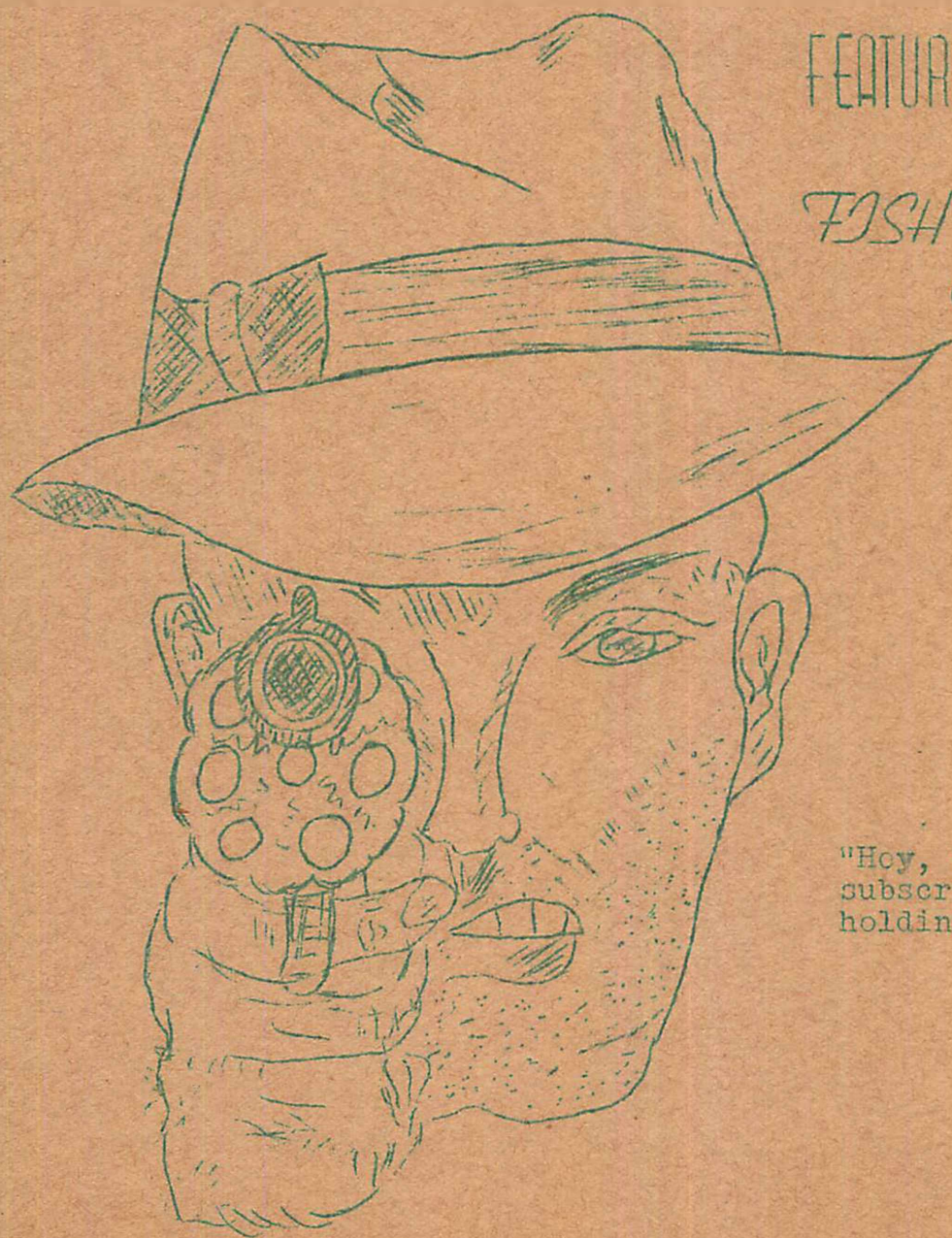


THE DAMN THING

march 1941 III



FEATURING

FISH AND
GYPS
FROM
thorne
smith

"Hey, bud, how's that
subscription of yours
holding out?"

THE DAMN THING

Dictator, T. Bruce Yerke.

Financier and Circulation,
Forrest J. Ackerman

Hard Manual Labour
Merojo

VOLUME I

MARCH 1941

NUMBER FOUR

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THE DAMN THING is published every six weeks by T. Bruce Yerke. 'Tis one of those

CLASSIC magazines. Copies may be had at 10¢ per, 3 for 25¢, 6 for 50¢, and twelve for \$1.00. You can also get a subscription if you do it. Complaints and such stuff should be sent to T. Bruce Yerke, 1033 Sunset St., Hollywood, California. Monies and orders should be sent to 6478 Metro St., Los Angeles, Calif.

THE EDITOR SITS ON HIS PLATFORM

Beautiful jade, and cut glass,
Budah's sitting on his---platform.

In lieu of anything else to commence with, (I just got through staring at the page for five minutes) we will quote a prominent Technocrat, who, it appears, thinks the damn thing is a menace to Technocracy. "Three more issues of The Damn-Thing will cause chaos on the North American Continent."

It is expected that the Technocrats will shortly have a chart showing the rise of chaos with every issue of the magazine. We also had an offer from the Russian government, who wished to distribute copies of TDT throughout the world as excellent agitation material.

Before the dear reader sits down to write me a letter expressin' his lousy opinion on why or why not The Damn Thing should or should not ever again publish a seven page story, I will tell you now that I don't give a damn if you like the idea of a long story. At last, it's a hell of a lot better than some of the tripe we have to put up with in certain magazines. About the worst I can think of was the Ackerman-Flagg nauseous thin which dragged through the first three or four issues of IMAGINATION! (Another mag your ed started.) Whenever Fassbeinder, or J. E. Smith, or John Steinbeck send me a story that I like, it will appear, and those who don't like it can send in an extra 5¢ with their subscription, and we will take the trouble to delate the pages from the issue goi g to the particular sender.

This issue Poday Hodgy gets the ax. Our mutual friend is analysed. Aaaagh, isn't it? We also bring a bit of whimsy from Ray Bradbury. My critics, that annoying bunch of gas house boys in the balcony, will point with gleeful fingers, and say: "What a great ego is Mr. Yerke, who puts his name even in the fiction stories of the magazine. "I wish to make it clear that Bradbury wrote the story using my name---but I love it. (Quiet, YOU! Don't say you wouldn't.)

On the covour, throughout the magazine, and on the full page spread on the back of this, is represented the efforts of a new artist to our fold. Ewing Brown is a wolf of the first order. Mayhap I might say he is a jackel. His room is wall-papered with Petty drawings. With his camera he takes nothing but bathing beauties. It is rumoured that his camera lens whistles at every girl it gets into focuss. I had to make him put up a bond which would be forfeited if he insisted on drawing three lorelei's in Forsendyke's crystal ball. (This might have change the course of Smith's story, however. Forsendyke would then have been trying to get INFO the ball, instead of otherwise.)

I should like at this time to proclaim Arthur Louis Jocuel, II, a shlemiehl. A shlemiehl, I say, and repeat. A friend--heh, heh! (Read foregoing cynicly) No sooner than I announce that I am going to lift I. Asimov by his, well, you know what, and promptly expose him to the utmost criticism, than Shlemiehl Joquel puts out an entire magazine, featuring a rebutal to I. Asimov. However, we urge that you buy a copy of Jocuel's Sun Trails, knowing, however, that it is sheer plagiarism.

Milton A. Rothman has written us something for the magazine. Look as you can you won't find it in this issue. (Did you, Milty?) The only reason we might publish it is because if we don't, Rothman will raise a shriek of discrimination.

Full page illustration,
by Ewing Miles Brown.

"Fish," he said.



FISH & GYPS AS RETOLD BY

Carlton J. Fassbeinder, D. Ps.

Yogi Forsendyke held back a strangling choke. Indeed, had a doctor been present at the moment, he would have most certainly feared that the Yogi was going to shortly have a fit of apoplexy. To Mrs. Van Swank-Sack, who was sitting opposite the famed mystic, the change was most startling. The Yogi had just prepared to look into his crystal ball, anticipating a cosmic message from Roger, a deceased husband of the thrice-married society matron. His face had upon it a look of celestial peace. (And why not? Van Swank-Sack payed him good money for "messages.")

And then, the transformation! Yogi opened his eyes. They dialated. A look of utter horror crossed him. His veins bulged. (Too much alcohol) He rapidly flushed into the red end of a spectrum. And his nervous system went haywire; he shivered, much as with a case of palsy.

Mrs. Van Swank-Sack gazed on helplessly. Perhaps it was a celestial matter of a wrong-number. "Isn't Roger all right?" she inquired.

The Yogi gave her a penetrating look. His mouth opened and closed in an excellent emulation of a fish out of water. He was gagging on his larynx. And at last the fatal word escaped. "FISH!" he roared. "FISH!"

Mrs. Van Swank-Sack recoiled from this vocal thunder as if struck by lightning. So much noise put into one word from one person seemed impossible. A door opened to the rear of the velvet-shrouded Crystall Room. Yenson, a fish-eyed valet which the Yogi had pulled from a Copenhagen Gutter while touring Europe, hastily entered and was near his master's side.

"The Great Yogi is all right?"

Forsendyke was gesticulating wildly. He motioned Yenson over to the ball.

"What do you see in that ball," he stuttered.

Yenson gazed dully into the depths. Then his eyebrows raised a trifle. He looked back into the sparking eyes of his employer. With a long, corpulent finger, he pointed into the globe and said one word. "Fish!"

The dense and portly Mrs. Van Swank-Sack was by now aroused. She wobbled over and committed the blasphemy of gazing into the mysterious depths. Placidly swimming in the light-bathed interior, were three medium sized Goldfish. Madam V. S-Sack emitted a "Hummmph" and met the gaze of the Yogi. "Fish," she said.

And the next moment Mrs. Van Swank-Sack was being rapidly escorted to the door by a trembling Yenson, while from the open portal of the Crystall Room a stream of expletives, on a par with some of the things Yenson had heard often on the Copenhagen docks, was issuing forth.

Such an incongruity was appalling. The stately and famed Arabesque house which was known throughout the world of Astrologists, Spiritulists, and other Golden Fleeceers had never been visited by such a manifestation. Yogi Forsendyke had systematically robbed the wealthy for more than twenty years,

Several pseudo-hindus visited the Yogi in the evening. They were greeted by a shaking Yenson, who ushered the somewhat surprised visitors into the Crystall Room. They joined the Yogi, after the initial shock. They argued! They discussed! The cocktail bar was drained of its contents by midnight, and finally the great minds of the occult world agreed upon one thing: It was most amazing! And Yogi Forsendyke was saved from a nervous collapse. He was cautioned to continue his classes the next day while the great minds thought.

That night the unusual manifestation finally began to dawn on Yenson. And when the morning came, and Mr. Butterworth Frisby presented himself in the reception room, he was appalled to see the usual fisheyed and non-communicative Yenson going about as if in a stupor.

"Eh, Yenson," he finally spoke, "Eh, the Yogi is all right? Isn't he?"

Yenson didn't say anything. Butterworth Frisby thought he caught the odor of alcohol from the valet, and he rather imagined that Yenson was muttering something that sounded like "fish."

He looked pointedly at the fellow. "Yenson!" Yenson gave him a blank look. Frisby added a word in a soft, amicable voice. "Stocks!"

No response.

Frisby whispered secretivly, "STOCKS!" And at last—

Yenson appeared to have understood. He made his way erratically to the door, pushed it open by falling against it rather than unlatching the same, and led the way down the hall to the Crystall Room, followed by the wondering stock magnate.

The Yogi was standing over the crystal ball in a pose reminiscent of Napoleon waiting to belch. He turned at the slight click of the opening door. Frisby made his way to the usual chair. The Yogi looked at him. He looked at the Yogi. The Yogi was obviously under a terrific strain. Frisby hesitated, then pulled through.

"What would you consider a good buy today, Yogi? Eh, stocks, you know. Heh! Heh! Remember?"

Yogi Forsendyke gave a vitrolic "Yesss," and darted to the other side of the ball. He took a deep breath, closed his eyes, and shuddered. The usual pre-trance stuff, Frisby thought. Then the Yogi bent low, slowly opening his eyes.

To Frisby it appeared that the Yogi was suffering from a deadly mental strain. He trembled slightly, seemingly being unable to force himself to peer into the ball. Then he could stand it no longer. Throwing his hands into the air, he shrieked one word: "FISH!" His other actions, that of doing a jig and mouthing words in a foreign language, were not even noticed by the departing Frisby.

And in his pompous office on Wall Street, Frisby phoned his broker. "Buy on the fish market! Get that? Fish! Got me an inside tip." Frisby's broker was Jerry, the Margin Man.



I'M A FILLER!

That afternoon, Forsendyke called for his Zoölogical friend, Morton Kabalski. Kabalski arrived and was ushered in by the staggering Yenson. The first thing Kabalski noticed upon approaching the famed house was the absence of the classes and daily programs. Instead, a large yellow sign was posted on the mailbox: KEEP AWAY. D.T.'s.

At first Kabalski deduced that Yenson was suffering, but now, upon confronting Forsendyke, he was sure that both were victims. Forsendyke was pale and haggard. He was on the verge of collapse.

"I noticed that you have no classes today," Kabalski tried to lead into some sort of conversation. "The place looks fishy to me!"

Kabalski was at the Yogi's side as Forsendyke let out a shriek and fell over backward at the mention of the word "fish."

"Look in my Crystal Ball," Forsendyke gasped, "What do you see?"

Kabalski leaned over and peered into the interior. His eye brows registered some surprise. He turned and faced the apoplectic Forsendyke, "I see fish," he answered calmly. "A most realistic illusion."

"It's not an illusion," Forsendyke yelled. "They're real! Real!" He lapsed into hysterical sobs, accompanied with much wringing of hands. "They got in there yesterday. All night I watched them! The damn things swim around so placidly——aagh! They drive me nuts! I can't concentrate! They'll ruin me!"

His discourse was interrupted by the phone. Forsendyke reached over and clutched it. "Yes?" he shouted into it.

"Forsendyke," came the metallic growling voice which he recognised as his broker-adviser Jerry. "What the hell have you been telling Butterworth-Frisby?"

"Nothing, I got my own troubles."

"You got more now," Jerry retorted. "Frisby said you told him to buy fish! What was that?"

A gagging noise had come from the broker's receiver.

"Forget it," he continued. "Frisby made me buy up the whole damned fish market. It opened off 2 this morning, and the bottom fell out an hour ago. Frisby is ruined. He owes me \$789,000 on margin. He can't pay, so I'm ruined. You have \$300,000 deposited with me. I just paid that out, so you're ruined." The metallic voice rose to a phone-breaking yell. "God damn it! We're all ruined! What the devil did you have Frisby buy fish for?"

From his vantage position, Kabalski had an excellent chance to watch one person change from an all ready flushing red, through the spectrum, yellow, orange, green, blue, and lastly purple. When a click betokened the end of the conversation, Forsendyke emitted a peculiar sound which was midway between the noise made by a boiler exploding, and the noise made by a gigantic dog barking... pyrotechnics faded out, and the Yogi was lying limp in his chair. His dilating eyes tried to focuss on the Zoölogist. And the Zoölogist gazed in alarm, finally managing to speak.

"What, or, ah——is it serious?"

"Serious!" The Yogi explained. With pathetic gestures, with eloquent pathos, Yogi Forsendyke, greatest occultist in the world, explained how three mysterious Goldfish achieved the impossible—how three goldfish lost him the patronage of the wealthy Van Swank-Sack, lost him her \$50-a-day messages from her third and last husband; elucidated on the Butterworth Frisby deal, explained how his \$10,000 a month client was left holding the sardine can in the fish market, not only ruining Frisby, but their mutual (though unknown) broker, and himself as well.

Kabalski could understand. He knew Forsendyke was a fake, but a most ingenious one.

"What I can't see, Forsen, is what you want me for," he at length replied.

The Yogi looked pathetic. "The fish," he croaked. "I got to feed them somehow. I can't let 'em swell up and die in there. It'd be horrible. I never could stand to look in there then."

"But the fish are swimming in solid glass!" Kabalski explained. "It's supernatural, Forsen, that's what it is."

"Nuts," the Yogi retorted. "There isn't anything supernatural."

"These fish are."

"Oh, hell!" And raising his voice. "Yenson, get me another chaser! What's wrong with that dope?"

"He's fishy."

"QUIET! Don't mention that word. And do something about it!"

Kabalski took out a magnifying glass and approached the ball. Yes, they were real fish. Under the magnifying glass they appeared oddly more like projections than the actual thing. But, their source was original. Somewhere there were some real fish. It was obvious that they couldn't be in the globe, it was solid crystal.

"How do you work that stock market trick of yours?" he asked Forsendyke.

Forsendyke was lying disinterestedly in his chair. Kabalski had to repeat the question before the Yogi was brought out of the nightmare of watching three hundred thousand dollars being stuffed into a dead shark. "There's a ticker tape under the ball," he boredly explained. "When I turn it on, Jerry's stock line numbers project into the ball, magnified a couple hundred times. The suckers see the figures floating around, and forks over the dough."

Kabalski bent down and lifted the drapes surrounding the lower half of the globe. Here was the ingenious stock ticker, and—beside it was precisely what he was looking for. He dutifully extracted a small fish aquarium from under the focussing light of the ticker. Three goldfish were innocently, though slightly hungrily, basking in the interior. Gingerly carrying the bowl over to the prostrate occultist, Kabalski held the bowl under Forsendyke's nose. The Yogi's eyes dropped. They opened. They dilated. The Yogi, with one loud expletive was over the back of the chair.

"What are you trying to do?" he shrieked. "Drive me insane?"

(EDITORIAL NOTE: Due to the lack of space, as usual, we cut out a bit of conclusion to the fish episode from Spirit Smith's short story and skip several hours ((consisting of one page)) to the evening.)

II.

Having spent the remainder of the day after the fish episode, trying to remember when the goldfish bowl was put under the Crystal Ball, Yogi Forsendyke, slowly regaining some of his composure, decided to hold a materialisation that evening. For this purpose, he sent out special messages to the effect that the goldfish had been astral relations of Monstro, the whale. (Everything is smaller in heaven, as the place is stuffily crowded after receiving arrivals for two thousand years.) (Smith's explanation is weak. Ed.)

Butterworth-Frisby, a ruined man, had vowed eternal exposure of the Yogi as a fake. The pompous gent collapsed from apoplexy shortly after the fish crash. Jerry, the Margin Man, was going to sue for enough money to keep his seat on the stock exchange. Indeed, a materialisation was necessary. They averaged a take of about \$200 each, and this would be enough for a steamship ticket to South America.

Vilkins, the electrician, about nine o'clock that night, adjusted the lights for a materialisation. The movie projector, which created ghostly figures on a large plate glass, was inspected. Fifteen gypsy actors, which Forsendyke had paid bail for in a Hungarian work camp, lined up opposite the microphone, preparing to emulate the voices. And in his dressing room, the Yogi was finishing off a Side Car, donning his gowns, and just concluding a phone call for a reservation aboard the S.S. Mucho Smoko for the next morning.

Assembled in the Room of Spirit Voices was the prize sucker-bait of Park Avenue. Mr. Pilfery Tower and his wife were here for a message from Rodney, who had an affair with a French Mam'selle, disappeared, and was later reported shot by a sniper in the Foreign Legion who had also had an affair with the same Mam'selle. And here was Mrs. Algernon Northroyalessexgardens Black, hoping to get a message from one of her husbands about a lost will. And as the lights dimmed, the Yogi walked on the stage.

He stood there, swaying slightly, and met the polite tittering of applause with a smirk and an ever so polite belch. "Tonight," he said, "we will endeavour to answer (g-ulp) and bring to you (phhh-haugh) messages from those departed loved ones of ours, living in paradise on the 'other (hic) side'" The Yogi reached up to pull off the lights, missed, and swayed back into the curtains. Vilkins dashed out, and helped the Great Mind to his feet. "For God's sake," he whispered, "cut that out. Sniff! You smell like a smoked mackerel."

"I was just struck by an astral inspirat---(ulp)," he explained. This time he managed to get the light out. Then in the almost totally darkened room he began his monotone trance. "Shiballa bast awardan! Ah! Allah! A!, Departed Spirits! Come to this room of mysteries. Bring me your messages for your loved ones left behind. Bring me a Side Car! Do you hear Yenson, bring me a Side Car, with ice!" Forsendyke broke off abruptly as Vilkins tapped him with a stage brush from the rear.

The audience hadn't heard the last. They were concentrating on the screen. A blue light was forming on the stage. Gradually it grew larger. And at last it had the shape of a ghostly figure. Forsendyke, who had been musing to himself, turned at the blue light. "What the---?" he muttered. None of his projections

were blue.

"Where's Forsendyke?" the apparition rasped.

Forsendyke was in the curtains, but the audience couldn't see that. "I'm right here," he gasped.

"Tell Yenson I want a Martini with ice."

Forsendyke dashed around in back. Maybe one of his actors had been bribed by Frisby. He met his fifteen actors and Vilkins dashing around front to see what was up. "What the hell happens?" Vilkins whispered. "I didn't turn the projector on yet."

The fifteen actors, Vilkins, and Forsendyke crowded on the front stage to watch the mysterious visitor. It was swaying back and forth. "Hurry up with that Martini," it snapped.

"Yenson," Forsendyke commanded, "get the thing a Martini."

A figure hurried up from the audience. It was a visiting occultist. "My God," he gasped to Forsendyke, "you've actually achieved a materialisation!"

"Nuts," said the Yogi, "there isn't any such thing. You know damn well there is something fishy around here."

Another figure hurried out of the audience, bearing a Martini. "I just passed Yenson in the hall," the other occultist breathed. "He's leaving."

The spirit floated over and snatched the glass out of the man's hand. The man gave an effeminate shriek and fell down the stairs to the floor. The spirit seemed to surround the Martini, and when it parted, the glass was empty. Forsendyke, the fifteen Gypsies, Vilkins, and the occultist were awed for the first time in their respective (and disrespectful) lives.

"See here," the spirit snapped again. "For twenty years, Forsendyke, for twenty years I've watched (baaap) you rake in the dough off those suckers out there. It 'tisn't fair. I'm a real spirit, and I have to starve in that Blue Law heaven of ours for a good drink, while you skin the heifers and wallow in the stuff." He floated out in the audience. "This is Oscar, Mahetabelle," he smirked sweetly, à la Forsendyke and party. "Oscar is doing well, dear, and I know you will have success." Then back to his own voice. "Any moron could say that and rake in money."

The spirit seemed to stare at the trembling party on the stage. "Tell that Copenhagen clam of yours to mix me up a Side Car, with that old gin of yours, it demanded in a stentorian voice.

"Not the 1865 Paris?" Forsendyke pleaded.

"Quiet, you," the Spirit shouted. "This is the end. I phoned the steamship company and cancelled your trip. You're going out of business, and you're staying in the U.S. No more sucker stuff down in S.A. I just fixed up the fish market,

went around to all the buyers and whispered in their ears: 'Fish! Buy Fish.' They will buy fish tomorrow.

"What about Frisby?" Forsendyke asked.

"I whispered gently into his ear. 'Fish', I said. 'Buy fish tomorrow.' Poor fellow. He jumped out of bed and ran down the hall screaming. He should worry. He will be rich tomorrow. Jerry will be rich."

"And I'll be rich again," the Yogi sighed, quite relievedly.

"The hell you will," the spirit barked at him. "Sign this!" A large scroll and pen appeared out of the blue ghost. Forsendyke listened as the intruder read out in a loud legal tone. "'For systematically swindling the wealthy but not so smart denizens of Park Ave., I, Morris Fishbien Fink, alias the Great Yogi, P.G. Forsendyke, a faker and swindler of the first order, hereby divide up into equal portions and distribute to those whom I have taken for a ride, the sum total of my entire estate. If I ever try this Yogi stuff again, a blue ghost will appear in the middle and denounce me.' To my Copenhagen friend Yenson, I give a ticket back to Denmark. To Vilkins, my electrical genius, I will the movie projector. To the fifteen Hungarian Hams I donate one chance on Major Bowes' Amature Hour.' Sign, you shlomiehl, and send me amother Side Car!"

Forsendyke was propelled foreward by some invisi¹⁻⁻ble^{-8 ?} force^() h^ht.

Here the spiritual naration ended. As I set at my typewriter in the middle of the night, I was helpless as my hands flowed forth this little narrative. And just as the spirit that had taken hold of my body got to that last line, my hands got limp, and all of a sudden I was sitting their like I would have if I had got out of bed. I confess I felt foolish for a moment, and then a sense of awe over took me.

The original story Thorne-Smith's spirit dictated to me was two pages longer than the one which appears before you in The Damn Thing. Some of the explanatory base of what Smith was trying to write will be lost, and possibly the story will move too crypticly, the begining & and end seeming to be excessively long in comparison to the middle setting of the story. The style is Smith's book manner, and varies from the technique of short story writting. As one can see, the bit here could readily have been the begining page or so, a shot from the middle, and the closing scene from a regular 100,000 word book which Smith usually wrote.

However, it was probably quite a strain for a past-master to project his astral body from the "other side" and write off a story without revision. I can but feel over-awed that I was chosen to be the vehicle for the narration.

Carlton J. Fassbeinder.

EDITORIAL NOTE: The end of the story is probably obvious. Forsendyke signs the document, retires, and they all live drunkenly ever after. (Hic!)



HODGKINS, the enigma.

by Lothar Penguin

Russell J. Hodgkins is an enigma, sometimes an interesting one, but none the less an enigma. He impresses one as being incredibly alert twenty four hours out of twenty four. Even in his sleep he follows any intruder in his room with that incalculable gaze. He used to scare his mother as a child by fastening long, penetrating gazes upon her. Children shunned him, and he grew up alone, except for the company of his dog, Mickey, who is inhabited part of the time by the innocent personality of a dog, and part of the time by the haunting personality of Kttner. Hodgkins is strongly suspected of possessing latent mitogenetic powers.

We have no doubts that Mr. Hodgkins is a genius in mathematics. Doubtlessly, instead of possessing the conventional lobes, his brain is divided into mathematical sections. Russell is the acme of accurate accuracy. This automaton-like nature is sometimes irksome to the less precise members of the organisation.

The Bradbury-Hodgkins feud is of long duration in Los Angeles. Their humours don't mix. Hodgkins is quizzical. When he enters the room one is fascinated by his mouth. One is grasped by an insatiable feeling that the mouth is suddenly going to commence twitching and sniffing like a rabbit's. But back to this humour business, which is what all Angelenos dote upon. Humouristically speaking, Hodgkins is erratic. One moment he will laugh at Bradbury's jokes and the next moment he will be suggesting that Bradbury will please leave the room. His own humour is unpredictable. He likes ribald jokes, however. He stays sober until Shroyer gets in town. Slight inebriation, says Hodgkins, makes life more jovial. This is probably because he likes to escape his own prosaic behaviour at times. Again he is inconsistent; this regarding slight inebriation. Inebriation with Hodgkins cannot be escapism because he promptly falls into a deep sleep on such occasions and misses all the fun.

Russ makes an ideal Technocrat or, an ideal Technocrat would make a Russell Hodgkins. In Technocracy Hodgkins can make up for his needle-like physique by assuming the "hard-boiled" attitude. As a Technocrat he can be dogmatic and still be right, and this is marvellous. To be definite and unyielding fits in with Russell's nature perfectly.

Sometimes one is made to feel that Russell is reserved. He doesn't let himself "whole hog." At times your analyser is afraid that he is suddenly going to burst with a terrific FAP!!! And again we find that we are inconsistent. Quite to the contrary of all symptoms, Russ will engage in child-like threats, raising malt tins, chairs, books, etc. in the air in a threatening manner and saying: "Shut up, Bradbury?" And then too, he has at times actually thrown things. Which is, we must say, very juvenile. However, scientifically speaking, Russ is an old man. He is in his thirties.

And that all sums up to the total: Enigma. We can't draw a definite conclusion about anything. Someday, we fear, Hodgkins will give the Technocratic salute, and keep on doing it rapidly, with strict precision, faster and faster, until his arm is flashing back and forth so rapidly that it is only a blur. They will cart him away, stiff as a log, and when the Technate comes, he will be varnished and stood erect on a street corner, arm flashing back and forth, and under him will be inscribed: "This, Children, is what the Price System did to people." A very ignominious ending for a loyal Technocrat.

After an issue's absence, Fywert Kinge returns with another one of his works. His unique style of "blank verse" has caught the fancy of the editor of SPECULA, and others of his works will appear in that magazine. This one, he told me, was inspired by "Kemmenioströw: In A Cloister Garden" by Arthur Rubenstein. Scientific music lovers are urged to try reading this over that number on a phono.

N I G H T

Cold.

It is cold here--

The wind is as cutting and sharp

As those pinpoint of starlight.

Look up at them! Glittering solemn!

Little lights, staccato punctures

In the black drop of night.

They contrast with the rest.

Look down the hill;

Soft village steeples are a darker black

Against the all-encompassing mantel.

The trees are black and awesom.

The fields are inky patches of black.

The moon, a white hole above

Silvers the road with naked white

And softens the silvered river to the west.

A quiet whisper permeates it all.

Sublime peace reigns--

I wonder why.

Can it be that man is to bed?

Can it be that the suppurate hoards of Man

Has withdrawn to shelter?

Perhaps only the mantel of icy moonlight

Can bring this orb its pax.

Starlight is clean, penetrating, stark.

Moonlight is white, naked, harsh,

And the lack of either is called night

And it is soft veiling shades of no colour--

It covers all.

In this stark, barren quiet can I realise

That ultimate rest comes when a lone

Again I gaze up. The myriad stars gleam.

To them I offer my soul.

In their lonely vigil I find kinship.

This hill by night is a black moor--

My pedestal on which I muse,

A futile warm spark.

A few moments in time and I go out.

Even someday the stars go out

And others take their place.

Yes, here on the hill it is cold,

And it is clean and harsh---

Only at night, alone, comes peace.

-Fywert Kinge.

(con't from page 3.)

I suggest that he write me a letter asking me NOT to publish it.

Someone is sure to yell about the covour. "It ain't scientifictional," the poor moron will cry. "What's scientifictional about a man with a gun?" I should think it would be a damned welcome relief to see something on the covour besides Buck Rogers, a frowsy nude, lurid red lines all pointing to Moscow, or some horror of the New Fandom mind. (By the way, those New Fandom boys havn't been raising the squeawk I had anticipated) (Which is a welcome relief.)

Prize bait this issue goes to Robert W. Lowdnes. Robert, the club has been having a hell of a laugh at that frowsy bit of pornography you did for Nepenthe. We are laughing AT you, not with you. Some of the remarks passed about I am sure would loved to have heard. We even had a sweet article prepared about you, /you but we decided it wouldn't go through the mails. Anytime you come out to Shangri-la we will show it to you. However, brother Fred Shroyer enjoyed this insight on you so much that he has written a take-off on it. For those who feel that this item is too bawdy, we merely ask them to think of what YOURS must have been like. How does it feel to discovour sex, Bobby, especially at your age?

We find it our task to announce the death of Nepenthe's editor, Earl Singleton, who took the R.A.Howard way out several Sundays ago. This will probably send Lowdnes, author of "Dead End", in the December 1940 Alchemist into a frenzy of joy. His theory seems to have been supported. We anticipate the early demise of Miske as the next fan casualty. (Moscowitz will do, though.)

SPECULA A REVIEW—

Mr. Arthur Louis Joquel, II, recent (comparitively speaking) member of the organisation, has vowed us all with his primary publication, Specula. From the point of sheer content, this is one of the few fan magazines that can be really said to be worth a dime intrinsically. The Jan 1941 issue contains eighty two pages, plus a couple extra for advertisements. The covour, while not impressive, is a fine job of mimeographing. The magazine is the small size, by the way, and is $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. Better stories in the issue are: The War Germ, by Norman Anthony, in which a novel idea is presented that the war fever is a disease as much as T.B.. The Ring of Raman-Ptah by localite Corinne Ellesworth, is of near professional quality.. Mental Menace is a humorous item. Naturally "Who's A Misfit?" is the best item in the issue. It is by Carlton J. Fassbeinder.

Each story is printed on a different colour of paper, all being bound under one covour, of course. This makes it easy to locate your story without thumbing through the magazine, and the magazine is a welcome relief from "official" publications. It is NOT printed in green ink.

For a dime's worth drop one to: Arthur L. Joquel, Specula, 1426 W. 38th St. Los Angeles, California. The magazine is bi-monthly, and has a companion which will feature fan fiction. Sun Trails is also published at this address.

THE TROUBLE with HUMANS is PEOPLE

by Rev D. Bradbury

The dinosaur, being curious, looked in my window, staring at me. Evidently he was scared by what he saw, for he galloped off, screaming, and didn't come back for ten minutes. When he finally rallied courage, he crept back, all ten ten of him, and looked in again. I had been sitting waiting for him, and when he stuck his head thru the window, I conked him with a gin bottle and swore at him until he grabbed me by the trousers and yanked me outside.

"Lemme down," I cried, "you big hunk of prehistoric nightmare!"

"O.K.," commanded a squeaky baritone. "Put him down, Joseph."

The dinosaur dropped me in a heap of curses. He blinked at me and nuzzled my hair with a water-mellon shaped cranium.

A little man was standing over me with a ray gun in hand. in pink tights. "You oderous dog," he snapped at me when he saw that I saw that he saw me. "Why did you hit Joseph with a medicinal container?"

"That ain't no medicinal container," I said quickly, feeling of my glutous maximus to smooth out the tooth marks there. "And who in hell is Joseph?"

"He—" and the pink-tighted individual indicated the dinosaur, "is Joseph. He is an educated dinosaur. And don't swear in front of him. He was raised in a religious family. He believes that all good dinosaurs go to Valhalla."

Joseph nodded his big head and snuffed distainfully at me. He opened his cavernous mouth and said, muffledly, "Yeth."

"Does he talk?" I jumped back and stared.

"What a damned silly question— of course he does. Who ever heard of a dinosaur that didn't talk? Think he's ignorant?" the little man snapped.

"Never having met one I wouldn't know," I answered, peevishly. "I wish 'B would teach your dinosaurs to not come up and stare in peoples' windows. Someday he's going to get an eyeful of fists for his trouble."

"You talk like a vulgar 1941 man," said the pink-clad man.

"This IS 1941," I bellowed. "You're nuts."

"This is the year 1,000,000 B.C.," he replied, with a gesture. "And you're the third person who has wandered into our Time Strata in the last five hundred years. The first person was Yerke, who was watching a Hal Roach Production of the same name, and he was sitting on a fourth dimensional seat. Naturally he wound up back here. It was Yerke who started our culture in this century. Yerke opened up a college for dinosaurs and taught them to take their swamp-whisky straight."

"Hic," added Joseph.

"This is all very silly," I replied. But then I looked around and saw that

Los Angeles was gone, and in its place was a glass-covered jungle with rocket-ships and ray guns. "Don't tell me Yerke introduced all this?"

"Yes, isn't it marvellous? He brought back some copies of Astounding with him and we copied the world of the future from them—in patches."

"In patches is right," I cried. "You've got things upside down and back—wards." To the left ran one of Heinlein's ROADWAYS with a flourishing road-city at the side. A couple of Restaurants whizzed by. "God," I said. Just then a Rocket ship zoomed down with the words "Stylark" printed on it in Braille. A couple of native girls whose main subject of conversation seemed to be "oogly-woogly-burble" ran over the hill in oxygen suits à la Wesso. Then a gentleman resembling Heinlein trotted by, carrying a suitcase of assorted atoms under his arm,

"What's his name?" I asked.

"Giles Habibbula."

"That sounds like Yerke allright," I said. "He stared it all, did he?"

"Yerke is God."

"Yeth," said Joseph, the dinosaur, "Yerthy ith Godd."

"You have a wrinkled pronunciation," I observed.

"Youth stinkth," snuffed the dinosaur

"This is a four-dimensional riot," I went on. "It looks like a science fiction writer's nightmare. Or is it? You say you have colleges for dinosaurs. How about people?"

"People." The man gasped. "Why should we educate people?"

"That's a leading question. What's your name?"

"Kimball."

"If your last name is Kinnison, I'll scream!"

"Dinosaurs," the man went on, "are educated because they are next to Yerke. Yerke is God—therefore, dinosaurs are Godly "

"Give me a shot of morpheine and put me back in 1941," I pleaded. "Yerke has ruined everything. What's that you have in your hand?"

"A ray gun."

"What's it for?"

"I don't know. You just press the trigger and people vanish. Here, I'll show you."

"STOP!" I bellowed. "Stop!" But he didn't stop. He fired, and I was killed.

Hey, Yerke, are you REALLY God, huh?"

FOR FANS?

WALTER J. DAUGHERTY

While sitting here on a late Sunday afternoon, thoughts rambling, I pick up a copy of NEPTUNE. The first thoughts of amazement arise when I notice the size and excellent format. The title could be improved a bit and a little better subject presented for a cover, but they can be overlooked. Truly, NEPTUNE represented the origination of a great magazine wherein the poetic musings of fans from far and near. Yes, truly a great undertaking. But-----

I turn to page twelve and fourteen, what greets my eyes but two of the most atrocious pieces of trash and filth to ever mess up a sheet of paper. Really, Mr Lowndes, I'm ashamed of you.....A man in your position...The Editor of one of our best pro's creating such dribble for the fans of the country to read.

I recall rather recently of reading an article by a New York fan with a good conception of the merits of science fiction, praising the New York stands for banning all of the so-called Snappy Science magazines. Such a movement is fine and many cities, counties and States might well follow the example.

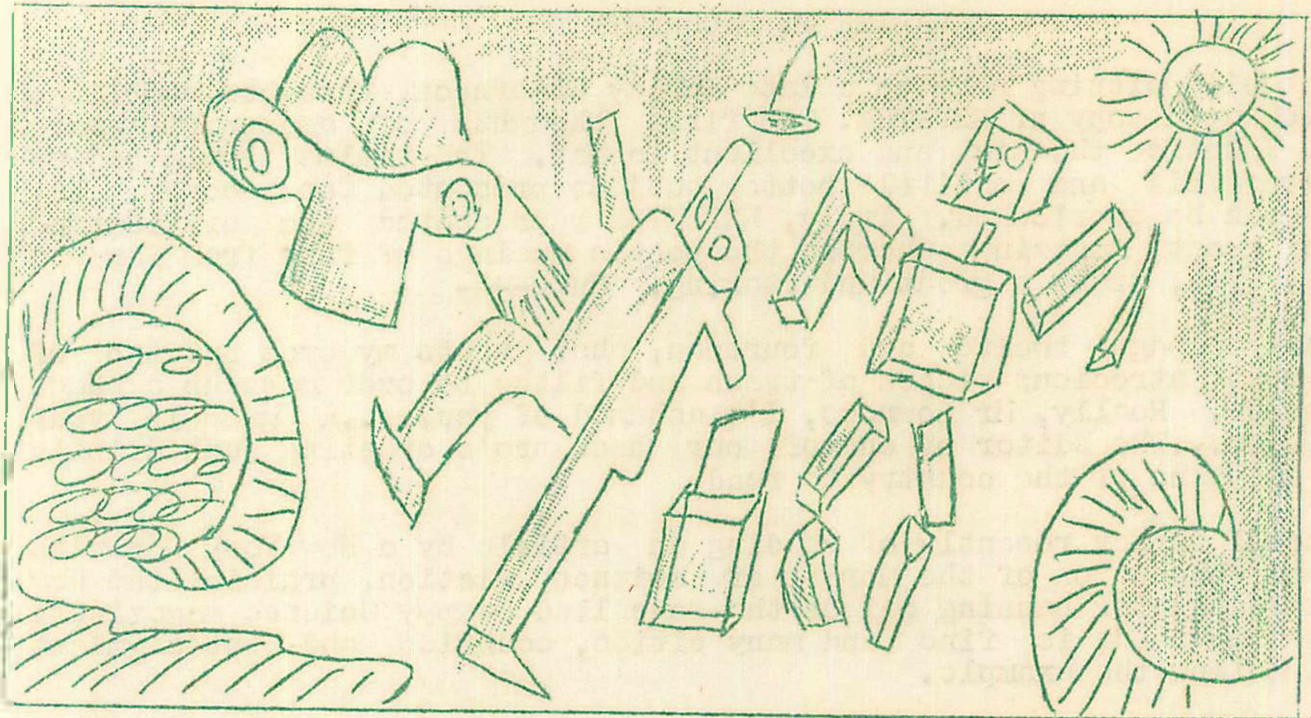
These "pulp trash" have always caused many a set back for true Science Fiction from coast to coast. They have many times given Science Fiction a bad name to live down. I repeat most emphatically, Mr Lowndes, why must you clutter up a good fan mag with your interpretations of a sex orgy?

One of the main boogie men that we have to fight for the benefit of our reading material is that of the utterly fantastic and impossible dreams and musings of some membranes. I am speaking of some of those whom we are trying get to understand the true merits of Scientifiction as a hobby. When the average man can point to something like those poems what can a man do to convince him that they are not that which our hobby entails?

I am taking into consideration that my opinion may be all off and a slight bit excentric, but I am mainly speaking for a large group (and you'd be surprised at how large a group they are) of the fans that this mag reaches, that are not the ones to receive the like of it. Did you ever stop to think what would happen to a fan of fifteen whose parent happened to read those poems? Not only would they be severely punished but would be refused the pleasures of the true Science Fiction we all enjoy.

I look at all fan situations from a hobby point of view. I am not a person who tries to get down to the inner depths of Science Fiction to try to read some inner possibility. From that point I take my stand as a scientist and not a theorist.

That's about all Mr. Lowndes. No hard feelings I hope, only a hope that next time you will think twice before you allow such material to save you for a fan mag. Think about the fact that we fans will have to think twice before we allow any new fan to look at the last effort of a memorable last contribution by a great fan...EARL SINGLETON.



"l'art moderne"

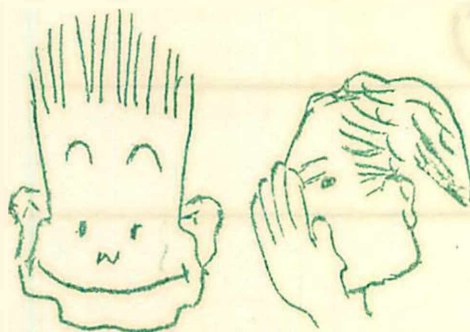
This is a sample of "L'Art Moderne." It bears out the statement that within twenty years, 80% of the population will be nuts. The above horrid example was painted by Leonardo DeSchmuck, the noted ABTRUSIVE CUBIST painter. I sought him for an interview, and I garnered the following facts.

The above picture represents a man and a woman carrying a shopping bag, with the eyes of a hungry beggar watching them from a second story window....By holding the picture upside-down, it illustrates the old proverb "Nitchie Skuns-Scum, nit nitchie skim.".....By looking at the picture through a mirror, it illustrates the equally old proverb of ".miks iehctin tin ,mucS-snukS".....However, the best way to look at it, says M. De Schmuck, is to stand on your head and look at it right side down. It is only then that you can appreciate the full meaning of this work of art. I tried it, but the rope broke and I fell on my head.....This type of drawing represents the true fourth-dimension perspective, says the artist, and if you look at it through a stereoptican, you will see the depth of the picture, or rather, the four pictures, because under a *coptican you see four reflections.However, M. DeSchmuck was informing me, the very best thing to do is to light a fire, and then hold the paper about three feet from the conflagration and let go of it-----

At this point the artist, who had been walking along the street telling me about the picture, walked into a mail box and was sorely hurt. I had a terrible time convincing him that he was really alive, and when the ambulance came, they gave me \$5.00 for finding Case No. 6475, for whom they had been looking for several days.



"What better way to fill a page," said the Walrus, "than with trade adds?"



SHHHH!!

DON'T LOOK NOW

But the sixth issue of Fanfare will be out soon, and then you can look all you want to at—

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ART WIDNER Jr, BOX 122, BRYANTVILLE, MASS.

(advrt.)

FANTASITE

The second big issue of The Fantasite has articles by Clifford D. Simak, Harry Warner, Samuel D. Russell, Donn Brazier, John Chapman, etc. It also has material by Forrest J Ackerman, damon knight, Louis R. Chauvenet and Bob Tucker, in addition to the regular departments. This issue features a PHOTO COVOUR! It is mailed FLAT in large envelopes; no unfolding or unrolling to do! And to top it all it is beautifully hektoed in colours. Only a dime to:

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