

HOLLERBOCHEN COMES BACK

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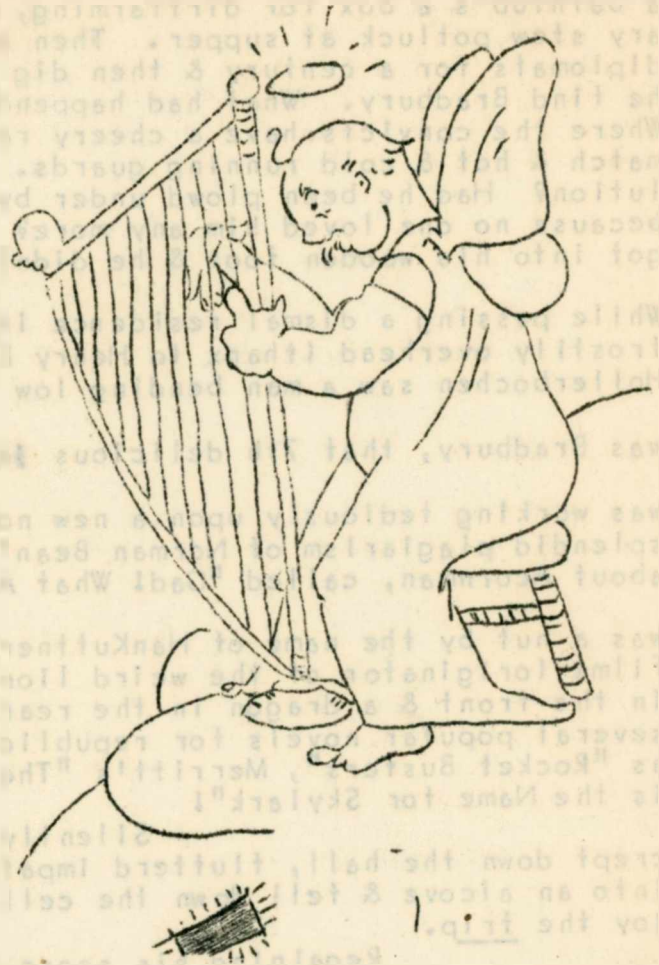
THE VOYAGE OF THE NEURALGIA

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Ray Bradbury



Hurting thru the stratostere somewhere, a tiny piece of matter bobbed up & down just this side of the heavyside layer where the rockets turn to the right & take the airplane to Jupiter past the array of billboards hanging by skyhooks on the clouds. This piece of matter was a bit of brain from...Hollerbochen. (See "Hollerbochen's Dilemma", IMAGINATION! #3). Hollerbochen, U remember (chorus: "It's Easy to Remember--So Hard to Forget!"), was blown up in space when he tryd to stand still in time & a warp formd around him. He is now starring in a new Disneyarn, "Snowite & the 7 Warps".

All about Hollerbochen in space flew what remaind of Chicago, the original Windy City, blown up with Hollerbochen in the warp. Now all that remaind of the Breezy Borough & Hollerbochen was that piece of flesh & the story, selling for 50c.

Hollerbochen came to a standstill in space. He had recvd thotwaves from Earth sent by Bradbury, pleading with him to come back & clear the good name of the family. Hollerbochen realized his author was suffering great torment under the haranguing of his friends & readers, so he decided to come back!

Hollerbochen expanded all the atoms in his small brain at once, visualizing what he had once lookt like, & grew & kept on growing until he had regaind his original size & was a chubby man in a toga floating in the clouds with a harp in one hand & wings on his back. For he was dead! Only he didnt know it. As far as he knew he was the same little Hollerbochen he always had been, with the cabbage nose & perennial halitosis.

So. Hollerbochen plummetted to earth, ready to avenge this wrong to the hack writer sometimes known as "Bubbles" Bradbury. He landed in a far Eastern city where every father makes a suitcase every day, from which the place derives its name: Bag-dad!

Then on to gay Pared! home of the Eye-full Tower & the Folizs Bourgeoise. Then on to Berlin, where they ask "Aryan our side or would U like to do a little concentrating?"

Then on to Moscow where the firing squads shoot to the tune of "I'll Be Glad When U're Dead U Russian U"! Then on to Ethiopia where a bathtub's a box for dirtfarming, a pair of empty shoes means missionary stew potluck at supper. Then on to Japan where they bury eggs & diplomats for a century & then dig up just the eggs. But nowhere could he find Bradbury. What had happened to that man? Then on to Alcatraz! Where the convicts have a cheery room with striped clothes & bars to match & hot & cold running guards. But--no Bradbury! What was the solution? Had he been plowd under by the WPA? Had he committed suicide because no one loved him any more? A rumor had it that termites had got into his wooden foot & he didnt have a leg to stand on.

& then!
While passing a dismal residence in the fog, while the stars glitterd frostily overhead (thax to Henry Kuttner they always glitter frostily) Hollerbochen saw a man bending low over his typewriter.

& he knew it was Bradbury, that 7th delicious fell-o flavor in person!

The author was working tediously upon a new novel for Doubledare Doran. It was a splendid plagiarism of Norman Bean's "Lord of the Jungle", only it was about Acornman, called "Gad! What A Forrest".

Working with Bradbury was a nut by the name of HanKuttner, author of a series about 9 Peanuts Films (originator of the weird lion-dragl, the creature that is a lion in the front & a dragon in the rear.) Together they were preparing several popular novels for republication to fit science fiction, such as "Rocket Busters", Merritt's "The Puss on the Precipice" & "Valeron is the Name for Skylark"!

Silently Hollerbochen entered the house, crept down the hall, flutterd impatiently into the kitchen, flutterd into an alcove & fell down the cellar stairs. It was too dark to enjoy the trip.

Regaining his sense he lookt up & found a bony individual was playing solitaire chess with his little toebones on a tombstone while sitting on Hollerbochen's chest. Hollerbochen had stumbled into Bradbury's skeleton in the closet!

He tosst the bones in the corner & went into a trance (which are very cheap nowadays--only 10c a trance!) & taking out his can of Ken-L-Ration he swallowd it whole & then--swish!--& he was off across the United States...plucking Pogo here, Miske there, Moskowitz between the bathroom & the sink, & on thru the nite until every fan who had criticlized the Bradburyarn (editorial note: in other words, every fan) was in his clutches. When he finisht his collection (not counting the milkbottles mistaken for Charly Hornlg) he cast it into the Pacific ocean off the coast.

Flash! The sea has since receded 100 miles & the poor fish are picketing with signs reading "Don't throw rubbish here!"

If U go there today U can see them all buryd heads first in the sand, legs waving faintly in the breeze. Nothing has changed except that Miske is still complaining about the taste of the sand--too much salt, says he.

Hollerbochen, his job finisht, committed suicide by flirting a fascist flag at a Wohlhelmichel Meeting.

Note: When Bradbury was born Milton wrote

PARADISE LOST.....

SHAME ON FANDOM

Louis Bremmer

A popular misconception is that science fiction readers & fans comprise a firmly united group, carrying the torch for the recognition of fantasy. It's a pleasant myth.

A casual study of the professional & fan magazines, & the readers' columns, should be sufficient to show there's a great deal of dissension in the ranks. Too much. As for the lovely legend of a Utopia on Earth with "fraternaltruism" (if I may coin one for "brotherly love" à la Ackerman), to be created by sfans...the acrimonious squabbles in the fanmags evidence the fallacy of that! Not all s-f leaders manage to retain their courtesy & sense of humor; when their pet theorys are attacked they promptly begin to abuse their opponents. The result is a series of fratricidal feuds & the splitting-up of fandom to some extent into a group of sects cherishing their own particular (entirely too particular) convictions.

The value of these beliefs does not concern us at the moment. What is important is the attitude of these fans (many of them partially excused by their exuberant youth) --a chip-on-the-shoulder attitude which is apt to bring fandom into disrepute as a conglomeration of cranks...opinionated, egotistical & narrow-minded. & unfortunately--alas, twas ever thus!--the majority is judged by the activities of the lime-lit minority.

I do not feel private differences should be permitted to waste the time of fans primarily interested in Science Fiction. Actually, a good deal of libelous material is published in fan magazines, stuff that might end in a law-court if it saw print in a professional publication. Because such action never has been taken various fan-writers feel at liberty to indulge in slander & abuse, usually without troubling to check such facts as they have. Unfortunately editors of fanmags find it difficult to get material & so are forced to use articles they might prefer to omit.

"But these are only a few individuals" you say. "Fandom does stick together." Scarcely! Certain readers will praise one writer to the skys; others declare this "hack" an illiterate dolt & praise another. There is more to this than a mere difference of opinion. Most readers know certain published stories are unquestionably bad from almost every standpoint; others have saving factors; still others are genuinely excellent. Yet a large group will be found championing each division. A popular science fiction writer once told me that, seeing so many poor stories published, he set out deliberately to write one as bad or worse. The story was bought & printed --& liked by many readers, tho not the same ones who had praised the writer's earlier work. Editors no doubt realize what sfans do not: There are all sorts & conditions of readers. Within the limits of science fiction there are innumerable cliques that have their own idols & ideals, generally are certain of their own righteousness. Each clique works for its own ends. Thus a census taken with the intention of discovering the ideal typ story, sort mag, would be...meaningless.

Finally I hold an integration of the various hot-varying groups may be attained (for one thing) by a more liberal point of view, & by discussions based less on caustic rivalry & more on common charity. Indeed, by the special nature of scientifiction it should be obvious the mental meeting-ground should be coldly logical rather than hot-headedly emotional.....

Fantasy Fiction's Foremost Fan by Art Barnes -

FANTASY FICTION'S FOREMOST FAN they call him, whispering in sepulchral tones of devout worship that wind eerily thru the tortuous catacombs of that necromantic netherworld where the Unwanted Ones congregate with their picturesque publications and revel in the Forbidden Joys of the science-afflictionist! Who is this terrible troglodyte, Monarch of Missives, Leader of Letters to the Readers' Columns? None other than F. (for Foo) J (for Jabberbug) Ackerman. No more (thank God!), no less.

During latter months and years, however, the pen of Ackypuss the Arghhhh has been silent--strangely, sinisterly so. Ugly rumors floating: Some say He never could write anyhow; was his six-year-old brother sent in all those lurid letters. Others say what the hell, let the sleeping dog lie, the rat! Still others don't say a word about it. Is it possible they don't even care? Excelsior!

Be that as it may, your correspondent was given carte blanche and told, regardless of cost (but only a dollar a day for meals, the heels) to rout out the Truth About Ackerman. The discoveries he made have left his soul gibbering in utter horror as he tries to translate to mere words the ghastly, incredible scenes of stark terror he witnessed.

People of America! F. (for Fuerher) J (for Jehovah) Ackerman is director of a depraved Cult. Its members meet by stealth, at the dark of the moon, in a palace of perversion on New Hampshire. Such is the cloak of hideous secrecy they wear they dare not use their Christian names. Instead, each devotee is blasphemed in blood with an inner-circle name of frightful allegory--such as Mbrojo...Tobojo...and... O-ho-ho! "4SJ" is the dreadful symbol of their leader, cryptic and revolting in its subtle implications of evil incarnate. Unremitting research failed to reveal the true meaning of this emblem of abomination but occult authorities regard it as a monstrous relic of the dark days of the Elder Boings, when Grog-Thothoth ruled diabolically...

Among themselves these degenerated crazily cackle their incomprehensible incantations in an abhorrent idiom. Horrid, clacking syllables wrack the listeners' tortured ears with their shocking, godless rhythm. Ackermanesperanto, language of Lucifer, so called in terror-stricken tribute to its inferno-spawned inventor.

These drug-debased fiends force themselves into irreligious frenzy swilling a brimstone brew called kokakola, stuffing their stomachs with mummified meats from the Egyptian dynasty of Anon-Rye. These noisome neotrics quickly plunge the meeting into an orgy of unworthodoxy, spinning, whirling, ever faster--faster--to the mad polka of the Master.

Noxious incense coiled its deadly fumes about the hall unholy; ghastly flares, flickering, made the awful images on the wall do a dance macabre. Your investigator could endure it no longer. He fled for the preservation of his immoral soul. Reeling, staggering, sanity slipping, he escaped--in body but not in mind. For within his benumbed brain still sang the maddening melody of Mephisto, the malign, toxic tempo of the Minuet in J!

THE WINNER! Jack Speer, polling 6 more votes than his nearest rival, Nancy Featherstone, has rcvd \$ & the congratulations of the LASFL for his winning submission, "After 1939--What?", in Madge's Prize Mss contest. "Jabberwork" got twice as many votes as 3d place "Book of the Dead", which in turn took twice as many as 4th place "Fans Panned".....

COMING DISTRACTIONS: An Immense Voice of the Imagi-nation by Baker, Bristol, Campbell, Carnell, Haggard, Kustan, Madte, Marconette, Miske, Perdue, Speer, Warner, Wilson, Wollheim et autres. Priced at 10 cents. "A Tale Which Hath No Title", noveltyarn by Ellay Esseffell. A nickel.

Price 5c. An LASFL Pub; Bx 6475 Metropolitan Sta., Los Angeles/Calif.