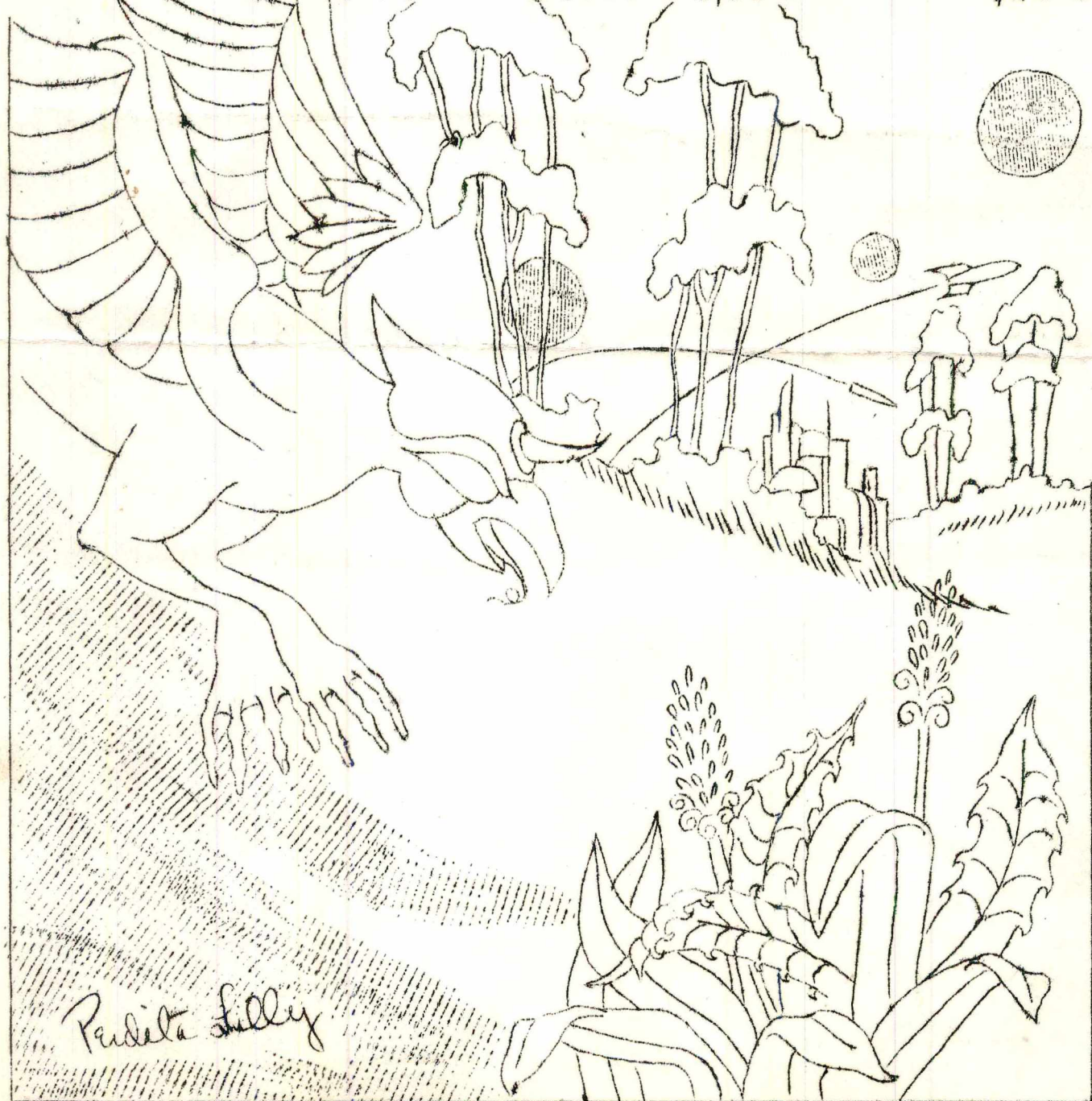


# The DETROIT JIFAN

Vol. I

October 1, 1950

No. 6



*Pudita Lilly*





NEXT MEETING:     The next meeting of the DETROIT SCIENCE FANTASY LEAGUE will be held at the home of Agnes Harook, 7876 Walnut St. Walnut is the first block past Vernor Hwy, off Van Dyke, going south. The host for this meeting will be Ed Kuss. Date of the meeting is Friday Oct. 6, 1950 at 7:30. In case you get lost call Wa 4-2460 and ask for Aggie.

PROGRAM:     At the next meeting of the DSFL there will be elections held for the newly created board of directors. Plans will be made for the Hallowe'en Party, more of this later. There will be pictures of the fan trip to Portland, Oregon. Also there will be the usual discussions beer and singing.

LAST MEETING:     The last meeting was held at the home of Roger Sims. Present were Perdita Lilly, George Young, Ben Singer, Ed Kuss, Bennett Sims, Agnes Harook, Bob Flood, Hubert Rossano, and of course Roger Sims. Also there were two fellows who came all the way from Port Huron, Matt Williams and Mike Klim.

It was quite a lively meeting\* in which a motion was passed to change the governing body the club. It was suggested that we have a board of directors in place of the three officers we have now.

After refreshments were served we all sat around and enjoyed some of Ed's slides on the Portland trip. The meeting broke up rather late because of the many varied discussions.

NEW PROZINES OUT NOW:     Beyond the Moon by Edmund Hamilton, originally titled The Star Kings. This story originally appeared in Amazing Stories about 1947 as a 70,000 word novel. As far as I know it has not been touched up and is the same as the magazine edition. Signet pocket-book edition 25¢. November issue of "See" magazine has a four page article with pictures on the movie "Destination Moon". Galaxy's novel "Sinister Barrier" by Eric Russell is out on the newstands this month. It is the complete novel exactly as it appeared in the book. The last issue of Saturday Evening Post carried a story by Ray Bradbury called "The Childrens World".

FANZINES:     Fantasy Times, best news of the professional magazines movies and fantasy, in the movies, radio and television. Published every week by James V. Taurasi, 137-03 32nd. Ave. Flushing, New York. Most up-to-date news of the fan world.

Here are a few other fanzines that I know of by name but do not know the address of off hand. Fancient, published by Don Day, Portland, Oregon. General zine and official organ of the Portland Science Fiction Association. Very entertaining and humorous zine. Peon, published by Charles E. Riddle U.S. Navy somewhere on the high seas. Very entertaining zine especially for Navy men. Fiction very good. Odd, it certainly is. Shivers, poetry, mostly god-awful.

NOTICE OF ELECTION:     At the next meeting of the D.S.F.L. an election will be held for two members of the newly created Board of Directors.

Some Bems  
Are fems  
On the ones I know  
It doesn't show  
though

\*understatement

# WHIFFINGHAM'S REVENGE

Dear Editor:

By Art Rapp

It was with shudders of uncontrollable horror that I leafed through the repulsive pages of your last issue. Why in the name of seven Martian BEMs must you descend to printing such awful trash? .....

Pausing to consider how I should proceed with my denunciations of the latest ish of Cataclysmic Cosmic Classics, I absently reached for the cool stein of beer which inspired me in these energy-consuming fan activities. My hand groped in empty space.

I looked up from my letter-writing, just in time to see the last of my beer flowing into an all-too-familiar face.

"So you're in again," I said resingedly.

"Good evening," said Morgan Botts, the stfan-inventer, "Hot isn't it?"

"I don't know why I come to this tavern," I retorted. "I could stay home and enjoy the peace and quiet there."

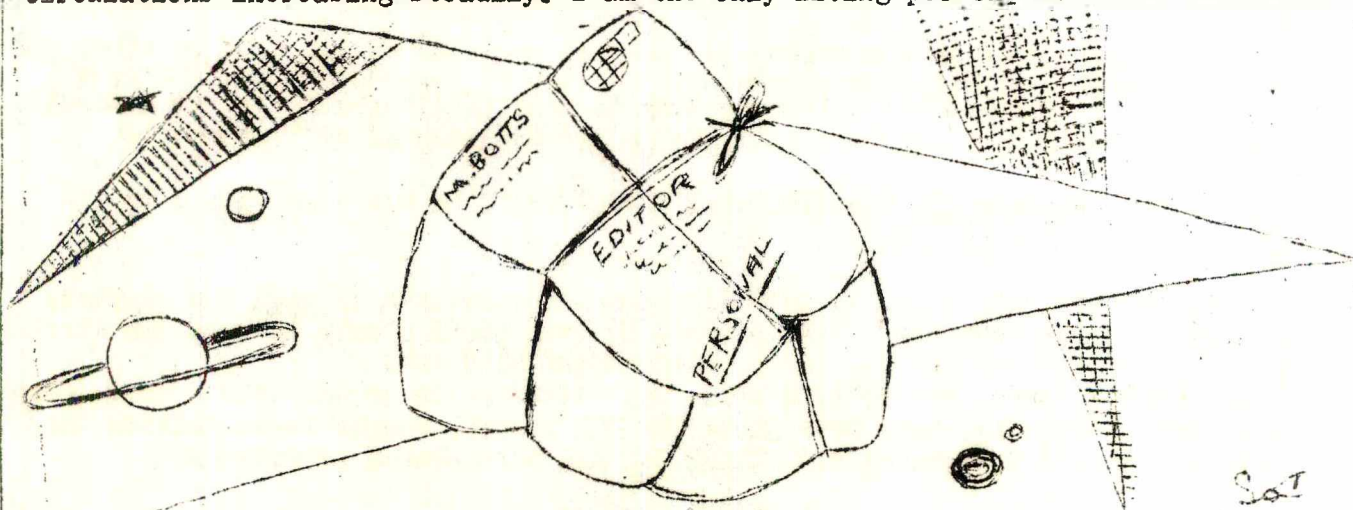
Botts ignored my unfriendly attitude. "Get some more beer," he ordered. "seeing you write a fanhack epistle reminds me of a rather starnge incident. Talking is very dry on the throat, however ...."

Oh, well, after all, Botts had once been one of stf's greats, and it was worth a few bears to hear his anecdotes of little-known aspects of fandom. I arranged for a continuous supply of beer and settled back in my chair.

"This took place many years ago," Botts began. "I was on the staff of Unbelievable Galactic Horrortales at the time."

"Good old UGH !" I interrupted. "It folded back about 1950 as I recall."

"Right," assented Botts. "Fandom has often speculated on the cause of UGH's sudden collapse, in an era when other mags were springing up left and right, and circulations increasing steadily. I am the only living person who knows the inside





story of UGH's demise."

"Proceed," I commanded, wiping foam from my mustache.

"As you know, UGH's crowning glory was its letter column, which often took half the space in the mag. The most cherished ambition of every fan back in '49 and '50 was to have a letter printed in "Misbegotten Missives" where, each issue, fans insulted the authors and artists, the editor insulted the fans, and the authors and artists hurled epithets at everyone, including each other."

"Ah, yes," I murmured. "As a matter of fact, several of my letters got printed and one of them so enraged the editor that he devoted a whole page to calling me foul names in reply. It raised my standing in fandom by several notches."

"You may be surprised to learn," smiled Botts, "that I was the man responsible for the "Misbegotten Missives" column. The task of selecting and answering the best of the epistles received each month was too much for the Managing Editor, who concentrated on the story section of UGH"

"Did they run stories too? I asked. "I'd never noticed."

"As you remember," Botts resumed his narrative, "the letters evolved more and more into a unique art-form. Eventually we were forced to discard, before even beginning to assemble the column, any letter written in ordinary, intelligible English"

"There was one guy who spelled every other word in reverse, wasn't there?" I commented. "I always used to look for his 'Dear Rotide' salutation as soon as I got a new UGH."

"Yep," Botts answered. "Then there was some guy named Bloog or Beagle, or something, who used a language of five-letter code groups, which could be deciphered on y with a key-list he sent to other fans."

"At any rate," he went on, "We finally began receiving a series of letters from a fan named Chadbury Q Whiffingham. The letters were excellently written, propounding many interesting scientific theories, comments on the activities of other fans, and dashes of delightful humor, but unfortunately, they would have been approved by any English professor as perfect examples of correct punctuation, sentence structure, and spelling."

"In pursuance of UGH's letter-column policy, we regretfully had to consign them to the wastebasket."

"So?"

"So the thing went on for months. As soon as an issue of UGH went on sale, one of those familiar pale-blue envelopes would arrive at our editorial offices, and the whole staff would gather around my desk to hear Whiffingham's latest comments.

"All went well until UGH began its famous reformation of stf ~~cover-art~~."

"You mean the time UGH declared that covers would be based on scenes in the tales?"

"Yes, but not only that, We actually forced the artists to read the stories, and comply with the authors' descriptions. We even hired people to read the stories aloud to those artists who had never mastered the alphabet.

"Naturally, fandom was enthusiastic. No, enthusiastic is too mild a term. Fandom, to put it bluntly, went nuts about the UGH covers. People began hailing the Editor as a second Gernsback, and rating UGH the best promag published."



Botts paused to drain his stein, then resumed.

"There was only only one fly in the ointment. The next time we received one of Chadbury Q Whiffingham's blue envelopes, we were horrified to learn that he disapproved of the new covers."

"In heaven's name -- why?" I gasped.

"Well, this Whiffingham had a rather fantastic theor that it was better to have a cover which did not coincide with the stories at all. Then, if parents or other disapproving non-fans said that stf was trash, the fan could always explain that the lurid covers were merely an incidental detriment --- that the stories themselves were actually of high quality."

"He has a point," I admitted, "but it seems like a fairly flimsy argument, nontheless."

"My sentiments exactly," Botts concurred. "However, whatever mental quirk was responsible for Whiffingham's antagonism, we could not convince him that he was wrong. His letters appeared regularly, but degenerated into mere tirades of invective and derogatory comment on our covers."

"Several months went by, with Whiffingham becoming more and more angry as his suggestions went unheeded. Suddenly a new note appeared in his epistles--he began to threaten us."

"I suppose he said he'd stop buying UGH unless you changed your covers?" I asked.

"No," said Botts. "He said that he couldn't stand the new covers any longer, that if we didn't abandon our policy, he'd sic a Saturnia Voorhinkle at us. He described it as a horrible BEM with crushing tentacles and long, sharp fangs."

I yawned. "Thats an ancient gag," I said. "Fans have threatened editors with BEMs as far back as I can recall."

"Of course. That's why we didn't pay much attention to Whiffingham's letters after that. They kept arriving, but we just glanced hastily at them and chucked them into the wastebasket."

"I thought you were going to explain why UGH folded," I said, refilling our glasses. "I don't see any connection between all this. . ."

"Just give me time," Botts retorted. "It is important that you know of the incidents I have related, so that you can appreciate what happened next."

"What happened next?"

"Well, Whiffingham finally reached the boiling point. Shortly after an ish of UGH hit the stands, we received an airmail letter from him. He said he'd stood for our defiance long enough, that this was our last warning. Naturally we sighed with relief at being rid of another too-troublesome screwball at last."

"Then our next issue appeared, and we heard from Whiffingham for the last time."

"What did that letter say?"

"It wasn't a letter. It was a small package, about the size and shape of one of those little boxes that a jeweler uses to keep a wedding ring in. It was addressed to: Managing Editor, UGH, and was marked PERSONAL."

"Go on," I prompted, as Botts paused for a copious draught of the foaming amber brew. "What was in the package?"

"Well, I never did see the contents myself," Botts admitted, "The editor was alone in his private office when he opened the box. The first intimation I had of anything unusual was when a most terrific uproar started up, startlingly sudden in our quiet office."

"An uproar? What do you mean by that?"

The noise was in the Managing Editor's office. There was a tremendous crashing and banging, as if someone were throwing the furniture around, and the editor was shouting in surprise. Suddenly the shouts were abruptly cut off, most horribly, by a sort of gurgle. After that came a dull thud, and what I can only describe as a gulping sound." Botts shuddered and took another pull at the beer.

"Naturally, the entire staff rushed to see what was the matter, I was the first to reach the office, and after one look at what lay inside, I kept the rest of the staff back, telling them to call the police."

"Don't keep me in suspense!" I yelled. "What was in the Managing Editor's office?"

"It was horrible!" Botts shuddered again. "The desk and swivel chair were overturned and smashed, and the Editor was lying in the center of the room -- what was left of him. He had literally been torn to pieces! Blood all over everything . . . . even the hardened policemen turned pale at the gruesome spectacle."

"What happened?"

"We searched high and low for the murderer. The room has only the one door, and a window which opened on a sheer drop of 27 stories, so no one could have escaped. Besides, the window was only open two inches or so, and hadn't been moved recently, as could be seen from dust on the sash."

"The police were baffled, and finally the coroner has to return a verdict of suicide although everyone knew the explanation was not that simple. I told them of Whiffingham's threats, and we tried to trace him, but the return address on his letters was a vacant lot, and he was never located."

"What happened to UGH?" I wondered.

"They offered me the editorship, but I declined. Of course, I could have changed the cover policy, but I knew I would never have a moment of peace knowing that SOMEWHERE Whiffingham was reading my magazine, and possibly taking a dislike to some other feature in it."

"Rumors of the strange circumstances surrounding the Editor's death had gone through the ranks of the profession like wildfire, and no one else could be persuaded to take the job, either."

"And that, my son, is why Unbelievable Galactic Horrors was discontinued."

Botts arose from the table and left as abruptly as he had appeared. I mused for a bit over his strange story, then resumed my letter-writing. . . . .

"Unless the stories in Cataclysmic Cosmic Classics show an improvement by next issue, I'll send my pet Zeeper from the swamps of Jupiter to haunt you, Editor. . . ."

---

### Ode to the Last Man on Earth

by Bennett Sims

Doubly sorry I am for you,  
You know the worst of facts is true.

You know You are ending the human race.  
This is the hardest of facts to face.

Doubly because of the fact you know  
You were the one who made it go.

YOU were the one who created the blast  
Now your 'e wacthing it breath its last

Yet thinking again I'm not sorry for you,  
For you see your destruction has cremated me too.

---

A Few lines from "Locksley Hall" by Tennyson

"Till the war drum throbbed no longer and the battle flags were furled  
In the parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

\* \* \*

Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns..."



THE THRONE OF SATURN; by S. Fowler Wright (review by A.H. Weitzenhoffer)

Published by Arkham House, 1949, \$3.00. 186p.-- Printed in the usual size and quality as other short story collections published by this firm.

In attempting to review this collection of twelve short stories I find myself approaching this topic with mixed feelings. Frankly, I was disappointed with the book. Yet, for those among the readers who are Fowler fans, I believe they will find this collection a worthwhile addition to their Fowlerana.

Two things about the above are largely misleading. One, the title. The other is the publicized fact that this is a collection of science-fiction stories. A far more appropriate title would have been something like "Tales of the Future". Possibly this is what the title attempts to imply since Saturn is also known as the Father of Time. This is about the only connection I can find between the title and the stories. The style of writing is both typically British and Fowlerian. For those who are primarily used to American writing this tends to make the book on the whole a little dull. Approximately one third of the material to be found in it is satirical and both in the genre of Swift's Gulliver's Travels and Huxley's Brave New World although in no ways as entertaining. My main objection to referring to the contents as being science-fiction is that, for the most part, the science theme plays not only a minor part, but is quite unessential for the plot or even for creating the correct atmosphere. On the other hand as tales of imagination these twelve stories are definitely of superior quality. . . . In conclusion, I cannot recommend this book to all without reservations. It will appeal to some, but not to everyone. As a final remark, I might add it is my opinion that this collection is best read by taking up only a few stories at a time. Possibly the greatest criticism I have to make concerns the fact that the tales which were chosen are too much in the same genre, hence the above suggestion.

#### Editorial

The bulletin this issue is put together with the aid of Bennett and Roger Sims, Agnes Harook, Perdita Lilly, and George Young. The cover was drawn and stenciled by Perdita Lilly. All the rest of the crud was credited on the page as we went along. There will be plans made for a Hallowe'en party at the next meeting of the DSFL. That's all for today.

THE DETROIT ST FAN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE  
DETROIT SCIENCE - FICTION LEAGUE

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