

ENDEAVOR 4

Jan 1972

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ENDEAVOR

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Contributor:

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 ART BY MITCH SCHEELE
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 MITCH SCHEELE
 KURT ERICHSEN
 DALE NELSON
 THE EDITORS
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Most of this issue is now printed and compiled; once again the ditto machine has given me some trouble. On page 2 of the Productional and page 4 of Garbage, there is carbon along the top of the page that doesn't belong there. It wasn't there when I put the masters in the clamp, so the inside of the machine must be dirty or something.

There was also some random distribution or spirit fluid in a few spots, leaving areas on the print. this problem has been corrected now.

KAE
 1/14/72



Endeavor #4.
A supplement to
the contents page

There wasn't enough room on the contents page to say everything that had to be said, and this side of the page would have otherwise been blank, so...

There was a rather unfortunate printing problem this issue with the first page of "Balcheor's Axe". This was due primarily to the fact that it arrived in the mail folded and creased, and it was on typing paper. Despite everything I tried, the corners folded and bent, leaving "Shadows", which don't look too good. There were a few of these on other pages, but fewer. This was one of the factors that led me to make a decision concerning printing of originals not on vellum or tracing paper. (see productional)

Although at first I tried to do away with copies with the "shadows", it was too much paper. So I had to use some of them, but I replaced as many of the bad copies as I could.

Normally I won't be making the thermomasters, but finals are coming up, and I needed to get the masters as soon as possible, and I didn't want to bother Mark, and mailing would take several days. So after ruining several masters, I finally got some that were acceptable.

The sketchbook will be mostly thermofaxed. The first printing sold out almost immediately (except for one copy) but was underpriced. A better price would have been about 80¢. But the second printing will be mostly ditto, except for the covers, and a few pages inside. The price will remain at 50¢.

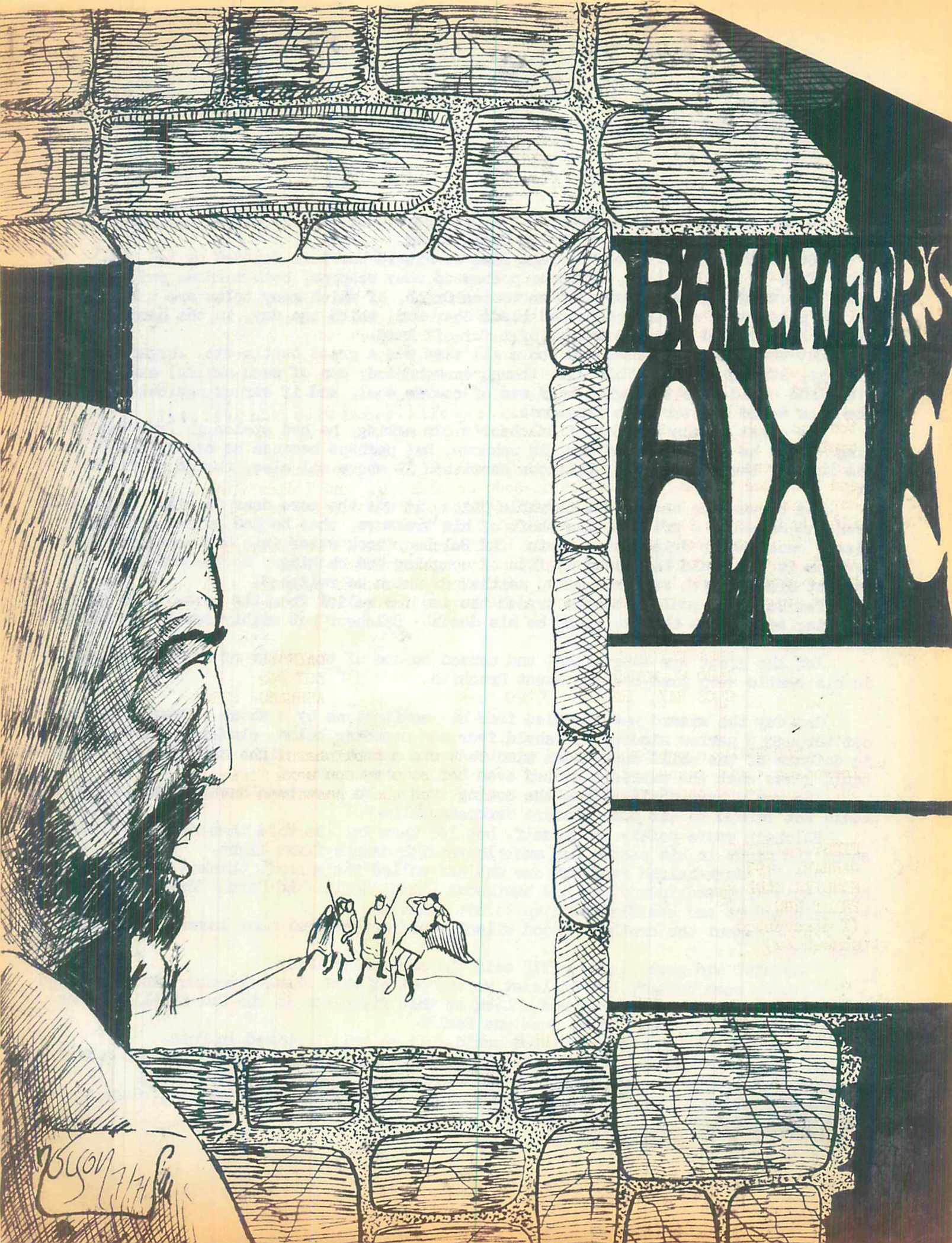
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ENDEAVOR is published quarterly by Anacreon Publishers. Due to postal rate increases, this issue sells for 40¢. For the same reason next issue will sell for 50¢. Printed by the downstairs mini-monster and the downstairs monster.

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somewhere)

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BALCHEOR'S AXE

Written and Illustrated by Hale Nelson

I

In the chill sea-bound land of Freithin there once dwelt a wizard of great power, whose name was Balcheor of the Sahle Cloak.

Now Balcheor came of the ancient line of Wizard-Warriors founded by Red Sam-nic. True to his heritage, Balcheor possessed many weapons, both mundane and magical. He owned a great spear, the enchanted Drich, of which many tales are told. Also in his possession was the enchanted blade Ghar-wod, which one day, in the hands of a mighty hero, would slay the tyrant of a far-off land.

But what Balcheor treasured above all else was a great battle-axe, forged of strange, strong metals. This axe, though unenchanted, was of such skilful make that its blade could pass through a huge wad of coarse wool, and if struck against a rock, the rock would shatter into fragments.

The great weapon was not of Balcheor's own making; he had stolen it from the Sea-King. When he did this, and how, is unknown; but perhaps because he had stolen it in the face of terrible danger, Balcheor cherished it above all else, though he did not use it.

And because he had paid a terrible price, it was the more dear to him. So great had been the Sea-King's wrath at the theft of his treasure, that he had cursed Balcheor: the wizard could never drink water again. If Balcheor took water into his mouth and tried to swallow it, he would be seized by fits of coughing and choking. So the sea-thief had to content himself with wine and milk, neither of which he relished.

Yet Balcheor would not have traded the axe for relief from the curse, even when the Sea-King added that the axe would be his death. Balcheor put mighty spells on the axe and thought himself safe.

And the great axe hung silent and unused on one of the walls of Balcheor's armory in his castle atop wind-haunted Mount Drachith.

One day the wizard was startled from his meditations by a shout. Crossing his head out through a narrow window, he beheld four men standing below, cloaks wrapped about them in defense of the chill snow-laden wind that was coming on. Night was falling; the wizard could guess what the warriors wanted even before they spoke--

"We would have shelter from the coming storm. We have been hunting far afield and could not return to our homes before darkness falls."

Balcheor swore softly to himself, but let them in. He told them that they could spend the night in his castle but must leave with dawn's first light.

A tall, dark-haired man, the one who had called the wizard, thanked Balcheor for his hospitality and introduced his brothers: Llain, Ezall, and Pern. The wizard grumbled acknowledgment and shuffled back up to his chambers.

For a moment the brothers stood silently and watched Balcheor leave, then turned to each other.

"Cheerful old goat, is he not?" said the one called Llain.

"I have seen better, but at least we are out of that flame-freezing wind, and even this place, I think, can be warmed. Look at that fireplace in the Great Hall." Thus spake the fourth brother, whose name was Ezall.

"Even that partridge he mentioned would suit me well," chimed in Pern.

So saying the brothers went into the stone-walled hall, and soon they had a fire roaring. They sang warrior-songs and opened a flask they had brought along.

After finishing their meal and songs, they rolled up in their cloaks, close to the fire, and slept.

Buril's eyes opened slowly. Perhaps the porridge had not suited his belly so well, for he had not slept deeply as he usually did.

The fire was low. The castle was silent save for his brothers' snores and the wind's distant howl.

Buril tried to fall asleep again, but the lurking silence of the castle (and maybe the porridge as well) kept him from slumber. For half an hour he tossed and turned. Finally with an irate growl he hurled the cloak from him and rose, abandoning all attempts at sleep. He paced slowly around the sleeping, and finding walking pleasing, strode away from the place where his brothers slept.

He crept along corridors of echoing stone, and passed chambers, the doors to some of which were open. Most of these rooms were empty or filled with uninteresting things; but a few held objects whose purpose he did not understand.

Then he came to a room which he did indeed understand, and which waited him greatly. He stood in the doorway of the armory.

His warrior's love of weapons compelled him to enter, and he did. He looked around, wide-eyed as a child, at the wondrous array of weapons displayed.

He walked slowly, scrutinizing each weapon. Many he picked up for closer examination but a few weapons, such as the spear Ditch, frightened him, for he could sense their enchantment. These he did not touch.

Many weapons he saw; hours passed. He began to think he should be returning to his brothers lest his host come upon him unexpectedly. He strode for the chamber's exit, suddenly stopped. He beheld the great battle-axe.

Without thought, almost, he seized it. Buril could sense its perfection and wondrous craftsmanship. And in that moment desire to possess the weapon entered his heart, fierce, flaming. He swore to himself he would have the weapon.

He ran to the hall where his brothers lay and woke them. At first they were angry for being roused from their slumber, but when they saw the axe thoughts of all else fled their minds.

So it was that Balcheor found them. His heart burned with rage, and, without warning, he sprang amongst them and seized the axe-handle, striving to pull it from Buril's grasp.

But Buril was a strong man, and he would not release it. He cried for the wizard to listen to him.

"Gracious host, do not misinterpret our possession of this axe. I merely admired your axe, the like of which I have truly never seen. Forgive my removing it, but--"

Balcheor cut Buril short. "Enough! I will return the weapon to its place and you will be on your way."

But Buril spoke, "Gracious host, it was in my mind to trade something for it, for I do truly desire it."

The wizard's reply was almost a shriek. "You could never guess the price I paid for this, or the dangers I faced, or the powers I hocked. Now leave and never return!"

Buril was not one to give up, once his interest was focussed upon one thing. Boldly he spoke:

"We will not leave unless the axe goes with us."

For a moment Balcheor stood still, his eyes glancing like glowing red coals. Then he spoke, his voice quivering with rage; all the brothers would have given up then, save for Buril.

"You will not leave this place with any weapon of Balcheor's."



7/71

Buril spoke haughtily. "Try and stop us. You are one against four, and I dare say any one of us is stronger than you."

Then the wizard, in his rage, forgot his magical powers and flung himself at Buril. The warrior stepped aside, then snatched about and drove the axe between the wizard's shoulderblades.

The force of that blow hurled Balcheor to the floor and set red blood to spurting forth, but the wizard did not die immediately. Through bloodied lips he hissed a curse:

"The battle-axe of Balcheor will be the death of you all! May you die in agony."

Then the wizard shuddered the entire length of his body and lay still. Buril stood for a moment looking at the body, then turned.

"Let us be leaving, brothers. Our homes wait for us; no doubt our wives fear for us. There is no reason to stay here."

And they turned then and walked out into the early morning light, uneasy because of the curse, and because of the way the wind had moaned when Balcheor died.

II

For months the brothers lived peacefully with their families, until one day in spring Buril proposed that they go hunting.

The other brothers agreed immediately, and gathered their spears and bows. All save Buril; he took the axe, for it had grown to be a part of him almost. The others warned him that an axe was a poor weapon to use when hunting the wild bear, but Buril growled defiantly, "The axe is better than any other weapon—I will take it if I choose!"

His snarl told the others that further dispute would cause trouble, so they reluctantly spoke no more about the matter.

And so they hunted that day, but found no game. Then as the sun began to fall, Buril, who had separated from the others, beheld a large tusked before him. Hoping to bring the animal down by himself, he did not call in his pride, and charged toward the bear.

The animal bellowed with rage and came at him. Buril raised the axe above his head, planning to chop off the bristly head, but miscalculated the bear's terrific speed. The animal hurtled at him, knocked him down, and sprang to him, tusks ripping.

Buril screamed until he could scream no more. When the brothers found him, Buril's body was mutilated almost beyond recognition. The bear-tusks told their brother's fate.

And so Balcheor's curse began to come true... for had Buril taken a spear instead into battle, he would not have died that day.

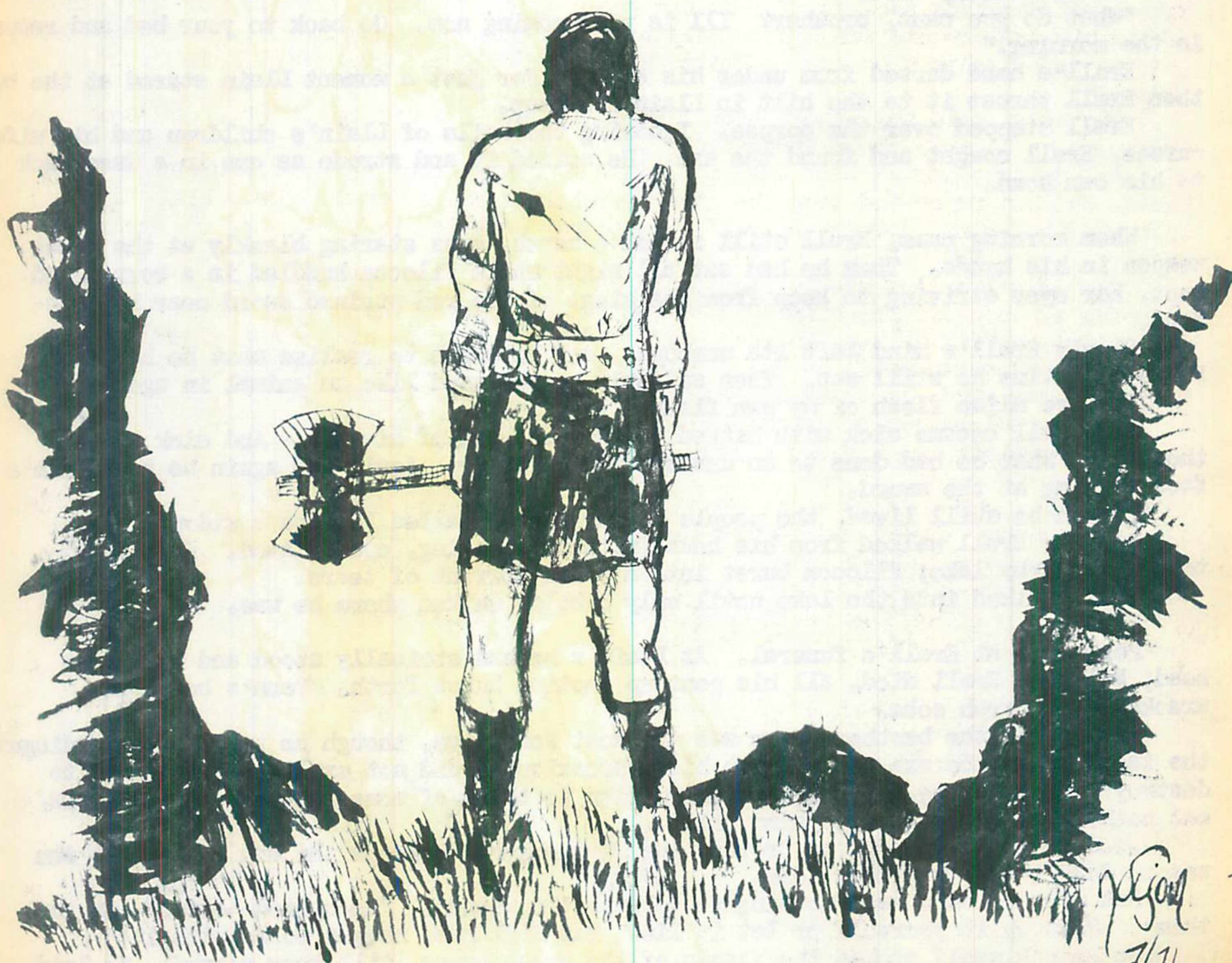
The brothers mourned their dead one, and on a bright day soon afterward laid Buril in a deep grave. Then, as was the custom, they lay all his weapons beside him, save for the great axe. Their withholding of this they explained by saying they wanted something to remember their brother by. So they said.

Then they piled a great heap of stones above the grave, to let others know that beneath lay the body of a great warrior.

After a few more days of mourning, the time came to divide Buril's belongings among his brothers, as was the tradition. Buril's wife went to live with Brall's family, which pleased him, as she made a good nurse for Brall's abundant progeny. Buril's house and servants were taken by Ilain, and the dead brother's livestock went to Fern.

All went well until the matter of the axe came up. Now there was dispute, for in truth, each brother coveted the great weapon.

After long disputes, they came to the conclusion that they would have to gamble for it, for each professed that his was the greatest claim. They decided that the person who rolled the highest number on a dice would get the axe.



7/71

Pern cast a three.

Erall rolled two; he swore.

Llain rolled six.

Pern joined Erall in a few oaths, but let Llain keep the axe. He had won it fairly; and the matter should have been settled then.

But one night Erall awoke from restless slumber, sweating and panting, his voice hoarse. His wife told him that he had been screaming as if in the grip of hideous nightmares. She asked him what was wrong.

"I-I don't know, Filocca. It seems--"

Erall lapsed into silence. His face was twisted, confused. Then a strange light came into his eyes. Filocca involuntarily leaned backward as he spoke, in the voice of one dying--thin and hollow, unlike Erall's usual pleasant voice.

"Get me my cloak and sword, woman. I have something to do."

Filocca fearfully, silently, obeyed. Erall left without a word, his sword unsheathed beneath his cloak.

He came to Llain's house, knocked. He did not stop until Llain opened it, a black scowl on his bleary face.

"What do you want, brother? Ill is your coming now. Go back to your bed and return in the morning."

Erall's hand darted from under his cloak. For just a moment Llain stared at the blade, then Erall thrust it to the hilt in Llain's breast.

Erall stepped over the corpse. Ignoring the wails of Llain's children and his wife's curses, Erall sought and found the axe. He seized it and strode as one in a daze back to his own home.

When morning came, Erall still sat on a bench, eyes staring blankly at the great weapon in his hands. Thus he had sat all night while Filocca huddled in a corner and wept, her eyes striving to keep from the sight of the red-stained sword near her husband.

Slowly Erall's mind left its numbness, and he began to realize what he had done. For a long time he still sat. Then suddenly he screamed like an animal in agony.

"I have alien flesh of my own flesh!"

And Erall became sick with hatred of the axe, and of himself. And sick at the thought of what he had done to an unsuspecting brother. Again and again he saw Llain's face staring at the sword.

Though he still lived, the people living nearby called Filocca a widow.

One day Erall walked from his house without speaking, eyes glazed. He strode toward a nearby lake; Filocca burst into a fresh torrent of tears.

Erall walked into the lake until only bubbles marked where he was.

Pern wept at Erall's funeral. At Llain's he had stoically stood and bowed his head; but when Erall died, all his pent-up emotion burst forth. Pern's body was wracked with harsh sobs.

For of all the brothers Pern was the most sensitive, though he tried hard to disguise the fact. When the axe passed into his possession he did not exult, but resolved to destroy it. For long and long he vainly tried to think of some way to accomplish this, but nothing feasible came to mind until...

...One day he thought of Croran, the Blacksmith. Perhaps the man could melt the weapon down into a harmless form.

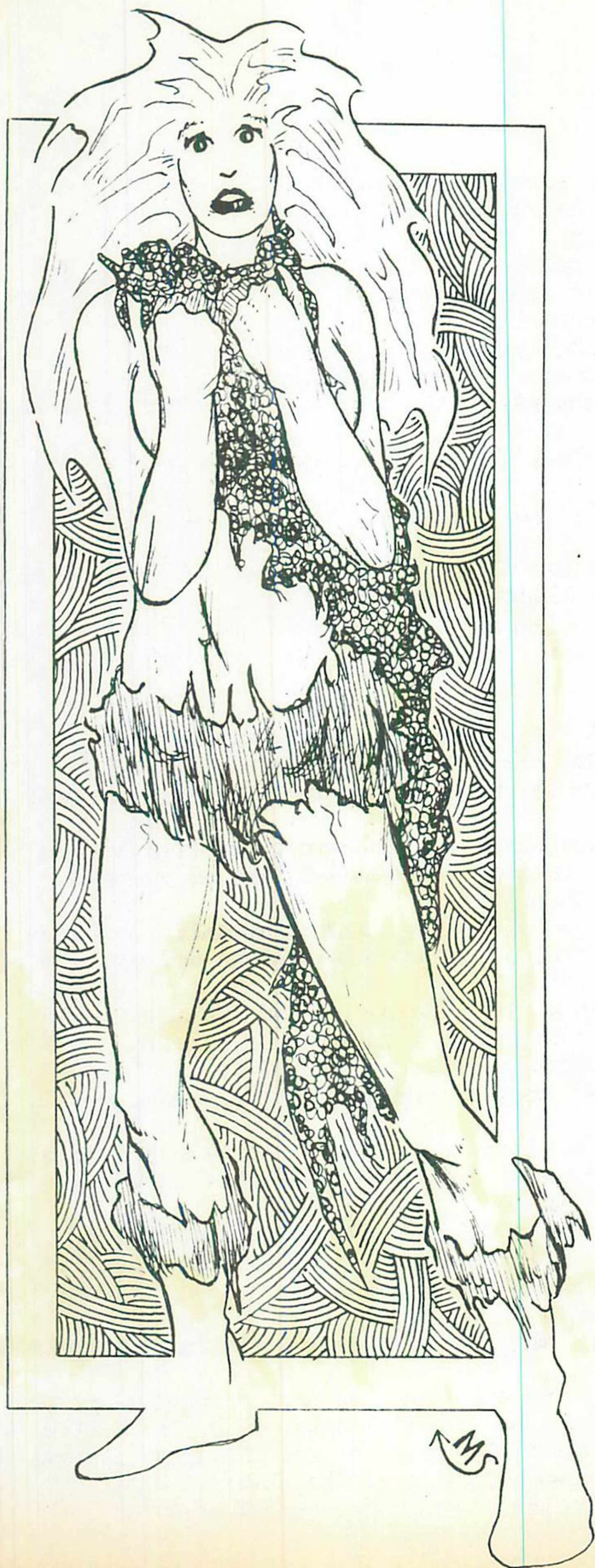
But Croran would have nothing to do with the weapon. "Enchanted--cursed--is that thing. Destroy it yourself or let it lie. But I'll have naught to do with it."

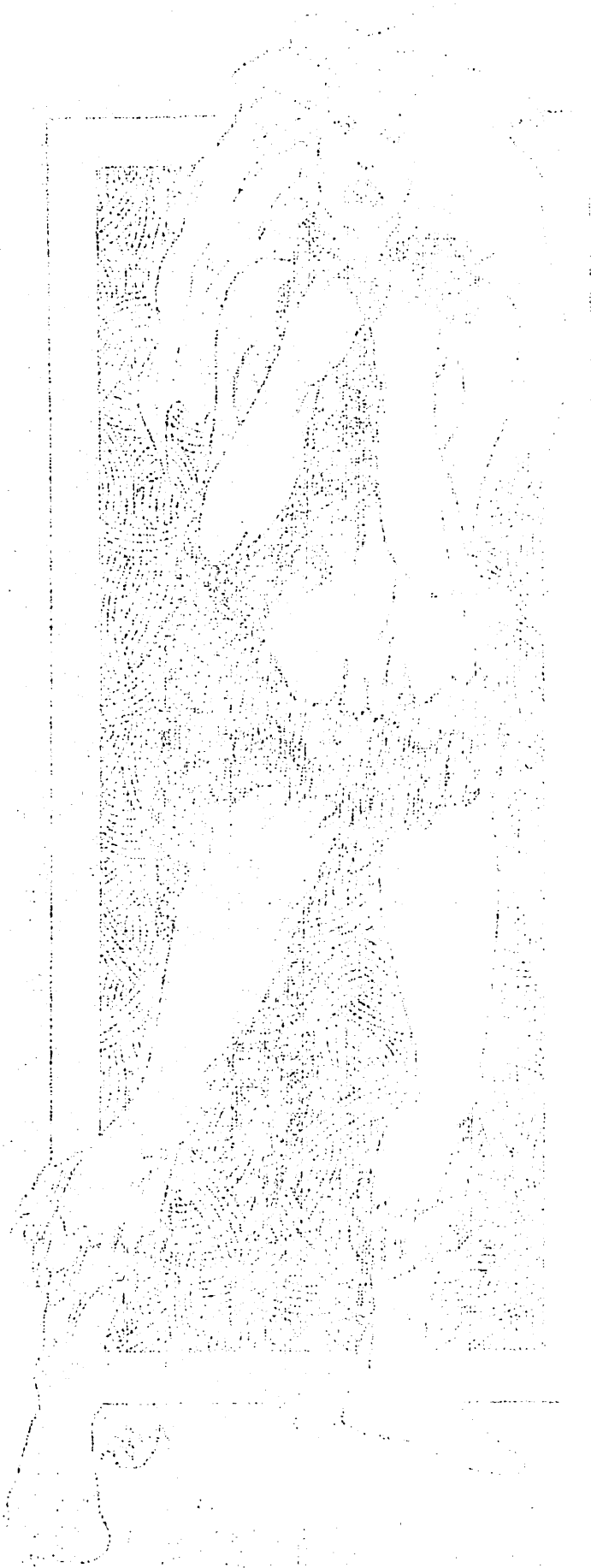
So Pern himself stoked the flames of the great ovens, till they roared. He laid the weapon in a heavy emularen and suspended this in the flames.

Surprisingly, the axe quickly became liquid. Pern rejoiced as he looked at the bubbling metal.

And all parts of this tale can be explained save this; that as Pern stood there, the emularen toppled over--and the bubbling metal splashed over Pern--who gave one short shriek, and then lay still.

Thus passed Balcheor's axe and the brothers who stole it.





G A P !

WRITTEN BY
KURT ERICHSEN

The Inventor's name was Gabe Dawson; a man who had long studied men, their ways, and speech. He had always remarked to his friends that he didn't really like his work, but since he couldn't make mopsy by doing what he liked, he had to settle for something else. And so to keep himself alive, he built machines: machines never imagined in a human mind before; machines with purposes never before conceived, or even dreamed of.

Except for the continual humming of the machine, there was no sound in the room. Dawson told them, "I have called all of you here. I didn't send you a telegram, or call you on the phone, but I did send for you."

"And the first thing you did as soon as each of us walked through the door was cram these headphones (or whatever they are) on our heads," remarked someone, and he started to take them off.

"No!" Dawson ordered, "You must leave it on. Have patience for a little while and I'll tell all of you what is going on. Without them, you will not... understand."

Another of the five men was called James Philmont. He dealt with mass-production. "I don't know what it is you're trying to pull, Dawson, but if you expect to sell this contraption to my company, you're going to have to--"

The silence continued.

Dawson interrupted him. "Very well, Mister Philmont. I had hoped to avoid such tedious detail, but I shall include it if you insist."

"You ask I invest millions of dollars in this machine of yours. I must insist."

"Very well."

Images filled their minds.

II Two men sat by a fire in a cave. Winter was closing in about them, and the skins of animals they had worn in summer no longer kept them warm. They walked about in a stooped-over position, and now spent the days searching for furry animals for food and winter clothing. They were roasting the leg of an animal they'd killed.

"Quite a system," one grunted.

"Yes. The only ones that understand throat-noises."

"We co-operate. Work together. Others fight alone; often loose."

"You did well to-day."

The other's eyes opened widely and gleamed through the glare of the flames with a sudden hatred and contempt.

"Four branched on your neck are deformed!"

The first was puzzled and slightly angered. "But there no branches on any neck. I said nothing to anger you..."

The other rose to his feet abruptly and defiantly shouted, "A bird swims and collides with a valley!"

The first was still confused, but his anger was growing. Still, he tried to calm the other down. "We must not act like this, it..."

The other would tolerate no more. He reached across the flames though they burned his arms, and mercilessly grabbed the first by his hair, throwing him face-down into the flames, and held him there until his screaming and struggling ceased.

III

The men's minds in Dawson's workshop returned to the present.

One asked, "I've got to go along with Philmont this time, Dawson. What're trying to do? More gadgetry to try to squeeze every cent out of us you can?"

"If this is a story-telling machine, that's fine, but I wish you'd hurry up and get to the moral. I'm a busy man."

Dawson remained calm. "I will explain what you see, gentlemen. You merely need to be patient a little while longer."

Again their thoughts were not their own.

IV

"We will have done a great thing to-day, gentlemen. War has been avoided. Many people who would have died will now live, and all the three nations whom we represent shall prosper."

One was whittling on a piece of obsidian with a harder rock, making an arrowhead. "An admirable accomplishment, indeed. No one's ever been able to do anything like this before. Not Alexander and his Phalanx, nor Caesar and his legions. They thought they could bring peace by conquering all men and making them one. Well, now," he grinned and indicated his newly made arrow, "this arrow and all like it will be intended no longer for men, but for animals for food. No longer will the arrow, battle axe and catapult. Peace shall be its successor."

"It is indeed fortunate that war was aborted before your imperialistic king decided to try to force my people into slavery." His smile remained the same.

But the first was offended. "Why do you say that? It was we who proposed that this conference be arranged. It is no secret that your king wishes to marry our king's daughter, and inherit both thrones."

"You cursed traitor! How could you suggest that I would attempt such a murderous thing?" He rose from the table and stormed towards the flap of the tent.

"I never said you tried anything murderous. I could not sit by and listen to such scandalous lies about my king. And there are rumors...." But things only got worse, and he saw only a horse disappearing, leaving behind only a cloud of dust stirred up from the road. The third one said nothing, but left.

There would be war.

V

"I don't even see what that one was about," protested Philmont.

"Then it would appear that I have no alternative but to explain. You see, gentlemen, there is a very strange problem that has plagued mankind for many years. In the first case, it was more obvious, of course."

"Right. It was obvious that that guy was insane."

"Insane? No. There is something one could say to a person that would make him angry enough to kill you. To any person there is something that could make him that mad. He merely said the wrong thing."

"But telling him that he had done well--"

"That is the problem I was talking about. The meaning was lost. That is why we are wearing earphones. The computer picks up the brain waves and decodes it into its own 'language'. And then it transmits it back to the rest of us in images, and so we all see exactly what the person sending the message saw, and I might add that pictures are universal."

"A picture is worth a thousand words'?"

"Far more than that actually, but that's the idea. But if you said that out loud, it would mean something entirely different to each of us. What has happened is similar to Darwin's Theory: a linguistic evolution, in a way. We speak, and we think we understand, but do we? Everything we hear fits together with what we just said, like two gears in a machine. The cave men were among the first to talk. They thought they understood, but they didn't. Perhaps it all started when one indicated

a small object on the ground, and said 'rock.', and the other thought he meant that 'rock' was a verb meaning 'to point'. There were occasions, frequently at first, and they may have resulted in fights, but generations continued, and the words fit together more and more smoothly, with those not understanding being eliminated in some way. Some fights, murders, wars, some thought that the other was crazy, and shunned him, or moved far away. These created the different languages. Why, it was probably a single sentence that didn't fit that caused the separation of Hispania into Spain and Portugal, a peninsula that geographically looks like one nation. And even though words made sense to one speaking but not the other, when one moves, he takes his meaning with him, so to speak. And the languages remain similar.

"What're you trying to prove," asked Philmont, suspiciously.

"Quiet. Can't you tell I'm not done yet? We understand signs that give messages because we see how other people react to them, mainly, and they have created, perhaps a few words that have the same meaning to all of us. But printing; the meanings are as diversified as in speaking, but they make sense to all. This machine, gentlemen, eliminates that misunderstanding. And just in time. Why, last week I was visiting the governor, and he was talking to a friend of his in Moskva. I don't know how I did it, but I sensed that something would happen. Since I live in an area near the governor, the gears fit well, but Moskva is half way around the world, and words and statements didn't fit, and it was making the situation very hot. An innocent statement like 'how was the weather today?' could be that statement that would make a man angry enough to kill, and between to government officials, that could be war, so I slugged the governor, and cut the lines."

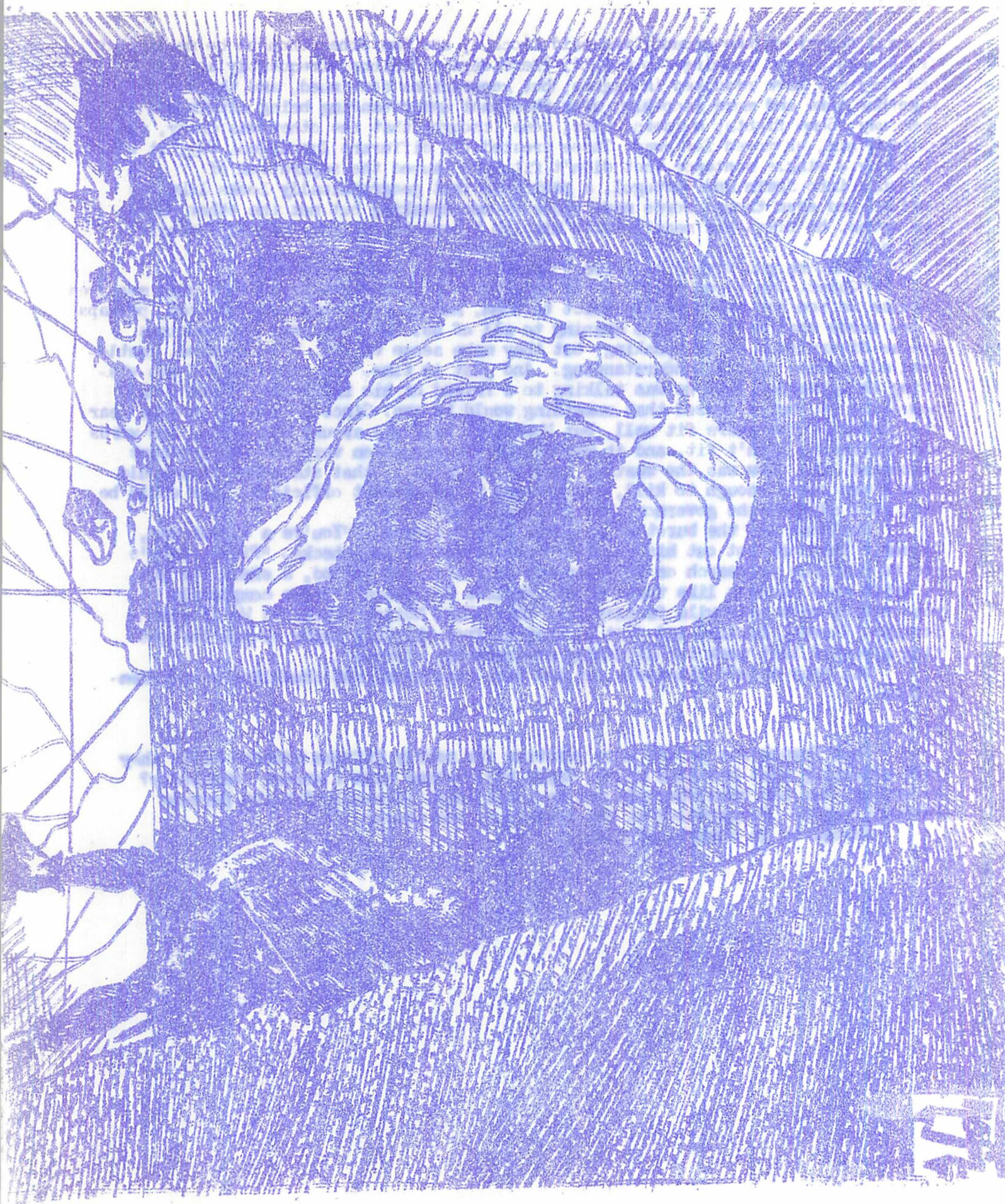
Philmont led the burst of laughter that followed. "You're a clever man, Dawson." Philmont got out his checkbook and wrote out two checks. "First, here's one to continue research on this machine of yours, and second, a check for you to write more stories like that. We can replace Hollywood's films completely if you come up with more wild fantasy like that. Mind Motion Pictures! We'll make a fortune. Clever, Dawson, and just to keep us from thinking badly of you for getting arrested last week for attacking a government official."

All four walked leisurely out the door chattering and chuckling among themselves.

VI

Gene Dawson sat in the same position for nearly fifteen minutes after they left wondering what had gone wrong. Maybe his machine hadn't worked completely? No matter. War had been aborted, and he could adapt if easily for the purpose Philmont wanted. We marveled at the amounts of the checks.

Forced to go commercial again.



SOME PEOPLE LIKE TO WRITE-----

---and an awful lot of people don't.

But the fact is, that some people are naturally creative. And some like to "make a point" or advance an idea. Some simply like to write because it is fun for them. Or perhaps some other author inspires, influences, or gives ideas to them.

The point is that if you are such a person, and would like to have your story see print---even if it's on a very, very limited scale---perhaps you should check Anacreon Publications.

We are amateur publishers---and we publish only amateurs.

If you think your story will measure up to our standards, why not submit it to Anacreon?

We specialize in science fiction and fantasy. That gives you quite a bit of room...

If you're interested---and you think we would be---write. We'll carefully consider all submissions.

We can't pay you. All that happens if we accept your manuscript is this: we print it, and put it in either the ENDEAVOR magazine or in one of our ANACREON SPECIALS. After we're done typing it up, your manuscript is returned intact to you. You'll have the satisfaction of seeing your story in print.

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ad ANNOUNCING THE NEW ad

ENDEAVOR SKETCH BOOK

The ENDEAVOR SKETCH BOOK, commemorating a year

of successful publishing for Anacreon is now out.

A truly different magazine. The SKETCH BOOK presents artwork and stories (ranging from fantasy to SF to satire) never presented before. Some unusual work by Kurt Erichsen and Dale Nelson.

_____ pages..... \$



LETTERS

ENDEAVOR #4

Edited by Dale Nelson

(Due to various factors, I didn't get as many letters for this page as last time. However, due to the length of the letters (and particularly, one of my answers), I'm still using up two pages. Well, here they are.)

I purchased ENDEAVOR #3 and was amazed at the change in quality of the work. The artwork was fine to begin with, and was very well printed. Special notice should be given to the zip-a-toning of Steve Alcorn's story, "The Catacomb Maze." Also worthy of mention is Nelson's "Armor from the Crypt." It was very well written and the artwork was superb. (Too bad the main character got "chaffed" in the end.) I think this was Dale's best accomplishment so far.

Kurt E. Ishaan's "Evolution" was very well done and the art was beautiful...

So far, I have had nothing but praise for everything. Now I will criticize: my gripe is the spelling. This could be remedied by PROOF READING.

Randy Shepard

(Editor's note: Thanks, Randy. Your letter was very interesting; it was nice to hear about something other than our printing.

Now I'll make a brief comment on spelling: We're trying. But one thing: Not all the spelling errors in ENDEAVOR are due to lack of knowledge on our part. Most of them are simply the result of accidentally hitting the wrong typewriter key. Our typed material goes on ditto-masters, which can be awfully messy to correct. But we'll try to be more careful. Let us know how you like this issue.)

Without, I hope, sounding too negative, I will try to undertake comment upon ENDEAVOR #3. I have some general and some specific comments to make. However, let me preface all remarks by saying that in general the issue is much improved over the last.

1. CORRECT spelling errors (p. 2, "toshknowledge," p.3, languages, ad nauseum.)

2. Keep editorial comment out of letters to the editor. Do not harass your writers. Comment should be confined to the addition of further facts. Do not comment upon what readers have written. Otherwise you bring the entire weight of the press to bear on your readers. This gives you unfair advantage.

3. You should not "explain" your stories in the editorials. If you want to comment on your stories, start a review column.

4. "Into the Void Beyond"--A business statement does not belong in an editorial column.

5. "Armor from the Crypt"--suggest you vary the style. Article sounds exactly like the last one. Perhaps more dialogue might help. This is a problem in science fiction and might well be in this type of writing.

Clifford H. Brock

(Comment on above letter on next page)

LETTERS continued

(Editor's note: Thanks greatly for a very thought-provoking letter. I'll comment on each point in order:

1) See above answer to R. Shepard's letter.

2) I no longer insert my comments into the actual letter. This does make commenting on specific points a bit more difficult, but I agree, my "editor's notes" should (and will) be confined to the end of the letter.

I was not aware that we "harassed" our writers. Please explain; I'll be glad to look into this.

3) Perhaps what is at fault here is not having story-comments in the editorial space, but simply calling the column "Editorial Privilege." The purpose of the column (in part) is to give background information that would, perhaps, slow the actual story down if placed in it. For instance, I was working on a story called "The Death-Dogs" (which took place circa 900 A.D.) (since cancelled). It concerned a band of Viking marauders, and in the first draft of my editorial column I was going to give some information not necessary to the story, but which might heighten the enjoyment of same. My column on "Armor from the Copt" was intended to give some background data on the villain which might have helped to make him seem more realistic.

4) I agree. I think Kurt can be persuaded not to put a statement of sales, etc., in an editorial space.

5) I assume you mean that both stories were fantasy, and you think I should try other forms.

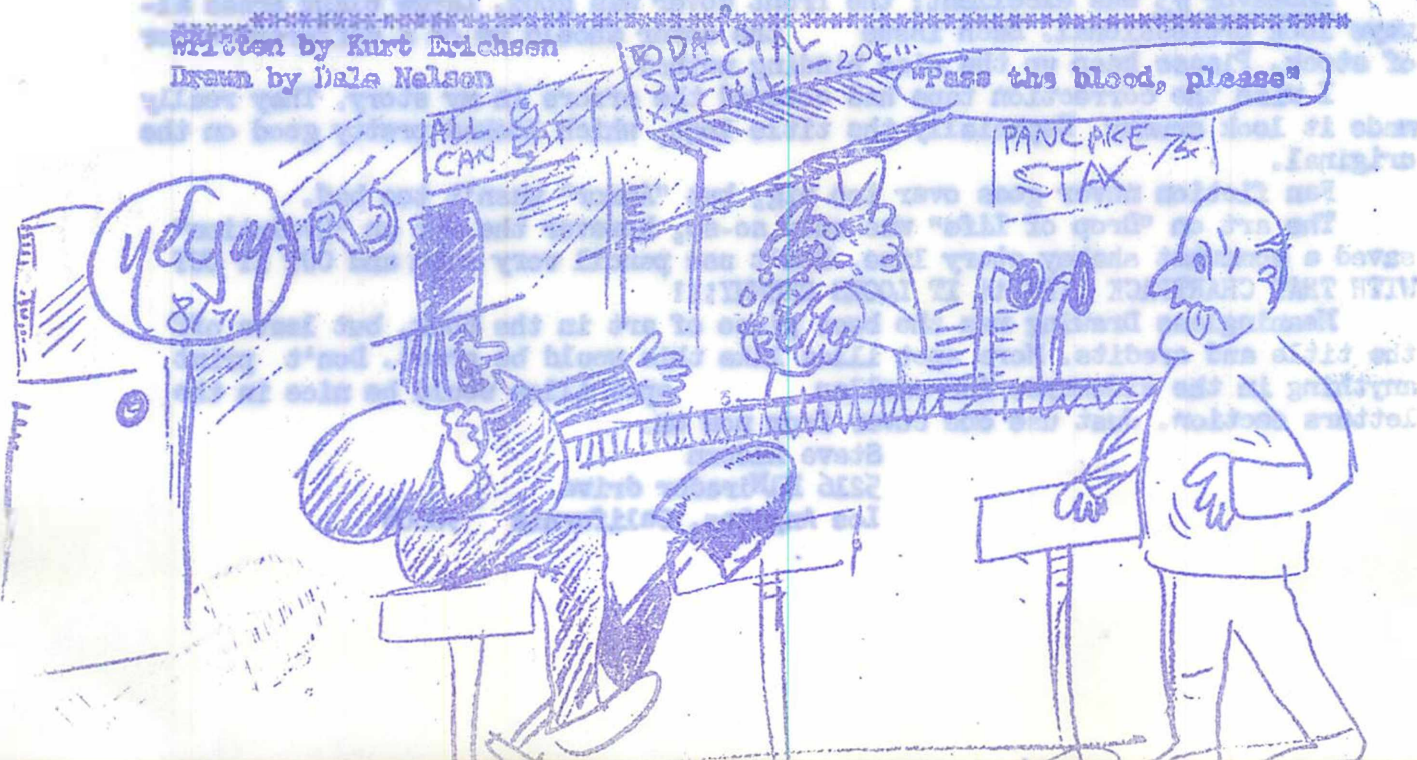
Sorry, but I like writing fantasy. I think most of our readers like it, too. There is not a great interest in mainstream fiction in most of fandom.

I intended that there should be a relationship between "Incident Beyond the World" (ENDEAVOR #2) and "Armor." Both stories take place in a cosmos I'm gradually developing. This issues stories by me occur there, too. I think you will find that the PLOT resemblances are small, though.

Your comment that use of more dialogue might be helpful is interesting and well-taken. I admit the fault. I'll try harder.)

This brings us to the end of my letters column for this issue. I anticipate some good letters on this issue in ENDEAVOR #5—letter-writers, don't let us down!

Written by Kurt Erichsen
Drawn by Dale Nelson



Dale and Kurt,

Endeavor #3 arrived in the mail; the following are my appraisals: Dale has proven, I think that he need only take a little time, and he'll come up with a competently drawn illo. The lettering on the cover, though, could have been neater, and more creatively conceived.

I laughed at the hilarity and cliché of "Boardem". The lettering was the famed Erichsen-sloppy-type, and the art was covered monstrosously by Kurt's inks. And the plot? Was I surprised when it turned out that Boardem had decided to destroy the Earth! Truly, Tales of the Watcher have returned at last!

There were a few places in the story that could have been good; the opening sequence on page one, and the four panels on page four. But the lack of decent art dismissed any chance for a good effect.

"Armor" From The Crypt" surprised me in that I had not suspected that Dale could write so well. I enjoyed it. The illos were pretty simple, though, and over inked.

Then came "The Catacomb Maze": cliché hoedown!!! The art I could understand, but the plot had to be a joke. You guys can really sock-it-to us readers with hilarity at its best, can't you? I'd like to see Steve attempt something more detailed art-wise, and possibly shorter strip-wise. I can see a definite style in his stuff, but definitely he must put more time into it.

"Evolution" - The art was sloppy, muddled, badly lettered, and just plain bad. What more can be said? The plot plodded along, and if there was a high-point, it had to be page eight. I almost choked on my tongue when the 'creature' was unable to eat because it was so tired. The 'high-point' in the art was the drawing of the creature in panel four of that page. All in all, a very mediocre story. The Meaningless Drawing I liked, however.

Rigorous Regular Reader

R. *Matthew*
455 Cascade drive
Lebanon, Oregon 97355

There isn't really much I can say in answer to your letter, except that I hope you think better of this issue, and there is certainly more to be said: other readers said it. (a hint to read on)

Dear Kurt and Dale,

Endeavor #3 was excellent; the front cover was good. Large blank areas always look professional. Each issue the cover should be on a different color of stock. Please keep up the nice binding method.

I wish the correction tape had covered the errors in my story. They really made it look crummy. Especially the title logo, which looked pretty good on the original.

Fan fiction never goes over too big, but "Armor" wasn't too bad.

The art on "Drop of Life" was only so-so, however the art on "Evolution" saved a somewhat shakey story line. Don't use pencil very much and CUT IT OUT WITH THAT CHARTPAK TAPE!!! IT LOOKS CRUMMY!!!

Meaningless Drawing was the best piece of art in the book, but leave off the title and credits. More spot illos like this would be great. Don't print anything in the sideways. And smaller spot illos would be nice in the letters section. Just use one cover from now on.

Steve Alcorn
5216 ElMirador drive
Los Angeles, California 90008

If Endeavor were printed by some type of photo copy, the error in the title logo wouldn't have printed, but I saw that it was corrected by tape, and if it were left as it was, a huge black blob would have printed. But instead I scraped away the correction tape carefully; remember that this process depends upon light going THROUGH the original, and ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING on BOTH sides of the paper will print.

Dear Kurt and Dale,

What do I think of Endeavor #3? It was better than the previous.

The cover printed poorly; the sip-a-tone was almost invisible on my copy. I venture to say that this is the worst cover of your three endeavors, not really the art itself, but for the fact that the art takes up a mere third of the cover, and the rest is taken up with the title Endeavor, and "Armor From The Crypt". And there is an exceedingly large amount of white space.

On Kurt's pages, however, the reverse has happened: too much darkness.

Now from the bad impression that the cover gives me I turn to the first page to spy some nonsense called "Boarder" Ah. Contents page. Not bad, except that it printed rather lightly. "Drop Of Life" (a good title) wasn't too good of a story even for an amateur, and the lettering didn't help.

"Armor From The Crypt" was soothing to my eyes after all that blackness which dominated the "Drop of Life". This time Dale has managed to balance the contrast quite well. The story was quite good; I can't decided whether I like Dale more as an artist of an author. His second illo, however, was too dark for me to see much of anything, but the last one was okay.

"The Catacomb Maze" was pitiful. An excellent story, but the art didn't print well. The lines being rather din, the lettering was better than the "Drop Of Life", but it still lacked something, especially on the calligraphy of the title of the story. I'd like to read more of Steve's stories; with a little more development they could be quite good.

"Evolution" was good, although I enjoyed "The Catacomb Maze" the most. But due to the execution of the story, "Evolution" was better in concept. I think that the pencilling employed could be used more impressively if mixed in occasionally with the inked part of the strip. My favorite page of the strip was page nine, and in particular, the sixth panel that impressed me. It printed very clearly, and the art was not cluttered up as it often is. Just the right amount of detail in the background with that little bit of zip-a-tone.

The hero presented in "Evolution" is obviously paranoid. There are many jokes about mad scientists blowing up the world, and in this I find it humorous that a similar thing should be employed. I was impressed with the method used in getting the man his mate, the casual way in which he introduced her to his ship and made her pull that lever as if it were insignificant. Very wise too, if she should ever regret ending all other human life, he would always be able to say "You pulled the lever!" But can you imagine what it would be like. Two people alone, two people still living after all those billions of people, two people are left of all man's hopes, man's glory and achievement. Such desolation can scarcely be imagined. The story does proceed quite well, but the scene with the monster would be better left out. It has no bearing on the plot except the superficial horror of seeing man changed into such a gross abomination. Kurt's humor becomes apparent with the mutated seaweed, a typhical BEM of science fiction. It is obvious that the seaweed people are more intelligent than the Homo Sapiens, and they are also much kinder as a race. I see nothing frightening about the invasion of the seaweed people as I normally would: perhaps they have even developed the psychological means of helping the paranoid man who rants and raves of mankind's supremacy and about how he will foster a better race of men. The world as we knew it was destroyed by a madman, but I thank you, Kurt, for presenting the

story in the madman's point of view (even though I can't agree with it!)

Moving on, I read the letter section. I concur fullheartedly with Clifford Brock on his major points. Because of the amateurish way in which Endeavor is presented, I find it very hard to consider it as seriously as I would a professional magazine. More planning on such things as the editorials and better layout would improve your fanzine immensely.

I also like the direction of relevancy Endeavor is taking whether intentionally or not, the direction towards the environment. "Evolution" and "Drop of Life" both had this. Of course, too much of it would make me sick, so Dale's story and the "Catacomb Maze" served quite well to round off the issue.

I disagree with Mr. Brock only on the point of avoiding first person. An editorial in any type of fan magazine is a personal thing, and it would just be a nuisance to try to rephrase things away from first person.

I hope to see continual improvement in Endeavor. I am certain that if care is taken it will become a very worthwhile enterprise. I suggest that you get more contributors; and with each issue raise the standard of quality.

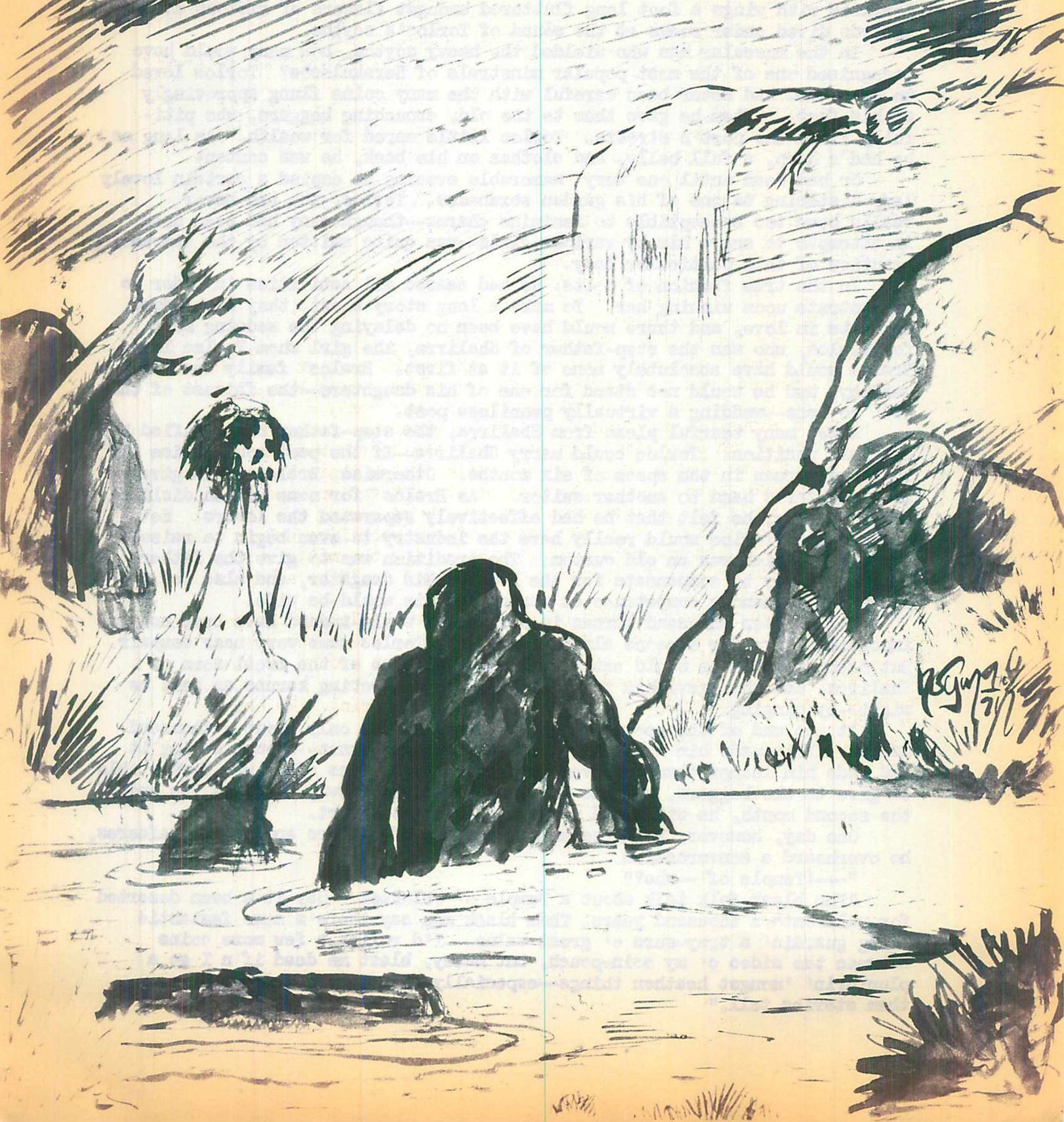
Mark Montchalin
9870 SE City View Drive
Portland, Oregon 97266

The infrequency of or publication of Endeavor has given me one disadvantage in answering this letter. It is now so long ago that I drew/wrote "Evolution" that I don't remember just what I put in the plot in all cases. But the plot did depend upon a man who thought, at least, that he was going to save Earth from its faults. But even though it was 'only a comic strip' I still needed a plausible motivation for him to undertake such an action. Miguel de Cervantes, in Don Quixote (In some ways similar; he went out into the world to cure its woes as a knight-errant, even though there had been no knight-errant in over 300 years) used paranoia as the motivation, and so did I, though in the case of Evolution it wasn't as obvious. My reasoning was that no one will do something "galent" that requires great personal sacrifice unless there's something in it for him, or unless there's something the matter with him. "I'll make mankind better if I have to destroy it!" would be a way of summing up the protagonist's philosophy.

I try to avoid the use of BEMs unless they are absolutely necessary to the plot. The mutation of the human was required to place the protagonist and friend in suspended animation to allow a sufficient amount of time to pass for the evolution of the seasawed to occur. I added the part about it being a mutated human for a bit of irony to keep it from seeming like nothing more than a BEM.

We would very much like to get more contributors, but it isn't so easily accomplished.

THE SENTINEL IN THE SWAMP



THE SENTINEL IN THE SWAMP

Written and Illustrated by Dale Nelson

Torloc hacked his way through the fibrous green stalks of the plants that impeded his way. Sweat glistened all over his sun-bronzed body, which was naked save for a short leather kilt, and high-topped boots. Around him colorful birds swooped in and out of the lush jungle vegetation. Butterflies with wings a foot long fluttered amongst flowers of riotous colors. Lizards dived under rocks at the sound of Torloc's scythe.

In the muscular man who wielded the heavy scythe, how many would have recognized one of the most popular minstrels of Herakuloses? Torloc loved to sing, and had never been careful with the many coins flung approvingly at his feet. Often he gave them to the old, crouching beggars, who pitifully lined the port's streets. Torloc little cared for wealth. As long as he had a harp, a full belly, and clothes on his back, he was content.

Or had been until one very memorable evening he espied a certain lovely lady listening to one of his garden serenades. Torloc, who had never really been too susceptible to feminine charms--though many had been used in attempts to snare him by various girls--was quite smitten by the entrancing beauties of this particular lady.

In the true fashion of poets, he had ceased all activities in order to concentrate upon winning her. To make a long story short, they both ended up quite in love, and there would have been no delaying the wedding save for Bralos, who was the step-father of Shalirra, the girl whom Torloc loved. Bralos would have absolutely none of it at first. Bralos' family was very wealthy, and he would not stand for one of his daughters--the fairest of the lot, no less--wedding a virtually penniless poet.

After many tearful pleas from Shalirra, the step-father had modified his original position. Torloc could marry Shalirra--if the poet could raise ten thousand karnas in the space of six months. Otherwise, Bralos would give his daughter's hand to another suitor. As Bralos for some reason disliked Torloc anyway, he felt that he had effectively separated the lovers. He doubted that Torloc would really have the industry to even begin to raise the money, which was an old custom. The tradition was to give the father a sum of money to compensate for the loss of his daughter, and also to prove the husband's competence at caring for his would-be wife.

Raising ten thousand karnas in six months would indeed have been nearly impossible save for someone already rich, and Torloc came very near despair. But occasionally he would catch a fleeting glimpse of the sweet form of Shalirra, and this gave him the will to go on collecting karnas as best he might--by singing.

At the end of the second month, however, he had only about a thousand karnas. This made him wealthier than the average person--though saving it had made him leaner than the average person, too. Less often was Torloc able to give to the beggars, who knew why and loved him anyway. Yet at the end of the second month, he still had nowhere near a good start.

One day, however, as he serenaded a group of sailors and other seafarers, he overheard a conversation.

"--'Temple of'--who?"

"The black folk talk about a Temple o' Talaktek. Say it's been deserted for well onto a thousand years. Them black men say there's some fantastic thing guardin' a tray-sure o' great value. I'd relish a few more coins between the sides o' my coin-pouch, but matey, blast me dead if'n I go a plun'drin' 'mongst heathen things--especially when they's guarded like them stories tell."

"Aye, but think of't. 'Twould be a blasted good thing ter be rich an' get out from under the lash. I've rowed enough in the past few months ter last me to the end o' my days."

"Ye can go after heathen jools if ye want. But blast me if I'm going to go with ye."

Torloc heard this with eager attentiveness. After his performance was over, he accosted the two whose conversation he had followed.

"I am willing to go with you after the wealth in the Temple of Teloktek, if you will have me. I am not weak, and my songs might be pleasant after a day's trek."

They had looked at him in surprise at first, but after some while it was decided that both sailors, and Torloc, would make the voyage to the city of Issulander across the Sea, and from there travel into the jungle in search of Teloktek's Temple.

Torloc's karnas were sufficient to get them there and buy provisions. So some two weeks later, they began their journey into the great jungle in search of the deserted temple.

Disaster came quickly. One of the sailors, a man by the name of Iarnak, was bitten by a deadly snake only the second day into the jungle. Within a matter of a few hours he died, leaving only Torloc, the other sailor, whose name was Reiborn, and a native who had agreed to guide them to within a few miles of the temple. Beyond that he was terrified to go, for he believed the tales of the hideous Guardian, who was reputed to have the same form as Teloktek himself!

Hot, steamy days blurred together. Several weeks passed. One day the native had announced that another three days' journey would bring them to their goal. And on that day, disaster fell again.

From the masses of foliage all around them suddenly burst naked savages, whose filed teeth proclaimed them to be cannibals. Their native guide had screamed and turned to run, but a cannibal spear was flung with such force that it went completely through his back, emerging, red-stained, through his belly. Reiborn had drawn his sword and cut down several of the howling killers when an arrow suddenly appeared, quivering, in his left temple. Torloc had run, zig-zag, into the depths of the jungle. The bloodthirsty cannibals had followed him, but after two days had come uncomfortably close to the ruins of the temple. There they had left him to his fate.

Torloc paused, the sweat running in rivulets down his back. He rubbed a brown hand across his brow and leaned on the scythe. For four days since the cannibals had left him he had hacked on into the jungle. But their guide had predicted only three more days of trekking. Torloc wondered if he were lost.

That night he built himself a little platform high in the branches of a tall tree, as the native guide had taught him to do. His body ached with weariness, but to this he had become quite accustomed.

He could not sleep. Doubts assailed him--he knew if he were lost he was doomed. Never would he sing to smiling crowds; never would he watch the slow sunset over the high towers of Herakuloses. And worse yet, never would he see Shalitra again!

After a while he rose, realizing that his tossing and turning would not help him a snap--and might also pitch him over the edge of the platform to death twenty feet below. He walked about on the platform, studying the weird beauty of the jungle as a huge tropical moon blazed on it--and suddenly his gaze was riveted to a strangely gleaming structure.

It had to be the Temple of Teloktek! Yes, it had to be; he could make out the central dome, the high slender towers, and the pillars at its entrance. Jungle foliage ran riot over the marble walls, but it was obviously intact--a true monument to whatever race had reared it.

After a quick breakfast on the platform, Torloc scrambled down the tree, going from limb to limb, and finally slid on the ground. He was unsurprised to find the spoon of a great beast beneath his tree, for he had sensed the presence of the killer when he had seen great glowing eyes below. There had also been roars of the great cats, both near to him and further away.

Torloc struck out in the direction of the Temple. Already it was hot; the dew that had fallen during the night steamed. Insects buzzed and hummed. There was, as usual, very little movement in the air.

Soon Torloc became aware that the number of insects had increased--clouds of irritating gnats hovered above the tall grass. Torloc realized that he was on the edge of a marsh or swamp. It would be better to circle around than risk the dangers of quicksand.

He managed to pick a way through tall rushes, and through the hedges of grass he could occasionally glimpse a large mass of mud and water. It would indeed have been folly to try to cross them. He heard a snap; a rotten limb had fallen from an overhanging tree. It slowly disappeared into the quicksand. Torloc shuddered.

Several times Torloc slipped in the slick mud which formed his path--a path which, though a thousand times better than trying to plow through quicksand, was still equipped with its own pitfalls. Torloc rapidly became muddy, and made a great deal of noise with his surges. Once he tripped on his sword, somehow, and was pitched into a thorny bush. There was a great deal of noise as he struggled to get out--birds hiding in the tall grass leaped up and fluttered away over the swamp. If there was indeed a living guardian, Torloc reflected that it must be well aware of his presence by now.

Torloc was very fortunate that his next fall was backwards. When he rose, he saw in front of him a cunningly concealed trap--a row of ugly metal spikes. The spikes were barbed. It would have been virtually impossible to get free--at least without ripping his feet into ruins.

He jumped over them, every leg-muscle straining. He made it, but realized that it was good that he had made that giant leap--for there was more than one set of spikes.

He continued on, sweating now not only because of the sun and his exertions, but because he realized that those who had been here had left fiendish traps--and that he would have to be doubly alert.

Covering a few feet was a process taking several minutes. The brush was now laden with Death. There was a crossbow which was tripped by an all-but-invisible wire; a hole over which rotten planks lay, and at the bottom of which were the skeletons of fanged snakes. There was a complicated trap involving a noose which would have jerked him into the air--

--and more. Torloc began to sicken of the many sadistic forms of death around him. His stomach felt knotted; his temples ached.

But he began to get more frequent glimpses of the temple through occasional breaks in the grass. It was immense, covered with vines. Though apparently deserted, a feeling of danger lurked over it and around it; Torloc fancied that he smelled the odor of a charnel-house.

Suddenly he emerged from the grass. The ground was paved with marble (which was frequently covered with moss). Only a few hundred feet from him the Temple of Telortek waited, like a crushing, brooding thing.

Nervous as he had been crossing the death-haunted stretch of grass, Torloc was even more anxious crossing that broad, even space. He came closer to turning back than ever before. But he fingered a ring Shalitra had given him as a token of love, and thought of her soft eyes

glowing in a sun's setting. He strode on.

Nothing greeted him save silence. He began to relax a little. Maybe all the obstacles had been passed. He licked his lips and smiled a little, and walked on somewhat less hesitantly.

An ear-splitting screech from the jungle rocketed through the heavy air. The birds, screaming, rose from the tall grasses in a frenetically-fluttering cloud.

Torloc sucked air into his lungs. That was not an animal scream. It did not really sound human, either...

Had one of the cannibals followed him all this way after all, and as fallen into one of the traps? Or could it be--something--else?

Torloc stood still for a few minutes, waiting. But there were no more sounds from the jungle--unless maybe the sound of crackling grass--perhaps the birds settling down again.

Torloc walked on. He came to the broad steps that led into the Temple. What lay beyond that portal? he wondered. Treasure for one thing. Death might also lurk there.

He hesitantly stepped on the first step. It was firm. And why shouldn't it be firm, anyway?

He walked up the next few. Then he came to the broad floor which led to the portal. Beyond it the shadows clustered thickly.

He stood there still for a few minutes. Then he thought with a shudder that it would not do to be caught inside the temple when night fell. And it was late afternoon already. The tropical sun lay close to the western hills, a swollen red disk.

He walked into the Temple of Telektek, which had lain deserted--or had it?--for thousands of years.

Despite the fact that the portal was open and the wind had had free access to the interior of the structure, it still had a faint odor, as of mustiness--or something else.

The portal was a square of light behind him. Ahead was sheer blackness. Torloc groped about, touched a heap that might have been a piece of rotted furniture. He found a thick, dry piece of wood. He made fire and lit the torch. The shadows leaped back.

Torloc beheld a huge vaulted room. Shreds of moulded curtains hung from a sagging rods. Heaps lay about that once might have been furnishings. Ornately-carved statues had toppled over; some were cracked and lay in shards.

It was not a lovely scene, but Torloc saw with relief that no living creature seemed to be there, nor had any apparently occupied the structure in years. There were no telltale droppings, or the bits of sticks and such that animals usually create nests with. No, there weren't even any bats.

Torloc suddenly thought that it was abnormal for animals to have avoided the place. There should at least have been bats. But--

Explorations revealed no treasure. Torloc began to wonder if it had not been plundered after all, perhaps by sailors who did not believe the old legends. It could not have been plundered by the natives, for they were genuinely terrified of the place, even the vicious cannibals.

Torloc was about to give up and leave before it became too dark, when he noticed a small doorway he had not recalled seeing before. He walked toward it. It opened on a narrow, misty corridor, down which Torloc proceeded.

The corridor had several branches. The first led to what had apparently been a sleeping-chamber. This was true of the next, and also with the next. Torloc wondered if all of the rooms would turn out to be of this nature.

The last room, however, was not a sleeping-chamber. It was larger than usual, with a multitude of boxes lying about. Some were opened and quite empty. Others had not been opened; Torloc hoped that these would contain treasure.

An iron bar, which apparently had been a bar for a door-latch lay on the dusty floor. Torloc took it and began to beat on one of the chests. After a good five minutes' beating, the lock was shattered. Torloc opened the box eagerly.

An assortment of sundry items were laid to view. There was a jewel-studded hair clip, a thin golden circlet, a heavy silver armband, many rings with precious stones crusted in them, and much more. Yes--a treasure!

Torloc had brought a sack. Into this he dropped the most valuable-looking items.

Suddenly his nape hairs prickled, for he distinctly heard the sound of something moving in the temple. He stood still, his hand at his sword. The sound--like scuffling feet--continued. A sort of dripping sound was also audible. Torloc swallowed nervously and drew his blade.

Suddenly a form appeared in the doorway. Torloc gasped in fright, for the thing was a nightmare come alive!

Its flesh was caked with dripping mud and grass, but where the flesh showed it was sickly white, with thin grey veins visible through the nearly-transparent skin. Its form was basically human, but still--horrifying.

The slight differences between it and a human gave it its horror. There were no eyes. Huge, flaring nostrils gaped moistly. The lipless mouth constantly opened and closed. The head was equipped with short, stubby horns.

Now it advanced slowly, its taloned fingers flexing and unflexing. Torloc stood frozen with fright for a moment. Then he leaped in, sword swinging viciously. The blade struck the monster's repulsive hide and glanced off without making even a slight wound.

Torloc hissed. The monster continued his advance without even breaking stride.

Torloc swung the blade again, this time striking the hideous face where the eyes would have been. The monster staggered back, but no sound escaped its grotesque lips.

The poet leaned back, panting. The monster was coming on again, beginning to rise.

Torloc stabbed again. The blade snapped. The monster swung clumsily but viciously, and Torloc went sailing into a heap of chests, back bruised.

The monster's hot breath fanned Torloc's face; its iron-like hold unfolded him. Torloc suddenly felt a wave of hatred overcome his fear for a moment as he thought of Shelirra. With a supreme effort, he unrenched free and seized a chest. Using every iota of power in his back, arms and shoulders, he hurled the chest.

It smashed full into the monster's chest, knocking it over. Yet as

soon as it had fallen, the monster began to rise. Torlos took advantage of its lapse and ran past it into the main room of the temple. Yet here he hesitated--to run into the jungle might save him from the monster, but there was always the danger of the traps. And he would be leaving the treasure--for he had not had time to collect much. And thus, he'd be abandoning Shalira--

He looked about for some sort of object with which to fight the monster. The wood would shatter easily; yet he saw no weapons.

The monster appeared, this time running--running in such a way as to block Torlos's exit through the portal. The heart neared him. In desperation, Torlos seized the nearest thing at hand--the idol which apparently had been worshipped in the temple. It was quite heavy, and had some sharp edges. It seemed to be made of denser material than his sword had been. Maybe--

Torlos hurled the idol with all his might at the monster, who had slowed when it had "seen" the idol.

There was a creaking noise and a flash. The building shook; Torlos was thrown off his feet. As he fell he saw that the monster had vanished; only smoke remained. Then Torlo's head smashed the floor and he blacked out.

He awoke, to find himself still in the temple, lying near the portal. The great walls had creaked, the floor was heaved up. Torlos heard a grating sound, and wonderingly staggered out.

And wall for him that he did. Suddenly there was a terrible roar as the entire structure caved in. Then the rumbling ceased, leaving colossal ruins.

Evidently the idol has been the "key" to the magic. When it had been destroyed by shattering on the beast, the spell, which had kept the Temple from crumbling from age, had been ended.

Torlos realized without warning that he only had the riches he'd managed to gather before the advent of the monster. He knew they would not suffice for their purpose...

In the clearing before the Temple, he looked over the jewels he had managed to save. Yes, he was wealthy--but not wealthy enough. After paying for passage over the sea, he estimated he'd only have six or a even of the required ten thousand karnas he needed.

Maybe Bralos would be pleased enough, after he learned through what perils the poet had passed. Maybe Shalira's cruel stepfather would accept their pleas. But Torlos feared that it would prove otherwise.

Wearily, he turned and walked into the jungle.

After weeks of travelling, he finally came to Issulander. There he had to wait two weeks for the next ship for Herakulceas; but eventually it came.

The voyage was miserable, except when he sang. This helped his mind dwell on something other than his beloved for a while. But when not thus busied, he dreamed of her for hours. She had been beautiful when he left, but now her beauty seemed even greater due to the long time he had been without her.

Several days later the ship was anchored in the port of Herakulceas. Torlos ran down the gangplank as the sun sank, now dressed in an "acceptable" manner, carrying his haxp and sack of wealth. He headed for an inn, where he sang as never before, long into the night. And when this was over,

he slept, filled with dreams of a predictable sort.

Morning came, and Torloc broke his fast, then went to the house of Bralos. Soon he would ask—if need be, plead—for Shalirra's hand.

Soon he came to Bralos' house, and was ushered into the man's presence. Bralos scowled blackly, but Shalirra ran forward and threw her arms around the poet's neck.

Torloc was quite comfortable, and in no hurry to disengage Shalirra's arms, but he did anyway, and spoke.

"Your Lordship, I have returned from perilous travels to again ask the hand of thy step-daughter in marriage. I have won a fortune, which will, I hope, be sufficient to compensate you for her loss, and to show that I am indeed capable of caring for her as she deserves."

Bralos scowled even more. "Show me the riches. If there's not enough, she'll wed Nalmar's son Felmin tomorrow's eve."

Bralos counted out the gems and gold and silver. His eyes lighted up with greed, but after he was through, he turned and said emphatically, "Not enough. My daughter shall wed Ferrin, whether she will or no."

Shalirra sobbed and again embraced Torloc, who did not move.

"Leave, poet. You have lost her!"

Torloc did not move.

"Curse you, leave my house!"

Torloc still stood waveringly.

Bralos swore and leaped up. He pushed Shalirra away and grasped Torloc's shoulders.

"Leave, lest I have the guards throw you out!"

Torloc took each of Bralos' arms and easily removed them from his shoulders. Then, calmly, he held Bralos' collar in his left hand, and with his right swung—ones.

Bralos tumbled to the floor like a pile of bricks.

Torloc said coolly, "There is quite enough money there to compensate you, and Shalirra will never go hungry. I ask you again: may I have the hand of your step-daughter in marriage?"

Bralos' eyes bulged. Thickly he whispered, "Y-yes. I-I do give thee the hand of my d-daughter, Shalirra, in a-marriage. M-may y-your d-days be long and p-p-prosperous!"

And that very evening they were wed.

Some time later, Shalirra asked Torloc, "Why did you not do that before? Bralos' would have given me to you even if you had only a little money, for all know he is a great coward."

Torloc smiled wistfully. "I-I didn't think of that."

She smiled and kissed him. "I suppose it is like you to do things the hard way. But then, one can't expect poets to be practical."

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

By Dale Nelson and Kurt Brichsen

Due to the fact that response to the Editorial Privilege column has been poor, this is the last column of that nature that we anticipate doing. Kurt Brichsen will be doing a Productional which will appear at the end of each issue, but the Privilege column is dead, unless perhaps readers miss them enough.

We have created a new set of rules for contributors (see Productional). These have been carefully thought out, and while they may cause somebody some inconvenience, we assure you that they are all quite justified by our set of circumstances. We heartily encourage contributions but certain rules have to be followed.

This issue marks, incidentally, one year of successful publishing for Anacraon Publications. To mark the occasion, we have assembled a SKETCH BOOK, which is now on sale. The SKETCH BOOK is an interesting collection of odds and ends, including stories, sketches, partially-completed strips, and other such things.

Our letters pages will be combined starting next issue. This is in an attempt to give ENDEAVOR a more unified appearance, which in turn hopefully will give us a more professional, streamlined look. You see, we are now in the process of "smoothing off the rough edges." We feel we are now doing basically what we want to, but there are things yet to be dealt with.

Thanks to all who helped make this a truly memorable 12 months.

Dale Nelson
Kurt Brichsen

Kurt Brichsen and Dale Nelson
The Editors

8/17/71

AN OPEN LETTER TO ENDEAVOR READERS:

Dear Reader:

Your support for ENDEAVOR Magazine has given us the courage to try a new publication—a brand-new idea.

In a short time, Anacreon Publications will be releasing a new line of magazines—The ANACREON SPECIALS.

These will feature stories that occupy the entire magazine—yes, a book-length story. Some of these will be in comic form; others will be in standard text format.

The first will be Dale Nelson's —page long comic strip, The Fortress of Dreams, which appeared as a serial in the fanzine CYMBOL. The Fortress of Dreams will be released in a few months, barring unforeseen developments.

And after this? If the first book is a success, there will be more. Eventually the Specials may appear on a quarterly basis, or twice a year. There will be stories by Dale Nelson and Kurt Erichsen, and perhaps a few collaborations. An anthology may appear occasionally, consisting of THE BEST FROM ENDEAVOR.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

(A) Each and every SPECIAL will be announced in the pages of ENDEAVOR Magazine, with pertinent information.

(B) The magazines will vary in length, but all will probably exceed 20 pages.

(C) The price will be determined by the number of pages. However, the average price will probably be in the neighborhood of 50¢.


(D) There, of course, will be no subscriptions.

(E) Letters of comment will be appreciated, but will be printed in ENDEAVOR Magazine, not the SPECIALS.

(F) The contents will be as follows: Cover (illustrated), title page, introduction by the author(s), table of contents, the main body of the story, and perhaps an afterword with an announcement of what the next SPECIAL will be about. There will also be a back cover. Both covers will be on heavy cardstock paper. The binding will be done by the same method as used on ENDEAVOR Magazine.

(G) The SPECIALS will have a very limited print run. If the demand for further printings is sufficient, though, there will indeed be new printings.

We would appreciate any comments you might have in regard to this project. The most interesting of these will be printed in ENDEAVOR. Please let us know if you are interested.


Dale Nelson & Kurt Erichsen
Anacreon Publications
August, 1971

GARBAGE

By Kurt Erichsen

Edward Facharn was one of the most contemptible, corrupted men I've ever known. He even took pride in that fact. I couldn't stand to be near him, but it was my misfortune to have a job that required me to be within a hundred yards of him day and night.

You see, as soon as I got out of college I thought I was pretty smart and I was going to go out and become rich. Unfortunately, there was little demand for someone with a PhD in psychological behavior of the *Cichlasoma Severum*, and after a few months of unemployment I was forced to take a job that my great aunt Bertha had all lined up for me before I went into post-graduate studies.

As I was saying, Facharn was our Regional Representative in Des Moines, and over the years he managed to acquire quite a large amount of power.

I was working one day emptying nuclear waste canisters into a large tank that would be taken a couple miles out of town to the launching pad. Another election was coming up and Facharn was losing. At that time I wasn't familiar with the part of Facharn's record that the public hadn't seen, and he came wandering around the assembly building. Well, I'd been there every day for over two years but had never met one of the Representatives. I must admit that seeing him walk up to me of all people was somewhat of a thrill. A garbageman!

He asked me to handle a campaign center on the east side of town, and there was nothing I wanted more at the time.

Well, a couple more months passed by, and in that time I was only working at the assembly building on weekends or on days that I got off work early at the campaign center.

By the time the election was only a couple weeks away I had risen to the top of the ranks at the center. I didn't have the slightest notion why the promotions came so fast, but with the new enlarged paychecks coming in, I wasn't complaining.

In a way, it was my own fault, being somewhat naïve. There did seem something strange about the way that people keep moving out of town without any notice or even coming back for any of their stuff. I tried to contact a couple of them, but it would have been easier to find someone who was dead.

Of course I never did find out what happened to a single one of them. As near as I can guess, they learned too much and tried to get out. He got them out of any connection they had with him alright; and also any connection they had with life.

I may have been naïve, but I wasn't stupid. I too found some of his records that didn't prove anything, but they hinted strongly at what I had already suspected. Things started to get sticky then. I never did or said anything that might hint what I had found out. I could quit or move; no telling what connections his friends had.

The election came and I was feeling pretty miserable. Especially when I heard the results. When he hired me to work on the East Precinct he figured that he had about 43 percent of the vote. And the results showed him getting 91 percent and winning by a comfortable margin. I miserably thought that he would have lost if not for those extra votes.

Facharn saw it that way, and he pictured me as the only one in the precinct who had enough guts to face up to the opposition and stick with him. Instead of going back to garbage flights full time, I found myself making about five times more money than I ever had before in my life and hating every minute of it as his public relations man.

I couldn't say too surely just how many votes I was responsible for in that election. (besides my own. I was afraid to vote against him. He might have someone hiding in the ballot box seeing how everyone voted.)

But I know how much I had to do with elections after that. His popularity was fading and he needed someone like me. For the next four elections I got countless

votes for him. Over those twelve years I grew to dispise him more and more. Another thing that grew within me was the realization that I must do something about it.

By then I had complete access to any of his records, legal or not. He figured that I was in it almost as deep as he was. Well, Maybe he was right. Usually when he gave me an order, he didn't care how it was done. Whenever he told me that, he was saying that I could go ahead and do something against the law, and it was fine with him. In fact, he was hoping that I would do something illegal so that he could hold it over my head and keep me loyal by blackmail. I hate to admit it even to myself, but it worked.

I'm responsible for the "elimination" of several of his opponets. I tried to do everything I could to keep it from happening; Each time I went to the intended victim and I told him that I was told by Facharn to get rid of him, and that if I didn't I'd be the first victim, and Facharn would eliminate him anyway. I didn't want it to sound like blackmail, but no matter what one calls it, it usually worked. And the would be victims mysteriously disapeared, and Facharn congratulated me on a job well done. I was just glad that I hadn't had to kill them.

But unfortunately, there were those who merely laughed and bravely opposed me. And in those cases I found it hard to smile through Facharn's congratulations.

This August's elections are only now a month gone by and only now are things starting to quiet down.

As usual, the elstions started with Facharn far ahead of his opponent this time, J. Morgan Johnson. One of the reasons that he became Facharn's opponent was because, as usual, Facharn had eliminated or discouraged everyone else that might run, and had convinced prominent and rich men to offer their support to him.

Facharn always did everything he could to make it look an election, even though the one he chose to run against him was always someone he was sure was very weak. I suppose that it was inevitable that he would make a mistake in his choice sooner or later; Johnson was that mistake. He had known was Facharn was up to, and knew that if he acted in just the right way that Facharn would choose him to run against him. Facharn chose him and Johnson immediately showed that he knew all the tricks.

First Johnson pointed out in public that several of Facharn's employees were warning more than Facharn himself was. He also proved that Facharn was spending far more than his expense account allowed. And Johnson continued. For the first two and a half months Johnson did little more than point out some of the things that Facharn was getting away with.

Then on my day off I took a train out to a small town, about 75 miles from Des Moines. I went to Johnson's campaign center there and made a sizable donation; I wanted to make sure that I would be noticed. I left my "name" with my correct address, and headed back to Des Moines.

Johnson knew who lived at that address. I had suspected that he had had my place bugged for some time. He came at about 2 A.M.. Johnson knocked inconspicuously and I opened the door for him.

He entered quietly and said, " That was a clever way of contacting me."

I mumbled a hasty thanks and said, "I'd like some help in getting out of an unpleasent situation."

"I figured that much. You've been Facharn's whipping boy for a long time. And in return?"

"I could make sure that you win the election. Facharn may have been using me all this time, but over the years I have developed the talent of getting votes. The first step is to get Facharn out of office, and then we can start to get rid of him altogether."

"Another dissapearance, you mean?"

"No. I'm not going that way again. By getting him out of office he should lose most of his power and influence. Then I can start gathering evidence and let the government get him. Then maybe I can start to live something like a normal life."

Johnson glanced around the room hinting, 'ask me to sit down'. He didn't

believe that I was going to try to get Facharn legally. He figured that I'd try the simpler way.

Since most men would have used the simpler way, I can see why Johnson got as far as he did. But I was determined not to have anyone hold something like that over my head ever again. And with Facharn out of the way, all the proof of what I did earlier would be gone forever.

I began bargaining. "I suggest that we find some more private spot for meetings, and arrange our strategy. I can make moves that will seem ingenious to Facharn, but if you use them just right, you can turn them against him completely. If we do it just right, he'll never suspect anything."

Facharn never suspected anything, and for the first time in many years it seemed that things were finally starting to go right. The election came, and Johnson won. It was close, but he won. I went into Facharn's office the next day after practicing a disappointed look and found him completely drunk.

Yes, Facharn drank, but never anything like this. It must have been a rough night for him. Carelessly discarded on the floor was a small plastic bottle. The kind pills come in. A prescription. The name of the drug that had been inside was written on the prescription slip. It seemed familiar. After trying to recall my college chemistry for a few minutes that it was a type of barbiturate. There's no telling how many pills there had been in there, but he'd taken them all. And that was even more dangerous with alcohol.

I cleaned all marks of my recent presence of my having been in the room recently and left the building.

The next day the paper noted that Facharn had poisoned himself.

I'd saved up a substantial amount of money over the years, but I still had to work, and I found myself in the same dilemma I had 13 years ago. I did my best to find some politician who didn't have a campaign manager that was good, but I just couldn't find one. It was humiliating. Eventually I realized that the only job at which I could say that I had any experience was working on the garbage flight. Everything by then was running on atomic power, and though they used it as efficiently as they could, there was still a certain amount of radioactive waste left. This was automatically emptied into lead-lined containers which were picked up on regular intervals, and emptied into a large container in a rocket, and compressed. When it was up to capacity, the rocket was launched straight for the sun. When it was between Mercury and the sun, it sprayed the material into space and the rocket returned to earth. The waste was absorbed into the sun.

I didn't like it, but I did go back to my old job there. Just as it seemed that things weren't really so bad, a rumor reached my ears about some unexplained figures in Johnson's expense account. The first time I'd worked at the garbage base I would have thought that someone had done that to Johnson just to try to get even with him or something, but by that time I'd worked with Facharn too long to even wonder what was happening.

And so I started using some of the skills I'd developed under Facharn after I got off work. It consisted mainly of burglary, wire tapping and extortion.

Just this morning I entered the D.A.'s office with enough evidence to take Johnson and all his friends out of power this side of twelve hours.

But Johnson's got a bigger organization than Facharn ever had. They couldn't get them all, and they know who turned the evidence in. I doubt they care half as much for another man's revenge as they do for killing and man. Slowly.

I have the satisfaction that these past few months have accomplished something. In his last moments a man likes to know that. An unbelievable number of reforms and new "checks and balances" have been passed, and politicians are just too scared to try anything. It probably won't last more than a few years, but it's something.

From my window I can see Johnson and his friends looking for me. There's no

escape from them for me, but just the same, there's no escape for most of the from the authorities. If Johnson thought there were he wouldn't come here: the first spot where they'd look for him.

The garbage flight will be taking off for its journey to the sun in only a few minutes now. Then Johnson and his men will fade off in the distance below, still wondering how I managed to elude him.

In a few hours he will be in the custody of the authorities.

By then I will have died from radiation poisoning from the waste materials in this rocket.

PRODUCTIONAL:

A SET OF GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS
BY KURT ERICHSEN

By our standards, this issue of Endeavor is extremely late. We would like to put it out at least quarterly if we can, but we will need help. This help must come in the form of contributors. Because of a lack of contributors, this issue consists almost entirely of mater by Dale Nelson and myself. The issue would be better if we had more contributors, but for the time being, we do have requirements/requests for those who would like to contribute. These are no where near as strict as they were a couple months ago.

As I stated in an answer to a letter earlier this issue, Penetration depends upon light (from the printing machine) to pass through the original and properly expose the print paper. The thicker the original, the slower the machine must go. Vellum goes fairly fast, and prints well. Tracing paper is the same is the same in these respects, but its corners have a tendency to crease, as did the originals of the drawings in "Balcheor's Axe", in this issue, which were drawn on 25% cotton fiber typing paper.

With the tracing paper I can make a "master". This is a copy from which other copies can be made, and run at a decent speed, but I cannot make a master from the typing paper, and so I'm afraid that there are copies of these drawings that have bad looking "shadows". Besides this, tracing paper (which runs less than half as fast as tracing paper) takes much longer to print.

Therefore, for the fanzine's sake, and my sanity, I will no longer print artwork not on vellum or tracing paper (or something similar. It must seem fairly translucent when held up to a light) by penetration.

A few months ago, that is where it ended. Now I am able to have thermofaxed masters made, which would be printed on the ditto machine. The printing isn't too bad, but it isn't as good as the penetration. But the only requirement of thermofax is that the original will bend easily. (This is also a requirement of penetration, since the original must go around rollers) Penetration can print half-tones, but thermo fax will print them completely black.

With the use and courtesy of Mark Verheiden's Thumping Thermofaxer, we can now print also anything; now it's just a matter of how the contributor wants it to turn out. If you can't get any tracing paper despite its low price, I'll send some vellum for you to use (within reason) if it will help get contributors.

Of course, if we receive some art that is absolutely fantastic, we will dump all restrictions and actually use offset. (Unless it's on vellum, which makes offset merely expensive. I can make that machine print as well as an off-set machine can if it's got a clear enough original)

Art contributions should be sent to me at 1580 West Myrtle ave, Coos Bay Oregon, 97420.

We have developed a new policy concerning stories. Rough drafts, or ideas should be sent to Dale, who will advise you and let you know whether (After telling me what was sent) you should proceed or not, and if you should go ahead, what changes should be made. Then submit the final, and Dale will edit it (if accepted) and type it onto dittomasters. Do not send in a final draft on ditto-masters.

The reason for this is not because Dale is a better writer than I am, or because I have better artistic tastes than he, but simply because I have all the printing material here, in Coos Bay, with far less time than I'd like to be able to spend on the fanzine. In Ashland, Dale has no way of printing anything (cheaper than I can, at least) and far more time.

Dale, I will stress, has moved, and his address is now Post Office Box #52, still in Ashland, same zip-code. Eventually (I don't know when) he will move again, and he will have yet another address (still in Ashland) but it will be a street-number, I assume. Unless we start moving faster, we will make note of that in our next issue.

In addition to Endeavor #5, we have the specials planned (mentioned earlier) and there are some in the early planning stages that could use contributors.

You should note the absence of strips this issue. I will let Dale make his own announcement (if he wishes) in regards to this, but last issue's "Evolution" is likely to be the last strip that I will do for Endeavor, or anywhere else. Endeavor took several months for me to draw, and since each page was pretty well a full day's work, I could only work on it on weekends when I had no homework.

Further complicating things, I'm afraid I don't have the patience to draw a page and make each drawing carefully, and so most drawings aren't any good. There are two in the entire strip "Evolution" that I consider good, and several pencil ones that would rate "decent".

But if I work on a one page drawing, I know that when I finish the page I won't still have ten more pages to go, and I can do a more careful drawing, particularly in finished pencil.

We have received suggestions that we use more spot illustrations (spotos). Our biggest problem has been printing them so far. It hardly seems worthwhile to use up an entire page just for a small drawing, or else we could devote an entire page to each one. I could print text on a page that already has art print on it, as will be on the contents page if I get the originals in time.

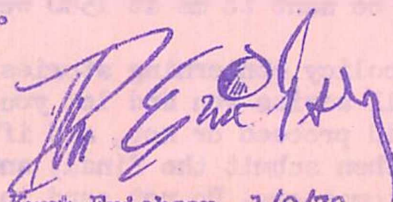
Another way I could print a spoto would be to get a drawing on a ditto master (a small part of one) and tape it onto a master, and outline its area on the other side: type around it.

I would prefer using the latter method. So, to would be contributors: for drawings of a size up 2/3 of a page, send it on a cut-out part of a ditto master, with a space around the drawing itself with no carbon large enough for tape, or a drawing ready to be thermofaxed. I would agree that these would improve the lettercol particularly.

As for strips in the future, we hope to get some scripts (edited as stories) and get someone to pencil it, and Dale to ink it (or perhaps me, if I have time to do a decent job).

We can produce a good fanzine, but we can't do it without the cooperation of our readers. For an accepted contribution, we will send you a complimentary copy of the issue in which your contribution appears. That may not be much, but it's as much as we can offer. If nothing else, we hope you enjoy contributing, and enjoy reading that fanzine.

That is our purpose.



Kurt Erichsen 1/9/72
Art Editor, printer

NEXT ISSUE, BESIDES THE USUAL EDITORIALS AND
OTHER FEATURES, THERE WILL BE NEW ART AND
STORIES. DALE NELSON PRESENTS "ENCOUNTERS:
A WIZARD, A WARRIOR, AND OTHERS." KURT
ERICHSEN PRESENTS SOME NEW TEXT FIC-
TION AND ART, AND OUR CONTRIBUTORS WILL... EH...
CONTRIBUTE! MORE THAN THIS, ALAS, CANNOT BE SAID.

