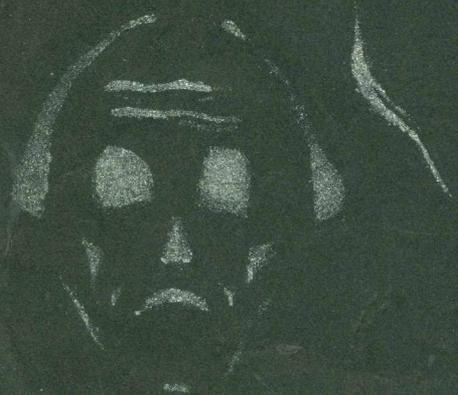


MACABRE



M A G A Z I N E

AN INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF WEIRD FICTION AND FANTASY
EDITED by JAMES P. RATHBONE::: COVER by HERBERT CROSSLEY
AN " M " PUBLICATION.

Price 2d.....Vol.I.No.I

FROM THE DEPTHS...

We had thought that we, of all the "fan" publications, would be least affected by such things as "national emergencies" and the like. We were wrong. But we are carrying on so far as is in our power.

In the first place, even our prospective interior artist doesn't know we're going into production as yet, so it is not surprising that there is no art work herein. Yet we hope, that, as things straighten themselves out in the near future, so will these pages become more and more pleasing to the critical eye...

We can't apologise for deficiencies you may see - they're all part of the emergency bugaboo which clouds all magazines to date. Still, we'll do better "next time."

Readers will be aware that the venerable editor lives among air raids and daily exists and thrives between air raid shelters and air raid shelters. In fact, with something like four warnings sounded (and, when actual juice was dropped, with no warning at all), the thing is in danger of becoming a psychological complex. Since no town - and certainly not this city - seem to be in much danger from bombs, the warning siren and mix-ups attendant thereon have become a singular source of amusement. Whether the editor ever aids himself to the phantom population on the astral plane as a result of this untoward merriment remains to be seen.

Otherwise, we shall continue to produce, in our blatant though complacent fashion, this "dark lady" - with very material manifestation of quality and (later) quantity...

One more note as to the next issue. This will be a special Xmas one, and will, besides having more pages, try to be more unusual in treatment...

The Ghoul-in-Chief -
James P. Rathbone.

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INTERVIEW WITH A MEDIUM

by DAVE McILWAIN.....

She was small, slightly built, and rather pretty. I found it difficult to be severe with her. "Malam," I said, "It is essential that you should conform to our conditions, in order to render this interview valid from the point of view of psychic research."

She nodded.

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" I shall be at liberty to question you, but I am not obliged to answer any questions that you ask me. Mr. Burke here will take down the proceedings in shorthand. We thank you greatly for your cooperation."

At this point Mr. John W. Burke, my colleague, amputated part of his finger while sharpening a pencil. "Blood," whispered the medium, "that is a good sign. You will receive a fortune shortly." Mr. JWB promptly proceeded to sever his arm at the elbow, avarice gleaming in his eye, but I twisted a tourniquet round his throat and strangled him. When he came to, we carried on with the examination of the medium.

We sat facing each other across a small polished table, the medium taking my hand. She inspected the palm. "I see a stain on your character," she said, in a hushed voice.

"Nothing," said I, "That's where I spilled the ink at work."

"And blood on your finger-tips," she went on.

"Nicotine," I explained patiently.

She glanced up, her face suddenly became contorted with horror - "An evil spirit is looking over our shoulder," she screamed.

I sighed, and, turning round, gave JWB a push in the face. "This is a scientific investigation, not Madame Tussaud's," I said scathingly and he wilted.

When I turned round again, the medium was in a trance. "Look what you've done now," I complained to JWB - "Can't you wear a nose-bag or summat?"

"I see," came the voice of the medium... "I see a strange spirit attired in red and green striped trousers with orange spots. He has a glass of beer in one hand, and he is playing the bagpipes with his feet."

"That's not a spirit - that's Bill Temple," I snorted in anger.

"And he is accompanied by a peculiar entity with a huge head - denoting amazing brain-power. He has innumerable mathematical books packed in his pockets, and, from the amount of twine that is wrapped round him, I should say he is highly strung."

"Damn," I muttered, "That's Arthur Clarke."

"And another strange being," continued the medium. "This latter is half asleep, and is attired in baggy military uniform..."

"Bloated militarist," came the voice of JWB, "hired assassin - let me get at him..."

"The spirit is angry," warned the medium.

She was right. The spirit was angry. JWB suddenly shot into the air, and hung there suspended upside-down. Came the sound of a carpet-beater, and the unfortunate Pacifist attempted to emulate an air-raid wren ((Impossible! Ed.))

But he was soon rescued. The medium procured some Holy Water, and flung it over the suspended body. Forthwith JWB crashed to the floor, stood up, then dashed for the bathroom at once.

I glanced suspiciously at the bottle of Holy Water - and my suspicions were correct - for the jar was labeled "Flit".

When the unfortunate JWB returned, we decided to hold a seance in order to get in touch with the spirits. So the lights were dimmed and we joined hands. JWB seemed very eager to take the medium's hand, and when she giggled once or twice, my suspicions were aroused, so I produced a bottle of chloroform and anaesthetised him.

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After that everything went smoothly, the psychic forces were getting nicely into play, when J.B. came to - and screamed - "I feel a cold sensation down my spine..."

We turned the lights up, and investigated this extraordinary spirit manifestation. But, unfortunately, the phenomenon had a rational explanation: Johnny had left the bathroom tap running, and the water had overflowed and dripped through the ceiling. With a sigh of resignation I grabbed my hat and prepared to go.

"Thank you very much, Madam," I said, "Our investigation has hardly been fruitful, but the next time I'll remember not to bring - this."

I put J.B. in my pocket, out of harm's way, and set off for home.

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M A R S H W I T C H

by
John P. Burke
...0...0...

The marsh grass whispers, the river chants a song:
The pale moon shines on a road that is too long:
Why should I keep living with sorrow's shadow strong?
I will find a grave down in the ditch.
The rain comes sweeping from the fury of the sea;
A face appears from the gloom that falls on me -
I know that face of old, and I feel the urge to flee:
We have met before, fair witch...

It may have been in Rome, or the long-lost land of Mu,
'Tis certain that in some far-distant lay we met, we two:
Your beauty has not changed, dear, I am still bewitched by you.
I will find a grave down in the ditch.
Perhaps the future holds another life for such as we,
Perhaps we'll meet again beneath the great Yggdrasil tree;
Our life is short, our love is old, and now we must be free.
We shall meet again, fair witch....
.....0.....

" W H I T E C A R N A T I O N S "

by
James P. Ralbone, who is to blame for a number of things...

It was a warm, sunny afternoon in June, and the aerial ways glistened the reflected light. The noise and bustle of their congested white avenues came thinly down to the gardens and parks below. Trees swayed a little, shrubs and flowers waved a lazy leaf or two, a woman's laugh filtered down to the ground levels, noisy, strained and - oung. Altogether, if they had cared to know, the citizens of New London might have found it to be two

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look on the weekly Plebs' day, year 2042...As it was, no one particularly bothered about the time." DROWN YOUR SORROWS IN A MELOWEISK BEER", or "TAKE ONE OF TRUDY'S PRETTY LADIES FOR A WALK ON YOUR PRIVATE ROOF-GARDEN --payment in advance ".....Why worry?" was the spirit of the New London of those days.

Did I say no one bothered about the time? Well, to make a reservation, and to begin my story, one, at least, was worried about the time, though she was waiting on two-twenty-five.-- A slim little lad clad in the shin grey of a Pleb, she anxiously watched the minute hand of the clock creep slowly onwards -- a great lump of a clock placed strategically all over one side of the restaurant over the way which also announced, in large red lettering, that "NOW IS THE TIME TO EAT."It was certainly not so beautiful as the water-lilies on the lake in Park twenty, or the girls who could hold and keep a man in the "Folie Petite" round the corner,yet it held all the world to this little Pleb, and that, of course, because "He"was coming. As every-one familiar with the ways of the world and romances in pulp magazines knows -- "He" -- with a capital "H" denotes a lover, so we might as well get to him right away:

"He" was a tall, gangling youth with queer ideas,unusually large eyes, and a sniff.He possessed very little else, save a remarkable personality. And, of course, he was the darling of the little Pleb's heart and the apple of her eye.

He had come with a tale of disillusionment,and had given her such happiness that made her snuffle into the pillow at night, ~~sobbing~~ sobbing because this one wished for dream had come true. The other girls in the Dormitory didn't like it -- "not much." Her with a male of the species", they would sniff, and console themselves recounting highly-colored adventures with pallid-faced, night club haunting Romeos, who inevitably found them alone...

"I'm , I'm sorry," he had gulped," George sent me to tell you he's, he's (gulp) getting married -- to a mannequin he fell for at Geraldine's...I'm sorry (I'm, I'm his brother, you know)and all that...Don't think much of his taste...Oh, hell, I'm sorry." And so that was the end to her little romance via the "ROMANTIC CORRESPONDENCE LEAGUE."She colored up then, when, before, she had been white."-- So you think I'd fall for the two-timing ape? I hate him, I hate him I tell you...I...ooh! And they had patched things up there and then to drown their sorrows in pots of steaming hot coffee and ham sandwiches at Goldway's --" over the way."

It all happened as usual, worldly readers,-- friendship ripened into love, love became for them something just a little removed from the delight of Paradise...Yet in this love they had for one another, there was the element of -- something else -- something dangerous... This was the mood of "Otherwhere", this was their instinctive delight in the loveliness of the sweet earth, this was their longing for more freedom and less artificial culture. It was more than just sentiment, for it seemed to have been there always waiting its chance to rise through them like a little spring seeking the sky. And it sought the sky, too --indeed, such was the primitiveness of its longing, it revived in them the old spirituality that their scientists were telling them daily had died out...It rose, crystal-clear, and overwhelmed them...utterly...

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"If I die, you shall know," he said, once.
"If you die - I die too," she had answered.
So that was that.

And we have the little Fleb waiting for her lover at a street corner in New London, and the birds singing, till (oh - there's always a "yet" or a "till") a noise of rending metal made her glance upwards...What she saw made her gasp...A little silver-colored car seemed poised for flight above her, then it plunged down for the bakelite pavements below. It faded out of sight where she could not see anything more. There was a deafening explosion, and she was almost thrown off her feet...When she recovered from the shock, a crowd of City Guards had swept round to the scene of the accident. The horrified babbling of a man came to her ears..."Gawd, there was a man there, there was - right underneath he was - Gawd..."

She felt very sick...But she had an appointment to keep and nothing...She sniffed her white carnation. They had met wearing them, now...No - whatever was she thinking - it couldn't be Him - not Him...yet...

There was a curious scent in the air, she recognised it at once as the smell of carnations - but - there must be myriads of them. It was curious she had never noticed the scent before. A shimmering patch of sunlight seemed to have detached itself from the rest - someone playing with mirrors, perhaps. The radiance made for her with a rush...and then she felt the sweetest - and most inexplicable - delight of her life...

The little Fleb was lifted out of herself, became one with the Outside - felt as it did, saw as it did. She knew the ecstasy of the first days of Spring, shared with the Earth the ripe motherhood of Autumn and the dance macabre of the dying leaves. She knew the joy of Summer and the pity of it...the dancing patch of sunlight raced on.

But before it went, something in it had whispered, "Come, come... oh, I'm free."

And the Fleb knew her lover was dead.

She turned, and the car line on her lips, the dainty cupid's bow painted there since she was sixteen, could not conceal the downward curve of her mouth, the careful makeup on her face lost itself in wrinkles of despair - and, somehow, the thing that had happened was beyond sorrow and suffering, beyond even tears...She turned, and crept round the corner, eyes downcast.

She could not look at the heap of crumpled metal by the roadside, but her downward glance revealed a little patch of white in the gutter...She picked the flower up..It was a white carnation, and it had drops of blood on it...She kissed it once, and whispered a name - and something inside her broke...Like a little white pillar crumbled at the base, she collapsed on the pavement, quite still.

A man saw her fall, and hurried over. He held her thin wrist for a moment..."Another death - and a dame this time," he murmured, awed. Two patches of sunlight danced round the corner, suddenly, and sped upwards, there was the colour of carnations in the air..."Gawd - I need a drink to sober me up," he said.

It was half-past two, and a woman's laugh floated down from the white ways, noisy, strained, and - young...

But there was no one to hear at a certain street corner in New London.

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" THE HAUNTED AND THE HAUNTING " by PLANIAS.

In the last issue of " FANTASIES " (American) I saw that Paul Freehoffer is starting a weird fan magazine called "POLARIS". Also, I gather Dave McIlwain has been courtin' death by making repeated threats about a fan-mag of his own...what about it, Dave ?

The fate of the "FUTURIAN" still hangs in the balance, too, and since that publication is the only properly printed fan-mag. on the market it seems to this bright individual something might be done about it.

From the horrible abysses above the Earth I gather that Seabury Quinn is cahoots with old Nick himself...Or so I hear from a Certain Ironic Individual. Any ideas on the subject, playmates ?

Is Caroline Kember - Gertrude Hecken ? Tell me, somebody, before I drop by the wayside...Even my tremendous occult power can't solve that riddle...And, if so - why ?

It is whispered in the precincts of Galgoath and the bright temples in Liverpool, London, Leeds, and sundry horrible, nameless places that James Rathbone Who-is-to-blame-for-it-all, believes in white magic. Admitted. More - he practises it.

Will the person who last saw the cover of Sam Youd's " Fantast " and duly departed for the nether world please return as he is wanted to praise the current instalment of " Fanopolis". ((Late news: The last instalment))

Current "satellite" contains a very interesting article "In Defence of ~~xxxxxx~~ Weird Fiction" ((More late news: reduced " Sally" just out.))

I suppose, bowing to the inevitable logic contained in the phrase- " There is no escape" one might be tempted to turn from the mystery of the inexplorable to the even profounder mystery of the explainable. Yet, without imagination, man is no more than a reasoning animal...and the proper exercise of imagination is only found in the wonder of fantasy such as is in s.f. and w.f. What one seems to need is knowledge of what is a balance between fantasy and reality...

In the Crystal Glass....

The next issue of "Macabre" will be larger and more artistic - if such term can be applied to a magazine of this type. Articles by well-known fans -- and some new writers, too. All interior illustrations by Osmond Robb -- already known for his cover work on the "Fantast".

Among the interesting contributions received is a story by one who wishes to remain anonymous called " The Initiation " - which, I think, is something more than a mere story, which you may confirm after reading it.

Looking forward...it is hoped that, now and then, a story will be received constituting a kind of theme around which other contributions might be written. If it becomes impossible to obtain weird fiction of the pulp variety, "Macabre" might take on a fiction form.

We hope you like this issue. Remember - a letter department will be with us next issue - so send in your ideas and opinions and ideas.

" HE WAS WARNED "

an authentic ghost story.

by

H.C.

oOo

A warning of the illness of a relative at a distant place, by the inner senses of man's psychic nature is the story of the unusual experience here related by a young Manchester artist named James Shepherd who had gone to live in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He had taken up employment with an engraver in that town and was living in private apartments. It was his custom to write home to his father and sisters living in Manchester once every week and to receive letters from home with equal regularity. All seemed well for about six months, when the letters the young artist received, stopped.

Shepherd was, as well as an artist, very greatly interested in religious and mystical subjects, and seems to have had more than a passing knowledge of psychic matters. He called it his intuition, and said he "knew" things were happening at a distance without the ordinary methods of communication.

Now, though the letters ceased arriving, the "news" came just as usual via his intuition. And disquieting news it was which did come - to the effect that his father was very seriously ill.

On retiring to bed one Friday (about the early part of October 1917) Shepherd was thinking of his father and sisters and wondering why they did not write, and fell asleep in that frame of mind.

After being asleep for about two hours he awoke suddenly to find his mother - who had been dead about seven years - "present" in the room. The apparition seemed to have been raised into objectivity by magnetic emanation from the heart of Shepherd, and he said he felt a great wave of emotion pass to and fro between himself and the apparition. This, at the same time, conveyed the news of his father's dangerous illness.

The manifestation lasted only a very short time, and seemed to pass back into Shepherd's heart by the magnetic projection formerly used to materialise....

Shepherd was somewhat startled by the occurrence, but fell asleep, however.

Early the following morning the young man was again awakened by hearing - quite distinctly - one of his sisters calling his name in an appealing and anxious tone from the foot of the staircase of the house in which he was living, although she was, at the time, miles away in Manchester. The voice was clear and distinct and her identity perfect. That day, Shepherd wrote home to say he knew his father was ill and asked to be fully acquainted with all the news... Back came the answer that old Mr. Shepherd was very ill indeed - and on the night of the "warnings" which James had received the old man had been low indeed and they had considered sending for him to come home.

However, the old man rallied, and a few weeks later, was quite able to be about again.

The apparition of the mother appearing to James on the night of the crisis of his father's illness seems to show the interest taken

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by relations who have "passed over" in earthly affairs, and would seem to demonstrate that ties of love cause the departed to be aware of happenings - particularly of an unusual nature, in the physical world.

The story gives proof of the theory of man's latent faculties, which under pressure of circumstances flash into activity ... A possibility more and more likely to occur as human consciousness unfolds and evolves.

TALPTECH NO. 1.

" POETRY "

BY JAMES P. BATHONE.

Poets are dream-adepts whose futile way
Consists of drawing margins round the day,
In hedging lovely things with spine and thorn,
In sighing elegies to what's just born.
And should sun shine - they wish for rain,
And should rain fall - they wish for sun again.
No cure there is for this most mortal ill -
A poet scorned is yet a poet still.
Nor spear, nor fence, nor stout rebout
Can keep the silly beggar out.
They still delight our hearts with rhyme,
And, if denied - they hide their time.

FAN MAGAZINE DIRECTORY

(Applications are invited in this department for fan magazine advertisement)
The directory will not be started till more than six applications are received. The terms are: exchange or reciprocal advertisement; or 5c each insertion.

AN AMATEUR ANTHOLOGY OF VERSE.

IT is thought that, since much of amateur poetry goes the way of most ill-starred things, a more permanent collection might be interesting, not to say, amusing -. Nothing barred - so what about the free versifiers domin into their own ??? What about... It should be noted that the idea embodies no notion of copyright, and a copy will be sent to magazine editors of the professional variety, so...

AND WHAT ABOUT THAT ARTICLE YOU FORGOT TO SEND IN ?

We want the next "Macabre" to be the best ever - barring the issue after that. And far from drowning under heaps of precious manuscripts, the editor has received articles - good - but not enough - remember - we're ten-paged next time. So send in your material NOW ...not forgetting the credits, please.

LATE SPECIAL.

(28/12/39)

The editor is being called up, and having made his protests to the tribunal in the near future, may find no time for Macabre in prison. So lets make this issue coming the best ever ... even if the tribunal happily releases him of military service. For it is the season for ghosts ..can't you feel them in the air ? Read Macabre by your own fireside.

Read the Fantast, the Futurian, and the Satellite - then you can't be wrong....