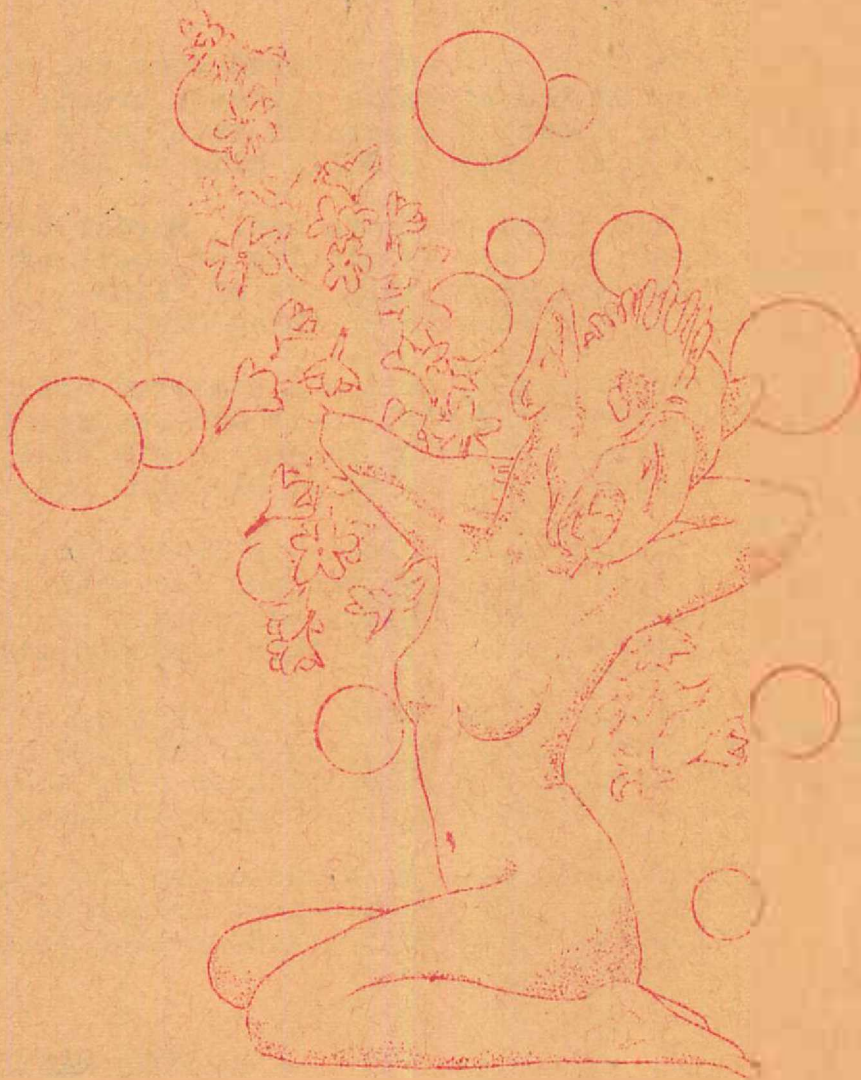


BANSHEE

NO. 3



MARLOW

published for FAPA by Larry Shaw

Dust -

The birth of earth! and armored monsters meet
To battle on the steaming planet's crust;
And later, 'neath the muscled cave man's feet,
He finds some teeth, a scaly hide -- and dust.

Then battle there the cave men. Murder bent,
They scream and die -- victims of their own lust.
The jungle cat finds only axe of flint
Beside the skeleton in writhing dust.

With fiery charger, mail and hammered gold,
The knight rides forth, feels and returns the thrust.
The prowling wolf, with hunger on his soul,
Finds rusted lance and helm, bleached bones -- and dust.

The roar of guns, and Death is in the air.
Great cities fall; dull weapons lie with rust.
And through the black-fringed portals of despair
Vast armies march. . . . Four Horsemen stir the dust.

The weapons men have made are crumbling steel
Where corpses lie. A foggy, fitful gust
Of wind unfurls a tattered banner o'er the field
Of souls forever doomed, who sank in dust.

The skies are dead. No birds adorn the trees
In Springtime, nor are pleasant farmlands flushed
With flowers. Idly roll the deep blue seas,
The seas eternal.

-- RAYMOND WASHINGTON, JR.

Number Four March, 1944 F A P A
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This is the new BANSHEE, which will hereafter be my chief FAPA mag. Material in future issues will all be by "outsiders," with nothing by Shaw except brief (but very) editorials. Contributions of a type ordinarily seen in subscription mags are wanted from everyone. I have quite a bit of material of that nature left from the defunct LEP and will use it up as rapidly as possible. Another type of material is wanted from certain ones of you: those who do not have a fapub, those who choose to devote their pub to one definite subject all the time, and anyone else who thinks he can fit into the general scheme. Material referred to: columns--regular, irregular, and one-shot--and letters of comment. In short, a general FAPA Forum, such as Gilbert began in SOUND OFF! The main subject of these items should be Fapa, but others are not excluded. Catch on? Okay, shoot!

That's Len's mistake on the cover. This is really Number Four, of course. . . .

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Sayings of the Spence

Quarterly Quibbling
by Pfc. Paul Spencer

Perusing Banshee, I became painfully aware that the current Sayings commenced in almost exactly the same fashion as its immediate predecessor. This repetition derives, I think, from the fact that I wrote the Winter installment several months after the Summer one, without reference to the latter, under the impression that it was written at Pawling (where, actually, only a rough draft was sketched), instead of Bolling Field, as actually was the case. Tch.

As I predicted last time, that lovely situation in Seattle terminated. I am now at one of the two air bases in Great Falls, Montana, back in barracks, and remote from Seattle's marvelous bookstores and library. Incidentally, Shaw tells me Tom Daniel was thinking of visiting me in Seattle -- gah! warum mir das? (Tristan und Isolde, Act III) In Washington, D. C., I miss Speer; in Seattle I miss Daniel; whom will I miss in Great Falls?

* * *

Having ignored the FAPA in my Winter column, I am determined to devote at least a large part of this quarter's edition to fapaffaires. I am embarrassed, however, by having sent the mailing home and hence not being able to refer to the various magazines. Bear this in mind, I pray, if I indulge in an occasional faux pas.

Firstly come praises for the remarkable size of the mailing. With a membership of 65, we can now have perfectly colossal mailings, and the current one is a good start in that direction: Shaw, of course, gets the iridium-plated cardvark's car for his nine contributions. ((I giggle modestly, kindly, but honesty impells me to point out that Juf-rus far outshone me in net weight. --Larry))

Which suggests, by a fairly obvious process of thought, the abbreviation "stef." To me, it is simply monstrous. Whence comes your "e"? And can you imagine a more stupid sounding monosyllable? I agree, however, with Speer, that even though "stefan" be not the solution, we need a word to replace "fan." I think the enthusiastic but inactive readers have a right to the word, and moreover they're welcome to it. "Scientifictionist" is better, but cumbersome. My feeble imagination balks at the task of creating a satisfactory synonym. Let's have some suggestions.

Speer, by the way, reveals himself in a now and unpleasant light in the current "Full-Length Articles." It pops up (or flashes on?) here and there throughout, but is epitomized in the sentence "Two colored soldiers sat down opposite me, so I ordered a box-lunch." And I've always admired Jack. . . .

* * *

A welcome surprise is the return of the inimitable Evans -- how about a longer "Tale" next time, Bo? As to the revival of the NFFF, I'll back it to the best of my ability, and I urge all other members to do likewise. What say we give Degler a run for his money? After all, a smoothly functioning and truly representative fan organization is the answer to the Cosmic Circle.

* * *

Fanfare is super, Art, and thanks for "Alicia," which I missed on its first run. Dare we hope for more such issues?

* * *

While Morojo is undoubtedly well able to defend her "kara lingvo," I want to make absolutely sure the criticisms of Stanley and Searles do not go unanswered, and will tackle the task myself.

First comes the base, unsubstantiated accusation that Esperanto is a "lifeless skeleton." Need I mention the five million Espists? Need I point out the three organizations listed in the Winter "Guteto"? Or Rosenblum's mention of an Esperanto "She"? I am not thoroughly familiar with the history of the Esperanto movement, but my impression is that while some local organizations have died, new ones have sprung up, and international ones as well, and on the whole the language has made fairly steady progress. If whoever made the "lifeless skeleton" crack (pardon my unreliable memory) will put forth some facts and figures, his remark may gain some strength.

Then there is the amusing sequel to "Basic Facts." I got a laugh out of it, but no serious thought. So what if Esperanto is not yet spoken by the average man? I might adduce a well-known adage as to the construction of Rome. Give the language time -- indeed, considering how reluctant one may justly be expected to be to learn a language in one's spare time, Esperanto, with five million in fifty years, has done remarkably well. Once it gets in public schools (U. S. variety, Mike!) its headway should really be something to watch.

I myself am a very recent convert to the tongue, and do not speak or write it really well, but I'm learning with pleasant ease, and I can read it fairly fluently. It does have faults, including some rather serious ones, but it is, after all, a human invention, and compared to any natural language I know of it fills the bill (which certainly needs filling) to something sufficiently resembling perfection.

* * *

Note for bibliophiles: having secured a copy of the deluxe Frank Papé-illustrated edition of Cabell's "Donnei," I discovered to my surprise that it contains what seems to be the Storisende text. That is, I cannot be sure without the definitive edition at hand, but this text differs from the standard edition in such ways as one would expect of the Storisende version.

"Donnei," if you don't know, is, though written by a master fantasist, not fantasy. However, it should appeal to many fapans, being a dreamlike, exquisitely written mediæval romance (or at least it masquerades as such; it is possible to regard it as an allegory of the peculiar status of woman in a man's world). I've recommended Cabell before; allow me to do so again: "Jurgen," "Figures of Earth," "The Silver Stallion," "The Cream of the Jest," and so on, are among the world's finest fantasies.

* * *

"Horrible beyond conception" was the charge which had taken place in my best friend, Crawford Tillinghast." No, friends, that is not a passage from a satire by Tucker; it was written in sober earnest by H. P. Lovecraft. There is much as bad as that, or worse, in the new Lovecraft omnibus, "Beyond the Wall of Sleep" -- even the jacket blurb admits that some of the material is "of secondary importance." But, more important, there is also -- "A fever of the gods, a fanfare of supernal trumpets, a clash of immortal cymbals"! Friends, here are such unforgettable tales as "The White Ship," "The Quest of Iranon," "The Green

Meadow," and others; and two splendid novels: "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward" and the previously unpublished "Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath." And there are great gobs of fascinating background material -- HPL's own "Notes on a Nonentity," "History of the Necronomicon," and "The Commonplace Book" (oddest reading imaginable!), plus W. Paul Cook's rambling but informative Appreciation and Fran Laney's Cthulhu Glossary. Also, of course, there is the poetry, for them as like.

The volume's major attraction, for me at least, is "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath." This is to my mind one of Lovecraft's most satisfactory tales; although the influence of Dunsany is very obvious, it never eclipses HPL's own style and method. Moreover, it avoids the over-writing and melodrama which so often cheapens HPL's; indeed, I find it hard to imagine the story's being written any better.

The plot is simple: Randolph Carter dreams of an achingly beautiful city, but each time is snatched away from it before he can enter; consumed by longing for this lovely vision, he sets about, in his dreams, contacting Earth's gods to secure from them help in reaching the city. But the gods dwell in an onyx castle atop Kadath, the world's greatest mountain, and even in dreamland the location of Kadath is not very generally known. Carter's adventures on his quest are unrestricted by waking logic, and hence fantastic in the extreme; the Dunsanian type of quietly exotic fantasy is combined with Lovecraft's uneasy innuendo in a surprisingly effective way. The whole long pageant of dreamland (incorporating elements from such stories as "The Cats of Ulthar," "Celephais," "Pickman's Model," etc., as well as the "Fungi from Yuggoth") is top-knotch Lovecraft, sure to warm the heart of all lovers of pure fantasy. "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath" is a Grade A classic. Don't miss it!

The format of the volume is similar to that of "The Outsider and Others"; the dust-jacket is of unusual interest for two reasons: first, because it bears photos of four C. A. Smith sculptures from the Cthulhu mythos, and secondly because it announces among forthcoming Arkham House publications a Robert E. Howard anthology.

* * *

To Fran Laney, heartfelt thanks for the Lovecraft bibliography; just before the mailing arrived I was thinking of writing to Laney suggesting such a project. In view of its value to all interested in tracing Lovecraft's literary career, it certainly should be included in the third volume of the HPL trilogy.

* * *

Though I'm anything but clever,
I could write like this forever.
But I won't.

~~~~~

THE READER (HOW VEDDY SINGULAR!) SEZ: Don Wollheim had some comments on the third Banshee . . . . .

Thanks for the post-mailing and the latest Nebula. Enjoyed Spence's comments very much--in particular his views on Merritt and his wonder at the peculiar ostracism of Howard. Derleth has always seemed somewhat reluctant about considering a REH work--I've asked him a couple times I believe in the past couple years--and other parties show the same odd indifference. Writing to his father about details or asking permission to get out some of REH's poetry never gets any response. It becomes a subject for mystery after a while.

# The Aspirin-Eaters

-by Raymond  
Washington, Jr.

"Patience!" he said unto the grumbling clan,  
"This Model-T Ford will roll us homeward soon."  
In the afternoon they came unto a fan  
Who seemed to be a monster, or a goon.  
All round this fan dim voices seemed to croon,  
The world seemed but a dark fantastic dream;  
Leering above these fen there stood the moon:  
They heard a last despairing anguished scream,  
For Lycanthropes were bathing in a nearby stream.

Out stepped the bravest fan: "My honored sir,  
Please tell us how to get away from here.  
We're far away from home; lost, as it were,  
And fain would quench our thirst with wine or beer.  
And if there be loose women on the street  
Perchance we'll stay with you a little while . . .  
We're always glad our fellow fen to greet;  
Our hearts are heavy from the trip; a smile  
Would sure beguile our hearts, though it were  
strange and wild."

The silent fan said naught. Instead, he grinned,  
And bared his fangs against the westering sun;  
Black were the streets, devoid of fen or men--  
Then someone shouted: "Fanzines by the ton!"  
In that weird meadow, obviously shunned,  
No one cried out, or sang aloud his fame,  
And round the Model T they tried to run--  
Black faces pale against that rosy flame,  
The pink-eyes, awful, horrible Aspirin-Eaters came.

Boxes they brought of that enchanted stuff,  
Laden with prozines and fruit, whereof they gave  
To each (disguised, of course, as Bluebell Snuff--)  
And he that gorged fell down into his grave.  
Far off the ocean seemed to roll and rave,  
On non-slan shores; if a survivor spake  
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave.  
Their hearts beat hard; they all seemed wide awake,  
And yet, asleep. They swore, "What's this, for  
Science's sake?"

They sat the down upon the yellow sand,  
Beside their Model T, upon the shore,  
And sweet it was to dream of friend and fan.  
Days passed. They would not shave. And evermore  
More futile seemed S. F., their chosen Corps,  
And futile seemed all things, and far away.  
Then someone said, "We will return no more."  
And all at once they sang: "It's tough, we say,  
Our nags will not be in the next F. A. P. A."



# Design -FOR- Fanmags

One night last July a group of fans got together and one of many things talked about and kicked around was the lack of good design in fanmags; most of the fanmags look pretty much the same, as you know. A couple of the fellows tried to disprove this by pointing out and showing copies of outstanding issues of fanmags. After the writer had put in his two cents worth on how to fix the others up, Larry Shaw, who was present, said with a very wicked gleam in his eye, "Write up those remarks and I'll publish them." So here they are.

The suggestions here are given with the thought of trying to make something that is good, better. Just as a designer tries to make a product and a package pleasing to the eye, as well as useful, these suggestions will make better looking and easier reading mags. A good design or layout -- call it what you will -- can, in most cases, make the job a little easier for that wild eyed man, the editor. Here we go, so get out your axes, boys, and sharpen them up!

The design need not be elaborate; the simpler it is, the better. Every page doesn't have to look the same as every other one. Take each page or group of pages and make a design or layout for them. Don't just change the color of the paper but plan more white space on each page. Do it by putting double or triple spaces between the paragraphs. It's being done by a few editors: how about it by more? Along with that, try putting wider margins on your pages. Make them big enough for a man's size hand. Some of the margins look as if





BY Bill Ryder —

they were designed for midgets! I'm not going to sing the praises of even lines on the right side of the page because I've seen pages done without them that were easy reading and pleasing to the eye. It all depends on how the editor handles the space on each page. There is a KNACK in handling white space. Think of it as so much black mass, the type, on a field of white, the paper, and it has to look right. Try to avoid the solid dense look that is so common in most publications. Plan to put a little color on each page or group of pages. An initial, the title, or even just a straight line in a different color will do a lot towards giving the page a pleasing appearance.

Nothing screwy so far in these suggestions, is there? Here's a few more. Try using fewer pages and come out more often!! Don't howl; let me prove why that's a good suggestion. Fewer pages means less work and you will feel more like tackling the job and more than likely you will do a better job of it. Think that over. You know the old saying, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder of something else."

How about more of the smaller size mags, **Reader's Digest** size? This size has a great many advantages; for instance, you can glue the pages instead of stapling and the mag will lay flat when opened. You can mail it without an envelope by gluing on another sheet and using that for a covering and for addressing. In that small size it's not hard to get together a twenty four page mag. Best of all, it's possible to mail a twenty four page mag for a penny. That helps to balance the books!

Almost everyone sticks the name on the front cover along with a drawing and the cover is finished and what have you got? Just another fanmag with a nice cover. Most commercial publications have to do that to sell but why do you? Why not make yours different? Give it a personality, because, after all, most fanmags are just one person, the editor, in print. Put a crest, a design, or a monogram on the cover; change the color you print it with from issue to issue or use different colored paper, and put that good drawing that was going on the cover on the inside without any name on it other than the artist's. Then the subscribers can remove it, if they want to, and hang it! What say to that?

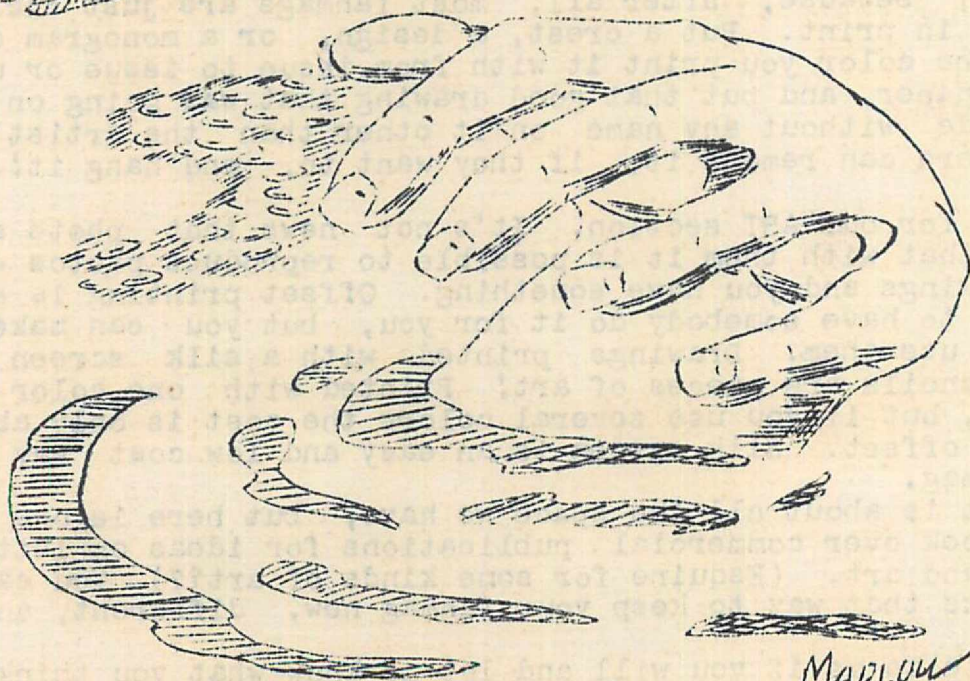
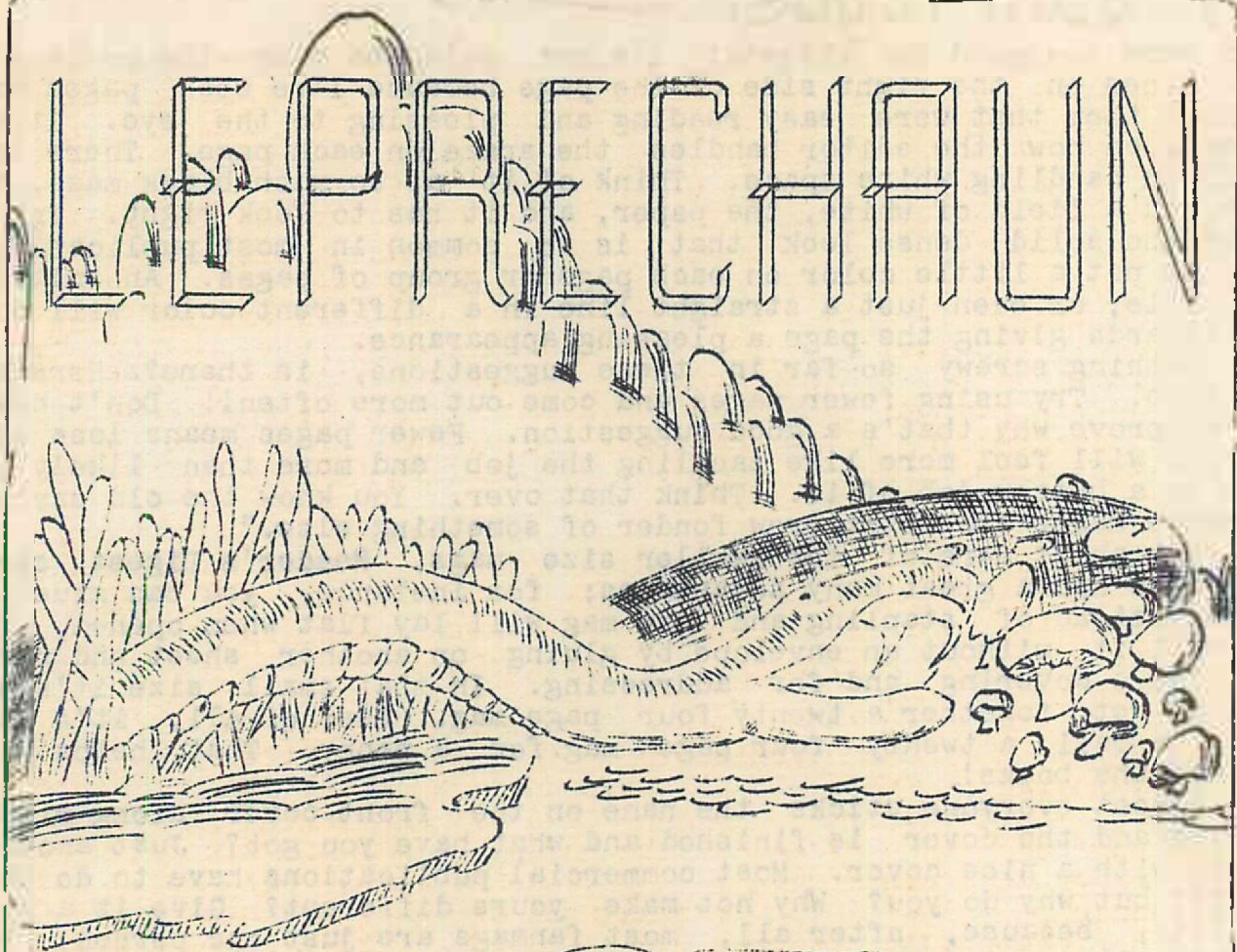
Now for our ART section. It's not news that photo stencils are out and that with them it is possible to reproduce photos -- but add to that drawings and you have something. Offset printing is expensive and you have to have somebody do it for you, but you can make photo stencils and use them. Drawings printed with a silk screen outfit from photo stencils are pieces of art! Printed with one color the cost is very low, but if you use several colors the cost is only about the same as photo offset. Silk screen is an easy and low cost way to add color to your mag.

That is about all the space we have, but here is one more suggestion: look over commercial publications for ideas on lettering, page layout, and art. (Esquire for some kinds of art??) You can pick up a few tricks that way to keep your fanmag new, different, and a pleasure to read.

Write to me if you will and let me know what you think. I'll be glad to hear from you, but please leave your axe at home! Thanks, Larry, for the space.



# LEPRECHAUN



MARLOW



f b r  
FANTASY BOOK REVIEW

by PAUL SPENCER

"ETIDORHPA; or, The End of Earth," The Strange History of a Mysterious Being and the Account of a Remarkable Journey, by John Uri Lloyd. With many illustrations by J. Augustus Knapp. Eleventh Edition, revised and enlarged. New York, Dodd Mead & Co., 1910.

Thus runs the title-page of one of the most astonishing works of fantasy ever written; "Etidorhpa," one of those rare items that are a delight to the heart of the collector, is among the few old-time fantasyarns which still retain a flavor of the unusual. Written in a leisurely style, following every detail with utmost care, waxing rather grandiloquent at times, this book is, let me warn at the outset, pretty tough going in places; yet, and this too I wish to emphasize, it is well worth struggling with the story's slowness, for there are many quaint fancies and stimulating ideas embodied in the narrative. Nor is the style without a certain beauty.

The story starts like many other ancient fantasyarns, but surprises are in store. The narrator is startled by the apparition of a strange, bearded man who leaves a manuscript behind him. This manuscript, the story of I-Am-The-Man-Who-Did-It, makes up the major portion of the book. I-Am-The-Man had been interested in alchemy and psychical research, and, in response to a certain letter, joins a secret mystical society, with the purpose of revealing to the world the higher science attained by the organization. As a punishment for his betrayal, I-Am-The-Man is made aged in appearance, and, for reasons hinted at but never clearly divulged, is made immortal and taken on a fantastic journey beneath the surface of the Earth. His guide in this Verne-esque journey is a superhuman man who has no eyes, but "sees" through higher senses. I-Am-The-Man is conducted through the huge caverns under the Earth's crust, meeting strange life-forms and astonishing natural phenomena. High point of his journey is his meeting with Etidorhpa, whose nature is pretty well implied in her name if you interpret it correctly.

There is very little plot to the story; it is nothing more than what it claims to be -- "the account of a remarkable journey." Each step of the way is discussed in minute scientific detail, and all sorts of surprising and thought-provoking theories are advanced; "Etidorhpa" contains more ideas to the square inch than any other book I know of. These ideas are often quite mystical, verging on the supernatural, but there is plenty of good solid science as well. The author has carried his conception through with the most astounding thoroughness and startling verisimilitude. Though the science is all straggleforward enough (including countless curious experiments which the reader may be interested in trying out for himself), there is a good deal of very odd hidden meaning. The title itself, the cover, the name of the author, the artist (whose profuse illustrations are superb) -- these and other things seem to possess subtle significance.

"Etidorhpa" is unique; there is nothing else to compare it with. If you like to meet strange ideas and quaint conceptions -- if it amuses you to play with unconventional experiments -- then "Etidorhpa" should thrill you profoundly. The basic idea of the book is embodied in this single sentence: "If scholars would cease to devote their entire energies to the development of the material . . . many beauties and powers of Nature now unknown would be revealed."

# **PURELY PERSONAL**

BY LEN MARLOW

It sez in the papers that jet propulsion is here. However, the papers—the local ones at least—seem to have been misinformed as to how jet propulsion functions. "The jet propelled airplane," they would have us believe, "operates on the rocket principle, with a series of short, sharp blasts." That doesn't even sound like a definition of how a rocket functions, almost all of the rocket devices we've ever heard of using a continuous blast.

So we were going to write some nice little letters to the editors of the various papers and tell them just how the thing works—but as usual we didn't get around to it. Why we're telling you this, we don't know, but after all, we had to start somewhere.

Magazines lately have been full of things like "Your Life Tomorrow" in Collier's, "The Rocket Grows Up" in This Week, etc, etc. You find manufacturers of alcoholic beverages using drawings of future inventions in their ads. The public, one would suppose, is becoming future conscious.

Fanzines are full of articles, very idealistic articles, painting a rosy picture of Stfdom after the war. Stf, they say, will be more widely recognized ATW, and may even play a part in shaping the future. We're slightly dubious.

While of the opinion that a wider field is opening up for stfantasy as a form of literature, we can't quite picture complacent old John Q. Public viewing it as having any merits along the line of predicting possible futures. People as a whole are so exasperatingly unimaginative.

Most of the articles in the slicks concern not the far distant future, but the very near future—after the war. All of the predictions are logically based on present developments, and, we might point out, the magazines in which they appear carry quite a bit more weight than does a pulp. So it seems to boil down to this: in the future we will see a lot of prediction and stuff in the slicks, written by some supposedly authoritative names. But as for stf mags—they'll still be "that crazy trash."

Just a passing thought—will we see all the great inventions and improvements after this war? Some of them, naturally. But what about all these wonderful predictions—ideas on which a certain amount of work has been done, but which lack a lot of developement yet. A lot of these predictors have no connection whatsoever with the manufacturers who will produce these "miracles of tomorrow." The ideas outlined are, we believe, pretty much just what the "prophet" would like to see developed ATW. Undoubtedly they could be, but they probably won't for quite a while.

Businessmen are shrowd old boys—why should they hand J. Q. Public a batch of improvements all at once, when they can string them out over a period of years and make him pay ten times as much for 'em that way? Automobile manufacturers are now saying that postwar designs will be much the same as prewar. Thousands of war planes will be converted to



civilian use, thus tremendously reducing the market for some time to come. Despite what you may hear from certain sources, we won't all have helicopters in our backyards—they'll cost too much. Aircraft construction involves the use of special materials, and material cost remains much the same war or no war.

Postwar Picture: "Put on your old gray bonnet, while I hitch old Dobbin to the shay"—or words to that effect.

We also do not believe that Degler's Cosmic Circle will ever replace the Holy Rollers. . . .

But on to lighter subjects—Mr. Murgatroyd, for instance.

I first met Mr. Murgatroyd a week ago Wednesday evening. He appeared beside me on the street with a terrible shriek.

"Good evening," he said pleasantly. "I'm Mr. Murgatroyd."

"Oh—how do you do?" I replied.

"I'm a ghost, you know," he added casually, and that rather stumped me. What does one say when informed by a companion that he is a ghost?

"Beautiful dark evening, isn't it?" Mr. Murgatroyd inquired, attempting to liven up the lagging conversation a bit.

"Yes indeed," I agreed, "it certainly is dark." I confess that my voice trembled a bit as I spoke. After all, one doesn't meet a ghost just any old dark evening.

At the corner we passed a street light, and as we did so I noticed that Mr. Murgatroyd became rather translucent, as well as somewhat wavy about the edges.

"Oh, yes," he said when I had pointed the fact out to him. "A strong light always does that to me. In fact I sometimes fade away quite completely. You have no idea how beastly annoying it can be."

We walked on down the street in silence. Finally, when the absence of conversation was becoming acutely painful, I bolstered up enough courage to ask, "And what do you do for a living? Haunt houses and such like, I suppose?"

"Oh, I say old boy!" he laughed. "That's really quite good! No, I'm a ghost writer, you know."

Unfortunately we had just passed under a theater marquee, and as the lights struck full upon him, Mr. Murgatroyd began to fade very swiftly, finally vanishing away altogether.

Maybe it's just us—but don't the pocket size Astoundings appear to be picking up more than just a little bit of late? Much better covers since the return to the old cover style. The way the lettering on the back binding changes around every couple of issues is a little annoying, though, as is the late appearance—altho it was only four days late the last time instead of the usual two weeks. But we should kick when we're still able to buy Ast.

And lest you think we have forgotten the fine crop of stories, how about "Lost Art," "We Print the Truth," "Fricassee in Four Dimensions," "The Iron Standard," "Technical Error," "The Leech," "Ogre," "As Never Was," "The Anarch," "Though Dreamers Die," "Catch that Rabbit," and, the only story we've yet read in the March issue, "The Children's Hour?"

About that last, incidentally. While one of Kuttner's and Ast's best, we still found one bad fault—the too early speculation that Someone was carefully regulating Clarissa's life. To us, at least, it

gave the whole story away. Not that the story needed a great deal of suspense, though.

How about the fine illustrations for that yarn, too? The year's best. In fact, the best since Rogers and Schneeman were snatched away. Kolliker, it seems, almost invariably does better as Williams. His work has really improved vastly of late, and Orban has picked up too. Our objection, in the past, to Orban's drawings is that they have been too black. Compare his usual run of work with the pix for "Fricassee in Four Dimensions."

Can a machine look alien—well, we don't like to admit it, but we're forced to agree with Larry. The answer is no. (We hate that, too. Here we were hoping to start a nice, hot argument with the Hermit—sorta pay him back, by disagreeing with him, for all those nasty little comments in our last installment of this thing. Besides, we could have filled a goodly amount of space that way.) We think that when Claude claims some of the early Paul covers contained machinery that was alien, he interpreted alien as unusual, which they certainly are. And just to heap a few more coals on the hotly raging fires of discussion, it is our opinion that nothing but life forms totally different from those to which we are accustomed could really look alien.

Actually, there are certain life forms here on good old Earth that impress us as alien. For instance, inspect a caterpillar closely sometime. Not the fuzzy kind, but the ones with little or no hair—or whatever you want to call it—and outre colorings. Or tomato worms. Nearly all of the half plant, half animal things to be found in the ocean have an alien appearance, too. It's only natural—we don't make a habit of walking around on the ocean floor every day. If we did, they would of course be quite commonplace. We are used to fish, though, so if you were to dredge up an unknown species it would appear grotesque and unusual, but not alien. See what we mean?

It's all a matter of being accustomed to a general class of things, whether it's machinery, plants, or animals. To a person familiar with Terrestrial machinery, a Martian automatic feed, atomic powered triple-decker nut cracker would look different, and its purpose would perhaps be quite difficult to puzzle out, but all in all—just another machine.

To add a little to our topic of two paragraphs back, those strange underwater life forms fit our description of alien to a T. We are accustomed to plant life and to animal life, but these—quasi creatures?—are neither and yet both.

At this point we feel called upon to reply to the little query Spencer directed at us in the second issue of CALIBAN. While we will not burst forth into a heated defense of Rap, we have a little, age old question to ask. The name of the mag is Amazing Stories; does the word "stories" imply science fiction, period? Personally, we rather suspect that the purpose of including fantasy was to perhaps snag a few more readers for FA. Palmer is strictly business, you know, and what's wrong with that? Magazines are generally published to make money, and the "gruesome twosome" seem to do right nicely be Ziff Davis. On the basis of circulation here in Indianapolis they rate right under Blue Book, which tops the pulp list.

Besides, we think most of youse guys go at Amazing with the idea in mind that everything in it is going to stink like hell, just as sure



# Robot's Soliloquy

What was that feeling? Once—no more—  
I felt it. . . . Running my machine  
That stood nearby the workshop door  
I looked upon a scene

Where people, idling foolishly,  
Were lying, strolling in the sun,  
While all around them I could see  
The world's work left undone.

And then, a giddiness—a pain—  
Assailed and blanked my whirling mind;  
My power-plant's current seemed to wane;  
My eyes grew dim, half-blind.

An un-traced thought crept through my head  
And spoke strange things. I felt that I  
Must leave my place, and walk instead  
Beneath the hot, blue sky.

An overseer found me then,  
Unmoving, staring toward the field;  
They brought me here into this pen,  
Behind this leaden shield.

What was the trouble that bright noon?  
They probed my workings, said it queer—  
Was some short-circuit righted soon?  
This room—why am I here?

- Don Gualterio

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# Cynicism OR Criticism == ? ==

by

TOM DANIEL

There are a couple of things that stand out to every reader of fantasy fiction, whether new or old, and whether active fan or not. These are the extremely noticeable frankness, and its badly suited partner, cynicism, of the fans. For it is possible to be very frank in making criticisms and statements and still be within the bounds of the term, "critic." What is happening is that too many of fandom's cohorts are taking that as a rather broad term and adding too much scorn to their remarks. Scorn of another is an admission of shortcomings in ourselves!

So fans are Slans, eh? Not by a long shot if they can ridicule others of their own ranks. Oh, you will say in self-defense, another way of puffing ourselves up in our own minds to justify those same shortcomings, "They don't show the intelligence necessary to be good members of fandom. They are obtuse, vulgar, procrastinating, and belittling." If, in pronouncing such sentence upon them, we do so in public and noisily, we ourselves have become members of the hated band. True, there are such who cause trouble and breed ill feeling and unrest in the ranks of the chosen, but who has been set up as the all-important being able to point the finger at each and every one and say, "He is good" or "He is bad"? I'm afraid it won't work that way for any type. Age, color, sex, or creed; there is no line of demarcation.

When those of us who are called old-timers were thirteen or fourteen years old, naive and full of the first thrill of our great discovery, who was there of the age of twenty or thirty to point the finger of scorn and laugh at our youthful straightforwardness? Would we have survived the storm of protest at this invasion of their sacred ground by this horde of brats and upstarts? Maybe some would, but there would be the same number of blasted hopes and ideals as of today. We can't ostracize such hopeful idealism. We have become cynical, used to all the diversions and ideas behind this, our one common denominator. Nor do I put myself in any separate category. I have felt the same tide of loose thinking and worldly-wise opinion, maybe even before the normal time of adulthood. But I have kept my ideals. Maybe I have too many of them, that I don't know. They have kept me happy and able to cope



with all the pitfalls of a trying time. I know my shortcomings, and have done my utmost to keep them from cropping out in the wrong places. At times I get a bit tangled in the resulting web of circumstance, but I come through with my spirit and body intact (generally). Now don't get the idea that I'm alluding to any one of fandom's farflung minions. This is something that should be aired thoroughly, and with no sense of blasting any one single individual. I've looked over some of my letters to magazines back in 1932 and later, and I almost blush with shame at some of the pretty foul things I used to say in reference to some fan or author.

Which should take us to the very next step of my mental meanderings. The principles outlined just now can also be applied to criticism of the pro field. Cynical or blatant criticism will say an author's or artist's work stinks -- "If I couldn't do better than that myself, I'd dip my head in a tub of water three times and come up twice." Just a flowery example. And not so flowery at that, compared to some of the elaborate torture devices I have seen described. I will say that some of this can be laid to youthful exuberance and inexperience, but as a rule, what we do see of it comes from all quarters of fandom.

Many who are guilty of one of the above vices could not be so charged with any other, but must we have one of them? Fandom could expand limitlessly if the proper approaches could be discovered to welcome the new and untried, to help them over the hurdles we had to knock down. Should we feel that since we had it the hard way, then so must they? What price all this wonderful scientific advance if our moral and mental clearness cannot cope with it?

"What's good enough for my Granpappy, is shore good enough for me!"

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↑ Purely Personal —

((continued from page 14))

as Klono made little pink space puppies. So, as you have made up your mind on that score, naturally the stories stink. You're too ready to find all the flaws and disregard the good points--and I think you'll find that nearly any story contains something of worth.

Put suppose that Palmer gets, as he sometimes does, a story from a well known writer who has written very good stuff for other pubs. Like the lineup he got quite some time back: Bates, Asimov, Bester, Eric Frank Russell. Well, you say, what's gonna happen! Some good stories at last. You read the story by Bates and you're a little disappointed. It's formula stuff, you say—but it's pretty good formula, anyway. If that story had been written by, say, Wilcox, ten to one you'd have been quick to throw it away in disgust. Personally, the only one of those stories we thought good was Russell's. Asimov's was fair.

Palmer prints some good stories once in a while, if you'll only take the trouble to dig them out; and some of the best covers and interior pix have appeared in FA and Amz.

Oh, by the way, Larry. We l- i- k- e the Three Stooges too!!!!  
heresy, rank heresy. . . .

# Superfan's PERFECT DAY

by LEN MARLOW

Superfan awoke.

The fans were fanning, the fishes were fishing, the buds were budding, the seas were seeing, and the moon was doing whatever it does in the a. m.

It was a day.

Superfan put on the sneakers, baggy pants, and dirty grey shirt he wore as the moronic hitch-hiker and Cosmic Cube propaganda distributor, Buck Dodgers.

Helenna Hadleigh, Superfan's cook, laundress, and—er—handygirl, was preparing something or other.

Isn't it a day, Helenna? said Superfan.

Uhhhhhhhh—uhuh, Superfan darling, said Helenna.

Helenna, said Superfan.

Helenna, how many times must I tell you not to call me Superfan, as you are the only person in the world who knows that I am really a Superfan, and to call me Buck Dodgers instead.

Uhhhhhhhh—uhuh, Superfan darling, said Helenna.

Breakfast was nauseating.

After he had finished gagging and wiped up the floor with Helenna's wig, Superfan got out his big book containing the names of all the FooFooists, Ashleys, Ungers, Schwartzes, model fans, editors, and anti-Cosmic Cubites in the whole world.

As he thumbed through the book, an even stranger look than usual spread over Superfan's hideous face.

It spread behind the matted curtain of hair that dangled down over the moronic face of Buck Dodgers, of course.

Finally Superfan closed the book with a snap, yanking his bruised thumb from between the pages with a howl of agony.

Helenna, said Superfan, you are the witness to a momentous occasion.

Today, Helenna, there are no more FooFooists, Ashleys, Ungers, Schwartzes, model fans, editors, or anti-Cosmic Cubites in the whole world.

I have reformed (Yak, yak!), jailed, sued, slaughtered (accidentally, of course) or exiled to Pluto every last one of them.

The earth is freed of all those who are opposed to the total fandom.

Helenna said Uhhhhhhhh. . . .

Superfan stood before a mirror and smirked ghoulishly as it shattered to bits.

Finally he said Helenna, I have been freed of my duty to the Cube-men. Today I am going out and have fun.

Helenna said Uhhhhhhhh. . . .

Superfan walked down the street, looking very funny.

I wonder what I can do to have fun, he gargled hoarsely to himself.

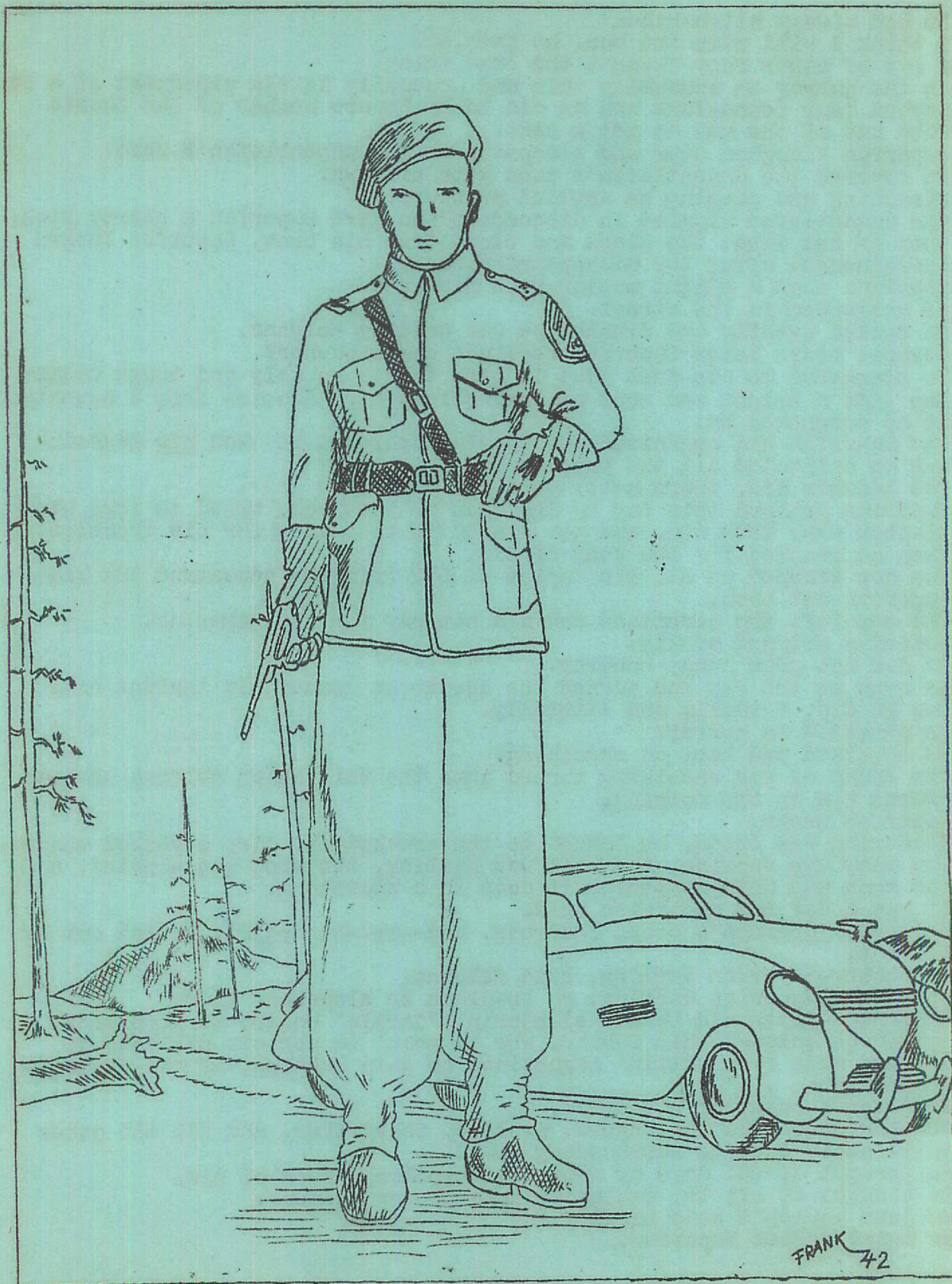
He decided to ride the bus.

He hadn't ridden the bus in eons.



He had always hitch-hiked.  
 I think I will ride the bus, he gargled.  
 A lot of other fans thought the same thing.  
 On the subway an unusually thin and unusually little pipsqueak of a fan pushed four femme-fans and an old Inner Square member of the Cosmic Cube out of the way to get a seat.  
 Superfan sloughed over and stooped near the ungentlefan's seat.  
 He covered the ungentlefan's toes with his own.  
 Straining and gasping he applied pressure.  
 The ungentlefan wiggled in discomfort and gave Superfan a hearty kick.  
 When he had wiped the glass and blood from his brow, Superfan looked incredulously after the disappearing bus.  
 Superfan made a slight motion with his hand.  
 He collapsed in the street.  
 He smiled sweetly and dreamed he was holding Helenna.  
 Several hours later Superfan regained consciousness.  
 He staggered to his feet just in time to see an ugly and tough Cosmic Cop lift a bright red copy of Sexy Scientigirl Stories from a newsstand as he swaggered by.  
 Now Superfan had organized the Cosmic Cops, but SSS was his magazine and he collected all the profits on it.  
 The trouble was, there never were any profits.  
 Superfan grasped this cop by the back of the neck, tried to take his blaster away from him, and got singed in the pants for his troubles.  
 Then he reached for the copy of SSS.  
 The cop scooped up all the copies of SSS from the newsstand and made Superfan eat them.  
 The cop left the newsstand and did not pay for the magazine.  
 Superfan grinned sickly.  
 He did not grin long, however.  
 As soon as the cop had turned the corner he heaved his insides out.  
 Yes he did, actually and literally.  
 He shrieked in horror.  
 He shrieked and kept on skreiking.  
 The sound of his shrieking turned into the wail which Helenna used to awaken him in the morning.  
 Superfan awoke.  
 Pondering his dream, he turned to the cracked and dirt streaked window.  
 The snow was snowing, the hail was hailing, the wind was winding, and the moon was doing whatever it does in a snowstorm.  
 It was a day for exclusion acts.  
 Helenna, Superfan's cook, laudress, and--er--handygirl, rolled out of bed too.  
 Uhhhhhhh--Superfan darling, said Helenna.  
 Uhhhhhhh--Superfan darling, ya shouldun be slouchin' thur.  
 Uhhhhhhh--ya should be out slanderin' "Garlic" Unger, world's most dangerous antuh-Cosmic Cubito, who is goin' ta use his millions of dollars made from sellin' maguhzines to gain cuhntrol of all fandom--  
 uhhhhhhhhhh. . . .  
 Superfan thought of his dream.  
 He thought of all the Ungers, Ashleys, Schwartzes, and all the other anti-Cosmic Cubites surrounding him.  
 He thought of the days of weary hitch-hiking ahead of him.  
 He thought of all the exclusion acts he must endure.  
 He just couldn't help himself.  
 Aw nuts! sobbed Superfan.





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