

Well, once more ol' Dave Van Arnam  
(Ohio Slim) takes you from the, er,  
sublime to the moderately ridiculous.

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FIRST DRAFT #104

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Last week I imposed a six page FIRST  
DRAFT on great quantities of fans in  
New York and California, the longest  
issue, as I offhand recall, since  
CORDWAINER BURBEE #11 (tho I may be  
in error).

This week I'm back to Cheating with a one-page issue.

I got a reason, tho, hey. The Ted White Fiction Factory, Uninc., has  
slowly ground me into another millstone, or something, and at present  
I have a 26-page albatross around my neck in the form of the first two  
chapters of a Gothick Novel. Last night at the Informal Writers' Group  
I read all but the last three pages (which I just finished before putting  
this stencil in the IBM) to the Group (Ted, rich brown, Cindy Fuzzy Heap,  
Mike McInerney, and Dirty Pro Lee Hoffman).

"Well, Dave," said Ted when I had finished reading what I hated to think  
of as prose of mine, "I can see you've found your metier as a writer  
at last -- you've got a great career ahead of you writing Gothic novels!"

Since Gothics mean \*money\*, I was not entirely displeased by this  
remark. But I shd not like to think that such paragraphs as the follow-  
ing excerpts from the first page are typical of the best prose I shall  
ever produce. I dunno tho. Maybe I have found my metier...

At the edge of the low cliff, near an old oak long since blasted by  
lightening, stood a small wooden bath house, its white paint eroded  
by the salt spray.

Rosalie Marchant stood on the slate flagging in front of the bath  
house, errant strands of her long black hair dancing in the wind.

Deep in her thoughts, she scarcely felt the damp cold wind.

"How Annette used to love to play here at this time of the year,"  
she thought, and wondered that she did not feel a pang of regret.

Carefully, absently, placing her feet in the center of each flag  
stone, she walked slowly to the verge of the low cliff.

□□□□ But I can go no farther. "How Annette used to love to play here,"  
indeed. If this be metier, I suppose I'll have to make the most of it,  
but...

Anyway, until Andy Porter unexpectedly walked in a moment ago, I had  
planned to bat out this one-page issue real quick like and spend the  
next two hours or so retyping the 26 pages so that I can give Ted a clean  
copy tonight. (He is doing the plotting and some copy-editing, but  
understandably wants me to run everything thru the typer first before he  
has at it, so that he doesn't waste time indicating changes I wd have  
made myself, which is reasonable.) There is reason for haste in this  
matter, since there are indications that publishers are beginning to  
withdraw from the gothic bonanza. □□□□ So apd therefore, until my next  
6-page issue, I'm hoping you are the sane...

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-- dgv

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