

TWILIGHT



Dear Friend:

Let me tell you of...

...the tale of a lad who said----

A

little boy. A farm. Flying blue and red is silhouetted against the chilling white of the snow as the little one rushes down for the morning paper. Then a flurry of scurrying feet and babbling lips as the small tot rushes into the house while shouting, "Grampa! Grampa! read me Buck Rogers."

A young man. A large city. Flashy drapes and a camel's hair; also rockies and the latest in what might be mistaken for socks. He scans the long files of science-fiction, then turns on the record player for some hot jive; maybe "A String of Pearls". He thumbs through a sheaf of fan-papers, then raps out a few skin-beats for drumming. He turns to his nightly work on the fanmag, but decides that there is more profit in a call to her.

Then he looks at the unanswered correspondence, but decides to pour it into Murphy's File in lieu of answering; besides, he must get busy on TRAILER DUST. Yes, there's an article to do, but his writing comes first, last, and always. Finally he turns to some club work, but lets it go; he must get off to college in the morning.

A young boy. A city. Brown chords blue shirt, freckled face; eager freckled face, but troubled brow. A magazine, much thumbed over, is the topic of discussion.

"You say it's really good? Well, if Doc Savage isn't out, I suppose I'll settle for astounding."

An older boy. A large city. Gut-binding jeans and a shirt that portends to show hypothetical hairs on the young chest. He ruffles his brow as he pauses to think of his many great exploits. He also pauses to exhale smoke from the short butt he holds. Older folk must make fools of themselves by smoking, so the younger folk must smoke to prove they are... adults.

Through his mind: "The largest fanmag of its time... the greatest newsmagazine in fandom... the finest fanmag ever issued... plans for the greatest thing attempted... The first club of its kind in the territory... the first local conference... the first to make a convention... The writer of fandom's largest letter... fandom's greatest fan-author... fandom's this... fandom's that. What the hell do I get out of it?"

This is to tell anyone and everyone that Joe Fortier no longer holds any responsibilities as regards fanmags, that all subscriptions may be considered fulfilled with this issue. If a fan feels that some obligation has not been met, then let that one write in explanation. All will be cleared;

Too, all other fan obligations and responsibilities have been "xt"; if anyone has received no written confirmation of this fact, please send a reminder to do so. No misunderstandings are desired.

So

one retires.

The same young man. At a small town. And dancing. He has been working. And studying. But now he's with her. He has changed. Is changing--

--To write the tale of one man.

----this is

the end.

Jinx/ILOVEYOU/Ryt.

And Fill/Joe/Art/Lew/Tub/Lou.

Two.

A Chance as Strong —

by Jean Dravin

The Emperor-- Sector Number Eight.
Introducing Our Cigarette Vignette

The Emperor of Merika held one of the long, slender cigarettes which only the royalty of 2042 could enjoy. His thin, tapered fingers tremblingly lit the cigarette with a flame that appeared as from nowhere.

Facing a televisor, he called, "Report."

"Sectors nine and ten now in action... this is the crisis... rise or fall... all sectors in mobilized action... flames... warfare... cities falling... terrific clashing and destruction on both sides ... magnificent..."

As the televisor clicked off, The Emperor dragged heavily on the highly scented smoke. His steadied fingers toyed with a dangerous looking knife. His grim lips smiled slowly, then reassumed their stern expression. A teletape rattled new reports.

"Greatest battle in history. Wonderful warfare. Both sides surging and milling. We have slight advantage. Sector eight is only weak factor..."

The teletape rattled on as The Emperor raised another glass of heady vintage. A flush came to his normally waxen cheeks. He smiled, then laughed raucously. He wasn't quite sure of anything right now, but his commanders would care for everything. He exhaled great wreaths of poignant smoke which clung to nearby tapestries. Just one weak sector of them all.

He stared down at a map. Where was sector eight? The hazy lines of the map assumed a more stable shape as his bleary eyes squinted at them. The cigarette in The Emperor's feline fingers burned furiously, steadily, ominously . . .

Sector eight! This was sector eight! He jumped nervously as the cigarette burned into his frightened flesh. The Emperor's cigarette dropped to the rug and smoldered there.

A concussion rent the very air and a gigantic gash marred the lovely marble of The Emperor's domain; meanwhile The Emperor toyed more nervously with the knife.

There was another concussion and great shouting without.

The teletape ticked again. "Sector eight demolished. All....."

A stained knife dropped noiselessly from the emperor's coiling fingers. On the costly rug there was a small scorch. A small scorch and a cigarette's cold ashes. There was only one more concussion before final silence.

