetry is superb and the prose writing of excellent quality. The illustrations seem the work of a practised expert and greatly enhance the effect of the printed contents. The color cuts are an added touch... The story Plurality is intriguing. With a little more in the way of plot complications and a little less attention to literary perfection the idea, it seems to me, could be whipped into a sure-fire science-fiction story... As far as I know, this is the only fan-mag venture in San Francisco." (As far as we know you're right)

R.D. SWISHER Another who needs no intro, as follows: "The first (issue) was quite well done. Even I, a confirmed hater of fan-fiction, thought Plurality quite well done - except for a minor question involving the law of conservation of mass - although I'm not sure I liked the present tense as well as I would have the more orthodox presentation. It might seem a little affected... One other personal idiosyncrasy - the meager two-space indentations give me the sensation of clinging to a narrow ledge on the side of a cliff. I get a sensation similar to that of danger in a dream." (You can relax now)

DAMON. KNIGHT Gives out: "Fantasia is not only a new mag but an exceptionally good one. Here are my reactions: Title too similar to FuFa, Bradbury's thing - 5; Cover, 10; Contents page, ditto; Plurality, ditto; Danse Grotesque, 7; Span of Hours, 10; Rise & Decline of Unk, 8; Wine of Wizardry pic, 9; Nights in Technicolor, 6; Ad Nauseum, 7; Witch Wine on the World, 10; Djinn Fizz, 9; Illustrations thruout, 9; Editorial, 8... From all of which you may have gathered that I like Fantasia. The material in your first ish is of an almost-professional standard, and sometimes I wonder why I say "almost". Particularly enjoyed your items about G. Sterling, since it introduced me - and my friend Bill Evans - to that master poet for the first time. Of your own poetry and prose I can only say that I wish mine were as good - & of your art work that I fear I have found a rival." (The congregation will now rise and sing...)

HARRY WARNER JR Editor of Spaceways, says, by postal: "It's one of the best first issues I've seen in a long while - the format, material and general atmosphere gives the impression that you'd been putting out a magazine like this for years. I was particularly impressed by the fiction - so much better than the usual run of fan-fiction."



JOE J FORTIER Of Starlight Publications and Golden Gate Futurians: "Fantasia, a damn good magazine; Cover, quite symbolic; Contents page, not alcoholic; Plurality, a killer; Art work, good all the way around; Danse Grotesque, a magnificent story. I don't think there are many stories that appear in fan publications one can call classics, but this is certainly one; Poetry, pretty good; Elliot, subject of deep sympathy; Pictorial, a pip; Nights, definitely filler, but it was good, all right; Witch Wine, liked."

RAY SIENKIEWICZ Writes: "I like your fanzine, Fantasia. As first issues go, you have a good first issue... Your fiction isn't too bad, and the best story is Plurality. Where We Stand, the editorial, is one of the best fan-editorials I have read in a long time. Well, anyway, one of the best editorials I ever read... Among the articles, The Nights in Technicolor and Djinn Fizz stand out in my memory. The Pictorial is all right, too."

DONN BRAZIER Editor, Frontier, with this, anent Fantasia # 1: "The mimeographing and the block prints (are they?) (They are) are first class and equal anything in existence. The block prints are unusual and show a great deal of artistic talent and labor. The pictorial of Sterling lines is very, very good. They (the block prints) add that touch to your mag which should put it in the top ten. In fact, I'm sorry I voted already, as I would have included your mag in my best ten list. (Maybe next time, huh, Donn?) Not only have you a wonderful format and mechanical superiority, but the contents presented is all good. The balance is very good, though if you cannot get good fiction, I would prefer poor articles to poor fiction. However, the fiction in this issue is superb. The article on Sterling was exceptional; makes me want to go right out and read his works... It's hard to pick number One item, so I shall pick three: The illustrations Witch Wine on the World and Rise and Decline of Unk."

JACK FIELDS Another GGFer: "Congratulations on your first issue of Fantasia. It made a hit with me and all those I am acquainted with. You have a swell mag, but also, you have set a high mark and you will have to work to keep up with this first issue... The covers and interiors were perfect. You have reached a new high in illustrations... I think my favorite is Borrie Hyman's Danse Grotesque; I like weirds anyway, so I guess that accounts for it... I have enclosed 20¢, and although I just got this issue of Fantasia, I am impatiently awaiting the next."

JOE LEWANDOWSKI With words: "Your first Fantasia best first issue of a fanzine I have ever seen. Fia places herself in the top rank with her debut. I could have sworn your cover was by Bok. It was a perfect example of his style of drawing, but don't overuse it. Your interior ill., while small, were really excellent jobs of artistry. First impressions of Fia: neat, orderly, attractive, clean-cut and trim, with a very enticing cover. (I stared at the cover alone for five full minutes!) Inside: regular margins, clear type, legibility, excellent pics, and what seemed to be fair material. (When I formed this conclusion, I hadn't yet read Fia.) Then I read the fanzine from cover to cover with no interruptions allowed. Immediately I knew Fia was as excellent in content as she was in appearance. Here's how I rate the first issue: Best piece of work, cover illustration; 2nd, Plurality - a bit sketchy in parts, but good; 3rd, Pictorial; 4th, article on Unknown; 5th, Djinn Fizz; 6th, Editorial; 7th, Ad Nauseum and Danse Grotesque; 8th, Nights, WWOW and Span of Hours."

Space limitations prevent the printing of all letters received. Some letters came in too late; others could not be fitted into the dummy. But those presented are, we believe, fairly representative. For late analysis of returns, see the Editorial.



# ON *Second* THOUGHT

This second issue of Fantasia is rather important to us on more than one account. First, it represents a measure of stabilization in format and makeup. Little things, for the most part, such as the rearrangement of interior type-faces and the widening of paragraph indentations; but we believe they all contribute to the improvement of Fantasia's appearance. Secondly, with this April number, we attain a few of our primary objectives in the campaign whose ultimate goal is the production of a fan-mag that will rate second to none.

For example, this issue's cover was printed on a press, whereas all of the illustrations in the January Fantasia were printed by hand. And for the first time, we present an "outside" contribution - Graph Waldeyer's Man the Space Rockets! Another new addition is the letter-section; we hope that we'll never run short of material for this department. Finally, the new Pictorial - lithographed instead of cut from a linoleum block.

As for future issues, we can say very little. In fact, as you read this, we will know little or nothing more about the contents of the forthcoming July number than you do. As for the cover, it will again be press-printed, and there is the possibility of a three-color job next time. We hope the letter-section will take care of itself. Consider our invitation for outside contributions as a personal one and a standing one, if you please. The only compensation for accepted material which we can offer at this time is a one-issue extension of your subscription. As soon as it can be managed, we want to improve our terms, and will - because material which you take the time to write, we the time to print, and others the time to read has a definite value to all concerned. The lithographed Pictorial is only an experiment. We hope to continue it, would not like to go back to the linoleum. But on a cash basis, that picture is worth forty sales, so we cannot say definitely that it will be repeated in July. But you may be sure that if we can find any justification for doing so, we'll keep it as a regular feature.

To those of you who responded so generously on receipt of the January Fantasia, our sincere thanks. Your splendid moral support proved even more decisive than did our financial backing - important though this latter was.

Two hundred copies of this issue are being printed, a rise over the 150 of January. Our paid circulation for the first number was low; we're gunning for new subscribers. Many new fans and potential fans will receive this edition. As was the case with the January issue, some will respond and some will not. And so we will consolidate our gains, and then invade new territories with the July Fantasia. This time, though, we intend to retain a sizeable reserve of copies. So if you have a friend who did not get a copy, but who might in your opinion like a copy, just refer him to us and we'll be able to accommodate him. By the way, the January stock is exhausted.

In the January issue, we made some mention of the possibility of bi-monthly publication. A glance at our circulation figures on the contents page will show you why this is out of the question at present. As it looks now, we will continue quarterly publication for another two issues at the very least. Probably it will be inadvisable to come out more frequently until our books show some signs of balancing.

Now for our own Analytical Lab: This hasn't been easy, and we haven't had a very large section of opinion to go by. Some of the ratings were based on the Warner System, some merely named first choice, some were indefinite. But after sifting them over, here's what we get: 1st - Danse Grotesque and Illustrations throughout; 2nd - Plurality, Witch Wine and Pictorial; 3rd - Cover pic and Djinn Fizz.

THE STAFF