

TIP-TACKS

JUNE 1941

No.4

On Reading Science Fiction

This awful hack-stuff. The stupid opening. The ridiculously impossible hero. The irritatingly stupid villain. The wretched plot.

The irritatingly convenient Spaceship for the hero to escape. The way the author describes the ravishing charms of the heroine. The crazily illogical world of inane jitterbugs. The horribly usual conception of a mad scientist.

The warped science the author uses, the tripe people talk about science anyway. The revolting conception of a social system. The feeble attempts at humour.

The worn out happy-ever-after ending. The final clinch of hero and heroine. The end, thank gawd.

His favourite author!!!

The anticipation of the story to come. The gratifying opening lines. The way the author describes so beautifully the social system of the future. The astounding genius of the scientist.

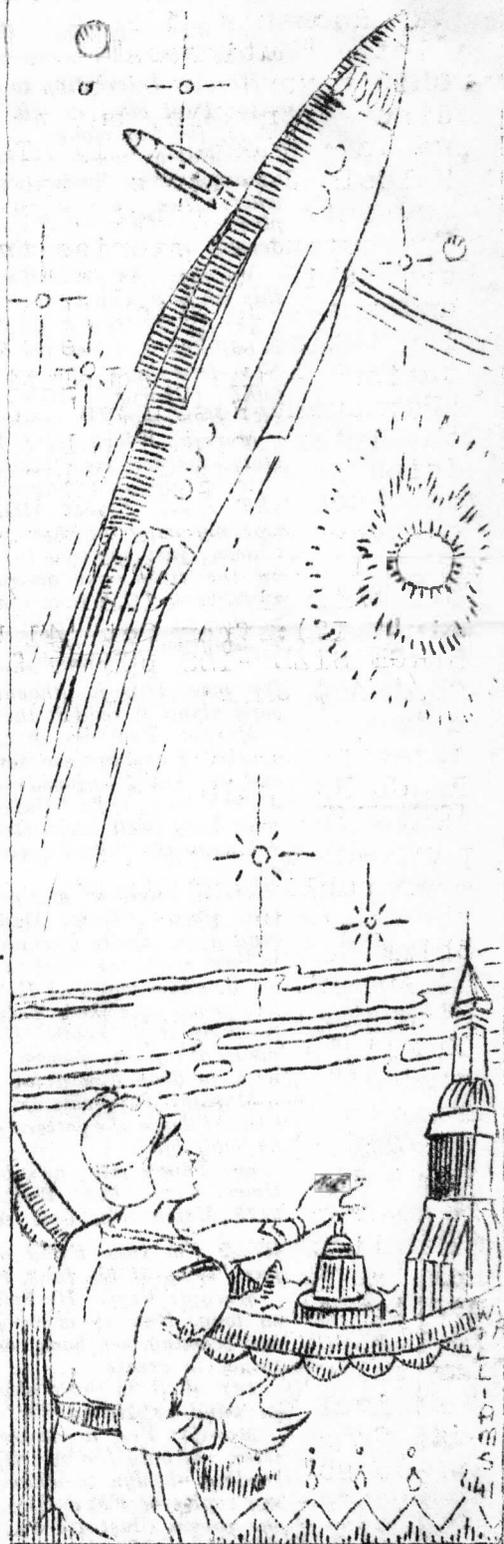
What a beautiful creature his daughter is, and how well the author describes her. The gorgeously villainous villain.

The well-conceived plot. The original use of scientific data. What a wonderful thing is science!! The original conception of a world of overgrown ants.

The closing paragraph. The romantic scene between the hero and heroine. The gorgeous way the villain is eaten by the ants. How regrettably, the end.

Then the truly humorous discovery that he'd turned two pages and had been reading a yarn by Fearn.

Still compiled by Don J. Doughty at 31, Bexwell Road, Downham Market, Norfolk -- Duplicated & distributed with the FIDO mailing by J. Michael Rosenblum, for which many thanks.



Special Delivery

FORREST J ACKERMAN & MOROJO

4e: Well, what do U think of the cover on the November number?

Morojo: Interesting to say the least.

4e: Paul could do all the covers on all mags, for my money; & all the interiors, too! But of course that's an impossibility, time not being elastic (except in sf storys, where they play around with it like a plastic!) Then, too, new artists never'd develop if one monopolized the field.

Morojo: The inclusion of Bok's pix in this ish is a step in the rite direction.

4e: Step? It's a leap! Young Hannes is building up a rep for himself in a hurry. Now let's have him for a cover on FF, huh? (Chorus: HOW ABOUT IT, ed?) (RT How about it, readers? Ed.)

Morojo: Which did U think was the best story—pardon me, "bestory," in the issue?

4e: Frankly, I haven't read it at all. (RT Hmm, I see! Regular fan! Ed.) Got my copy on the way back from the Chicon; just had time to read a couple storys on the train, got de-trained when I arrived back. O, I take that back. Beg your pardon, it was SCIENCE FICTION I was reading on my return; I remember now. FUTURE FICTION came out shortly before your trip to Phoenix. U took your copy along & read it there, didn't U?

Morojo: Yes; me & my brother & my cousin. I couldn't see how "The Flat Folk" could be, but I enjoyed reading it. I that J "rv" Haggard's "Universe in Darkness" was very well characterized but not developed to the fullest extent its plot suggested.

4e: A beaut of a 2-pg Paul spread for that story. "Robot Maid" was the one I read first. Quite humours, I thot. 'D'Like to see more of that sort. Incidentally I wonder how many of Bob Olsen's old reader-friends noe he's been in the hospital for nrly a yr now? LA fans have been visiting him in person. Other fans myt wish to drop him a line.

Morojo: They can use my box to contact him. I'll see the letters get to him wherever he may be.

4e: That's rite; he's been moved 4 or 5 times, hasn't he? Well, your PO Box is 6475 Metro Sta, Lois Angeles Cal, isn't

it? & I'm sure Bob'd appreciate hearing from some of his fans, rnt U?

Morojo: Very. He has been on his back so long. But he is very cheerful despite his seeming set back, & tho bedded continues to create.

4e: Well, is there anything else U have in mind regarding FF?

Morojo: Yes, a request I want to register, not only for myself but an Esperanto student of myn to whom I've been lending my copies of FF & SF; & that is to have the covers illustrate an incident in one of the storys. Tonjo says she gets all interested in a cover, then can't find any story to which it relates.

Like the fan features & hope they will continue.

Give Basil Wells my regards for his mention of Esperanto. I, too, am hoping to see Esperanto storys publisht in FF.

Nu, tio 'as chio. Well, that is all!

4e: Speaking of—and in—the Tongue of Tomoro, it seems to me FUTURE FICTION certly is the place to feature a little story in it.

I'm all for fan features myself.

Whatever became of the idea to name the Readers' Dept & Claim a cover, as I recall, for the winning title? I suggest the Futurama.

Was awfully disappointed in Asimov's "Magnificent Possession" in the preceding ish but am all for Isaac's being given another chance as he generally turns out a good dish. Leigh Brackett, Luc Monroe, Ray Bradbury, EESmith & HGWells mite improve the fiction content considerably, too.

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(Dear Morojo & 4e: Forgive us if we seem trite; you've probably heard this thousands of times before. But, it's true: we cannot, as yet, give either a definite "yes" or "no" to your request for brief tales in Esperanto. We understand that there are mechanical difficulties involved: special type-characters, etc. There is, further, the matter of space. It would mean cutting out one of the regular features, because you readers would not want to see our regular fiction pared down. Thus, before making a decision, we feel we should ascertain whether or not a fair sized section of readers would like to see a shortale in Esperanto in place of one or more of our regular departments.

So, we proclaim a plebiscite. Let all readers and fans who would have a voice in this matter write in and vote on these two questions. (1) Would you like to see a short-story story in Esperanto in FUTURE FICTION. Story to take up no more than two or three pages. (2) Which department would you like to have this innovation displace? Vote early; no registration required.

If Dr. Smith and HGWells care to submit mss to us, we are always ready to consider them. That's putting it somewhat mildly, because we have faith that their stuff would be good. And if any of the others you mentioned care to submit, we are fully as ready to lend an eye. After all, Doc Smith and HGWells were unknown writers once. And, really, we'd be quite happy if we could see some FF discovery blossom forth into glory on the scale achieved by the two mentioned above.

One of our authors, Donald A. Wollheim, is the person responsible for the naming of the readers department.)