

(104)

jan - feb

ABSTRACT

the
magazine
of
fantasy





Fascination

a guy can make a lot of goofs in the zine publishing field, as did Tom Piper when he was twelve and put out REASON, but the one who profits by these mistakes will have the better magazine. Such is the case with Tom and his new magazine, FASCINATION.

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c / o Tom Piper
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Here's what they say about "HA!" :

BOOB STEWART: HA! Stinks!
TERRY CARR: This is Humor?
TOM PIPER: "HA!"
LARRY BALINT: "AH!"
RON ELLIK: My Ghod!

Here is the first issue of one of my dreams come true.

For a long time I have been wanting to put out a good, sixteen page, photo-offset magazine that would go over with the fans.

So many times I have seen these so - called big-shot offset or lithoed mags snub the fans and devote the entire magazine to printing professional stories, professional articles, and other material.....all or mostly professional. And then they call themselves fanzines!

This mag will be entirely devoted to fans and Fandom. It will run stories of Science Fiction and Fantasy - mostly good fantasy - written by the best fan - authors. Occasionally, a few articles written by professionals, aimed directly at Fandom and written especially for this magazine will appear in future issues.

I am essentially on the look out for good amateur authors. So, you writers out there, can feel free to send me any of your better manuscripts for publication. You don't have to be a big name author to write for ABSTRACT, just a good one. Sometimes more than once, the two don't go hand in hand!

I realize that I am far from perfect on this, my first issue, and I am open to all constructive criticism that will help me improve. Please let me know how you like it.

Sincerely,

Peter Vorzimer

Abstract Magazine
Volume 1 Number 1

cover by: don howard donnell

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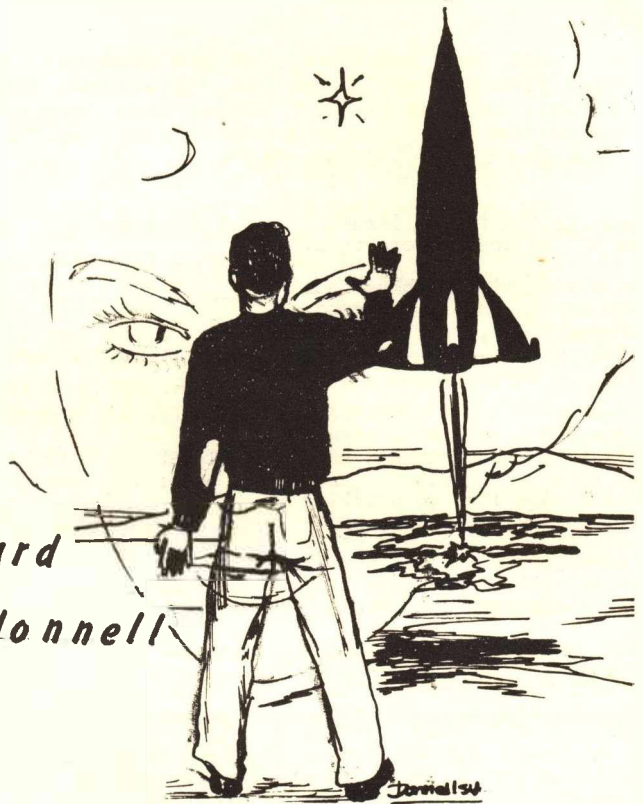
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three

THREE
LOVES
HAD
MICHAEL
don
howard
donnell



As the Editor of two magazines, and the co-editor of two more, I have seen and read a great many stories by a great many authors. In my estimation, Don Howard Donnell is the finest amateur author in Fandom today.

After reading just this first part of this three part serial which is almost a story in itself, I am sure you will agree.

PART ONE - the first love

Somewhere, on a wind-blown plain on a forgotten planet, there is a grave. Silent, unwinking stars stare at the plain mound of alien earth, and at the simple cross and the brief inscription on it.....

THREE LOVES HAD MICHAEL SOMMERFELD

The cold wind would blow and disturb a little of the dust and sweep it in little whirlwinds across the plain under the still silent, still unwinking stars.....

His name was Mike, and his head was way up in the clouds, away from the world and its unpleasant, fun-killing realities. A deep, intense look of wonder came from the depths of his black searching eyes, and his even blacker hair curled down on his forehead lazily, wondering too.

He was pedaling unhurriedly on his racer-bike down the main street of the small town. The traffic was light for it was early in the morning; the chill of a frosted night still clung to the damp streets. The sun was present as an orange glow over the sleepy, smoke-greyed buildings, and only a few of the windows caught and reflected the glow of the new light. He inhaled deeply, the smell of the new day causing a subtle tingling in his chest, the bite of the icy air sending pleasant thoughts of the night last week and the dance at school. It had been cold that night also, with a sharp chill to the air, but he hadn't noticed, he hadn't been cold...

For, after fifteen years of exploring new sensations and situations, the final, inevitable emotion had grasped Michael Sommerfeld.

He had fallen in love.

He smiled, swerving to miss a cat that had run into the street and frozen as it spied Michael's bike, remembering.....



The school couldn't raise enough money to hire a band, so the music for the Riverdale High School dance was supplied by a phonograph and an adequate supply of records. It started slow, as all social events seem to do, but soon was speeding along on its own impetus, and gained enough momentum to continue all night. So far as Michael Sommerfeld was concerned, it could go off a cliff. He sat alone in a dark corner, feeling hurt and mad at the same time. He had a half-empty glass of punch balanced precariously on one knee; his arms were folded across his chest, and he was pouting. Bitterness, even the small amount one could accumulate in fifteen years, was thick in his mouth, and the whole world seemed black to him. The girl he had escorted to the dance had become fascinated with one of his worst enemies, and the rest of the attractive females present were tied up with other specimens of his sex. It was disgusting, he thought as sat there in the near-dark, that

there wasn't enough of the prettier girls to go around.

Of course, he reasoned furiously, one could always ask someone like Martha Kenton for a dance if one could ever overlook buck-teeth and crossed eyes. Freckles he could ignore...

Why did Mary have to go off with that Richard character? His mind turned the question distastefully. The answer wouldn't sooth his hurt ego, so he dismissed the present line of thought and searched for whatever comfort might lie in self-pity.

"Hello, lonesome," said a voice from beside him. It was a soft voice. A pretty voice. A girl's voice. He raised his head slowly, not looking. The voice spoke again.

"What's the matter?" No one to dance with?" It was a gentle, soothing tone and it sounded sincere. Michael was almost afraid to look, expecting a leering, cross-eyed witch to be staring down at him, hiding behind a beautiful voice which he thought could have been mistaken for that of an angel. He summoned courage and looked.

Several things happened.

The punch glass fell off his knee, shattering on the floor and spraying punch all over his pants.

He fell in love.

She laughed.

He felt like a baby. He wanted to die.

"Clumsy," she giggled, and before he realized that she had left, she was back with a napkin to help him clean up. "Here," she said, smiling at him, "this might help." He took it in a daze, hardly noticing his hand closing over the offered napkin. He looked into her eyes. She smiled again. He began to feel embarrassed, and dropped his eyes quickly, sponging off his trousers where the punch had stained them. He finished and surveyed the mess on the floor. He looked up again, right into her eyes.

"I sure did it, didn't I?" was what he said. The words that had come to his lips at first, were unutterable for him. He couldn't say she was beautiful. He couldn't say he loved her. She would laugh.

"Well, let's go into the kitchen and get a mop and a broom I'll help you clean it up. Then we can dance."

Then we can dance! It was all he heard. It was like walking through a thick, unpenetrable fog, walking with her past the shadowy forms of the other couples, (just as oblivious), to the kitchen. She had taken his hand, and was leading him. He was aware only of the contact of his hand with hers, and it sent such a multitude of emotion through him as to leave him utterly confused and at a total loss as to what to say or do.

He had never felt like this before. He was not prepared. He felt foolish and wonderful, sad and happy all at the same time. The fog was still before his eyes, and he felt like he was being hit, alternately, with hot and cold streams of water: he felt as if his brain had suddenly become detached from the rest of his body and was soaring high above, racing a bird in high free spirals at an impossible altitude above the earth.

He knew, now, that love was not a simple thing. Falling into it was not like crossing a street---it was more like crossing the English Channell. That was the way it affected Michael. It might be different for other; it might vary in intensity and severity, but Michael was aware of but one thing, and he was only sure of that one thing; that indeed, it had happened, and to him.

It was like a dream. People seemed to float effortlessly in fantastic positions about him; all sound was absent, and before he was conscious of even the passing of a second, the broken punch glass was cleaned up and she and he were on the dance floor, together, gliding with the now audible--however faint--strains of dance music. She was close to him, and the closeness was unbearable for he thought he would die if she ever parted with him. Her cheek was against his, the warmth pleasant and wonderful, and her hair (he had recovered sufficiently to notice it) was flaming red like an autumn sunset on one of those days that were slow and reluctant to die. What color were her eyes? He moved his head, slightly, and looked at her face. Her eyes were closed, and her gentle breathing was a faint heaving against his chest and a sighing that seemed almost imaginary. Her small, beautifully shaped, body was close against him, each contour fitting exactly into each curve of his own---they moved in time to the music, knowing nothing but each other. She opened her eyes.

Her eyes were green.

Her eyebrow raised in a question. He smiled and they were cheek to cheek again, even closer and more intimate with each other. He realized that they knew not even each other's names. He maneuvered her to an exit, and they were outside in the chill air of a late fall night. They danced for awhile, not realizing, they were alone with only the stars watching and the wind through the trees far off for music. Lips touched---and then they parted.

"What's your name?" asked Michael. He took her hand.

"Angelia. Angelia Morrison."

"Mine's Michael. Call me Mike--everyone does."

"Okay, Mike."

"What grade are you in, Angelia?"

"B-11."

"I'm only an A-10."

"So?"

"How come I've never seen you around, Angelia?"

"I don't know. Maybe you never looked."

"I should have."

There was a pause, in which all the mysteries of the world passed before Michael, and in that magic moment, were solved. The universe seemed closer to him than anytime before, and the stars appeared ripe for plucking.

Let's dance again, Mike," murmured Angelia. They were together again, and moved in a slow circle, not loving, not thinking; just dancing, wondering a little of life, and then as the mood of the night settled upon them, holding each other closer. The school buildings and the dark asphalt yard were instantly transformed into a swirling sea of thousands upon thousands of stars moving in a slow, nebulous-like mist, shining in different colors and humming an ancient, forgotten melody as old as themselves.

Then blue, then red, then gold, mist moved to them and surrounded them, being all those colors at once and lifting them upward to a bright green orb of radiant fire which bathed them in a vivid, flickering, emerald luminescence. Angelia's hair was changed like the shards of a million great kaleidoscopes, into all the colors of the rainbow; glittering like fields of diamonds and rubys---her green eyes carved jade in an unremembered idol...

The dream burst---punctured.

"Kids, the dance's over!" It was the janitor, locking up the place for the weekend. Angelia and Michael parted, embarrassed. The janitor winked at them, then went his way. Hand in hand they went out of the yard onto the darkened street. There was no one in sight; the street was deserted and misting with dampness. Angelia shivered.

"It's late," she whispered, shivering. "I'll take you home. Where do you live, Mike?"

"Take me home?"

"Do you have a car?"

"No."

"I do. I'll drop you off. How old are you, Mike?"

Mike bit his lip in the darkness, calculating furiously. She must be sixteen, he reasoned, otherwise she couldn't drive. What would she think if she knew I was younger than she.

"How old are you Mike?" she asked again. He decided to be truthful.

"I'm fifteen," he said, watching her face carefully for her reaction. There was none.

"Well, come on, it's late. Your folks will be worried."

"Didn't you come with anybody?" Michael asked.

"No one asked me... Besides, it's more fun to go--stag..."

She smiled and walked over to a new, expensive car. She fumbled in her purse for the key, found it, inserted it in the lock, the door sliding open easily.

"Nice car you got," Michael commented, a little awed.

"Daddy bought it for me on my birthday." She started the car, and it glided out into the blackness.

eight

She had taken him home and kissed him goodnight. Michael was happy.

Coming back to the present with a start, Michael saw that he was home. He wheeled into the driveway and braked to a stop outside the kitchen door. He leaped off the bike and ran inside, slamming the screen door. His mother called from the living room.

"Mike. Michael! Come here, please. I want you to run an errand for me." Michael walked into the front room.

"Get me some butter---a cube will be fine---and two quarts of milk. Here's the money. You can use the change to buy whatever you want. Okay?"

"Sure, Mom," Michael replied, taking the money and running out the back door. The door slammed. His mother smiled. Michael always slammed the back door.

Michael was pedaling down the street toward the store when he saw Angelia. He was about to call out to her when he noticed the person walking with her.

Richard Marks!

He braked furiously, leaving a little rubber on the pavement. The squeal of his tires brought Angelia and Richard around abruptly.

"Hi Mike," called Richard, disgustingly friendly. "Why're you laying rubber?"

"Hello Mike," Angelia said. "You two know each other?"

"Too well," muttered Michael. "Where're you going?"

Richard said, "Nosy, aren't you?"

"Didn't ask you," said Michael.

"Well I'm answering you," snarled Richard, his fists clenched.

"Boys! Please stop it. Mike, Richard is taking me to a show." The words momentarily stunned Michael.

"Show?"

"Yeah," Richard said belligerently. "Angelia and I are going steady."

"Steady?" asked Mike, bewildered.

"Yes, Mike. Dick asked me this morning.

"But---last night---you...."

"Oh that," laughed Angelia, "I was just having fun with you."

"Fun?"

"Sure. Weren't you doing the same?" Michael paused after hearing this and thought. He understood suddenly. A hot film of moisture formed over his eyes and his stomach seemed to fall out and down a long, unending well.

"Yeah," he said, "I was just having fun, too."

"Okay, now beat it!" Richard snarled at him.

"Alright," said Michael. He turned around and slugged Richard as hard as he could--in the stomach. Then, without looking back, he ran to his bike, kicked up the kick - stand and pedaled furiously away from the scene. When he was a block away, he realized he was crying. Without trying to stop, he continued on to the store. When he arrived, he locked up his bike and he tried to stop crying. The little bitch! -- he thought over and over again. Just having fun! At my expense! Never thought I might be serious, the little bitch! He was bitter. He dried his tears savagely, and walked into the store. He ordered what his mother wanted. Absently he wandered over to the magazine rack still thinking of Angelia, still hurting inside, deep. His eyes fell on a magazine.

It depicted a space-ship blasting against a starred, space background. It intrigued him immediately, almost making him forget about her: Almost.

Its title: Astounding SCIENCE-FICTION.

He picked it up. He opened it. He remembered his mother saying he could buy whatever he wanted.

He bought the book.

That night, after supper, Michael retired early. He still was sad, sad as he could be at fifteen, and it still hurt. But upstairs, in bed, he opened the magazine. He began to read.

It almost made him forget. Almost. He never really would.

He read late into that night.

THIS CONCLUDES THE STORY OF MICHAEL'S FIRST LOVE

don howard donnell

to be continued

SOUTHERN CAL'S NEW APA

The National Amateur Press Association



NAPA Members preparing for the 1st Mailing

1st NAPA Mailing: January 31st, 1954

2nd NAPA Mailing: February 28th, 1954

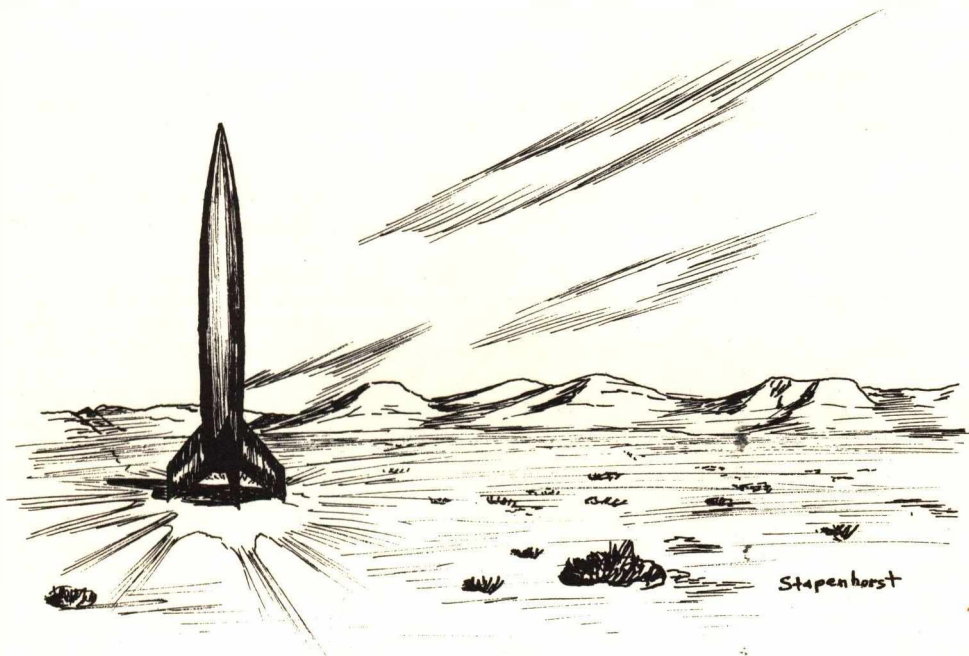
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and more to come...

For information regarding NAPA, write to: Don Howard Donnell
5425 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 29, California or Peter
Vorzimer, 1311 N. Laurel Ave., West Hollywood 46, California



by **MISINTERPRETATION** **TAD DUKE**

This is, actually, one of Tad Duke's first stories. It is also one of his best. With an unusual twist and an appropriate name, it is what I would call "good fantasy." p j v

The hot wind blew with whailing loneliness across the sandy desert. One prominent figure moved unsteadily toward, toward nothing, in no certain direction. He carried a gun in savage delirium, shooting whoever, and whatever interfered in his treadge forward.

A small, mouse-like creature found its dreadful fate when it showed itself in quick motion. It was finished in a moment.

The strange person who moved with tired limbs across the endless sand and the burning sun in a cloudless sky had no mercy he had only a gun and a bone dry canteen. His canteen had been without moisture for nearly three days and nights. The figure had been tabbed as a murderer. He was tried and sentenced to desolate isolation in the never ending desert so hated by all.

His fate was to live as he could. He was allowed a weapon, with which he could kill what food he needed, but his water, the precious liquid so needed by all who live, was limited to a single canteen.

Delirium had overtaken him only a day after his canteen had run dry. He had become, not only as far as his original self, but as a godless murderer now without scruples or reasons.

Sun, that bright orb in the dark blue sky; that cruel master of the so wonderful heavens, that driver of sane men to mad monsters, that watchman of the globes of heaven and the fires of Hell. This same sun had driven this wandering soul to insanity.

His squinting, bloodshot eyes looked skyward. The bright ball in the starspecked sky burned deep in his eyes, causing temporary blindness. It baked down into the sand causing visions to appear in its wake.

Far up, nearly hugging the sun, the same temperate, cruel, wonderful, pure, just, unjust, and responsible sun, that you and I see each day, a small reflective speck bright on one end and afire on the base. It was a ship, an alien ship resembling a silver candle hovering in unsteadiness above the mad wondering being on the hot baked sand.

The ship blasted down and rested with a grinding solidity on the deep, fine sand.

It rested with the sand crackling to crispness from the intense heat. The figure of the huge, sleek ship shadowed over the clean sand like a monster before a thousand—thousand candles.

A few moments passed without any movement. The small speck on the horizon of endless sand stumbled comparatively close to the ship, about a hundred feet. He stopped and crudely dug into the soft sand, partially burying himself.

A panel-like door slid open in the side of the ship. Three huge, wierdly clad beings stood in the inner compartment. Their legs were long and they stood nearly three times taller than the isolated murderer which was up to his knees now, staring blindly at the grotesque "things" in the ship.

Their arms were much shorter, in comparison with their body, than his were. Their heads, which were extraordinarily small, were set in globes of clear, glass-like substance their eyes were tremendously small, and below them was an odd proboscis. They walk in nearly the same manner as the exile did, and walked down the walkway to the sand. They were so heavy and had such ridiculously small feet, they sink down in the sand almost two feet.

Slowly, the mad exile rose to his haunches. He took careful aim at the small group just at the base of the ship. His anger kindled within. His hatred toward his own race for their cruel actions against him, his hurts, his thirst, and that damned monstrous sun. All these kindled his want to kill. His murderous life returned in threefold. His want had to be fulfilled, his mad, warped mind must be satisfied.

There was a blue flash near the base of the ship. A small cloud of white smoke drifted away in the warm, Martian wind. The earthlings, once alive, now lived only in the white drifting smoke, casting a transparent shadow of misunderstanding on the smooth thin martian sand.

The martian exile once again raised his eyes to the blue sky, watching the currents of the thin air rip and pull at the lone squall. His eyes moved about on their six separate tentacles and he carried himself nearer the ship and blasted it a half a dozen times. The nearly-destroyed ship stood alone with the 2 foot creature on the endless red sand. The sun made shadows prominent and lightened the strange writing on the wing.

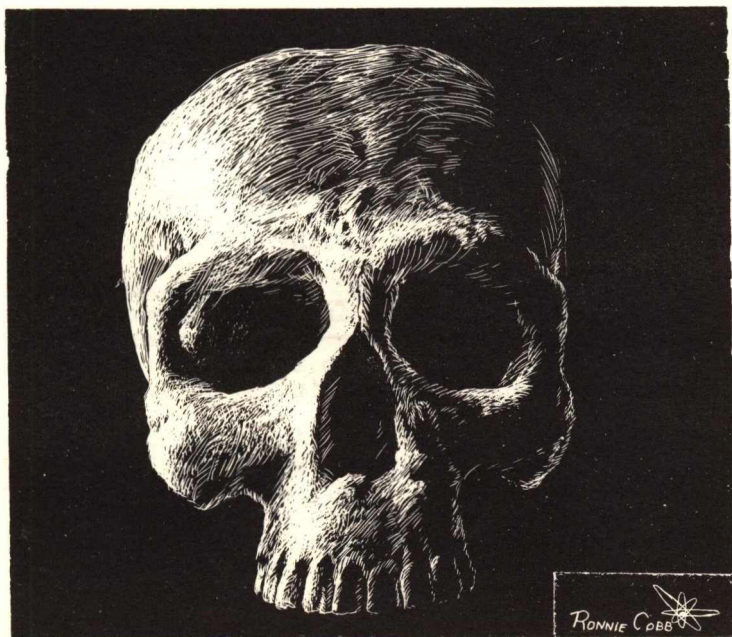
The Martian stood in amazement and question as his brain received the six directional picture.

It read in significance, "U. S. R. F. - X M - 1". The Wind once again blew a warm bath of air over the lone exile, and without pain, his life was silenced. He died. Yes, in wonderment, but, with a fiendish satisfaction.

the end

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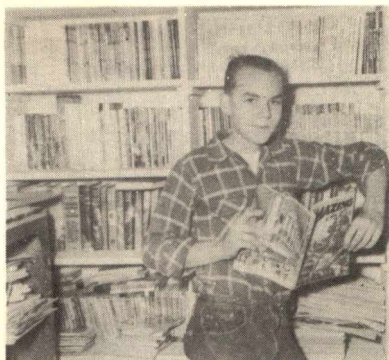
tad duke



FAN FARE

with TOM PIPER

This is the first in a series of autobiographies of Big-Name- Fen. We would like to have you select the people to appear on this page in future issues. All you have to do is write this magazine and state, in a list of three choices, the personalities you'd like most to appear in this feature. We will try our darndest to get them for you, although we can guarantee nothing. For the autobiographies of some of the most famous professionals, read FANTASY SPOTLIGHT in Starlight magazine.



TOM PIPER - FAN-FARE #1

After having existed on this fertile planet for close to a dozen years, I had been just another reader of that dreadful trash called Science-Fiction. My start in fandom came when I picked up the September, 1951 issue of Startling Stories. After reading just the first story, which, in my neo-fannish way, I thought was quite good, I set about writing the editors a letter. When I bought the next issue, there was my letter. I was quite surprised, but not half as surprised as when the threatening letters came in. It seems as though the one story I had read and raved about was supposed to be the worst. I answered all the letters and thereby started a correspondence that I'll regret to my dying day.

In June, 1952, I attended a LA Sci-Fantasy Society meeting at which I had the distinction of being the youngest member. I happened to meet a man by the name of Forry Ackerman there and was invited to his house where I saw just about everything there is to see in the way of SF books and magazines. This is what started the ball rolling.

My biggest goof, REASON, with the neo-fannish tag, "there is a reason for REASON," started in January, 1953, and had the gall to continue for one more putrid issue. I got all sorts of letters after this monstrosity.

In August, 1953, I met the editor of this rag, and we started on another goof called "HA!". This gave me the initiative to start a new mag. Pete gave me the name. FASCINATION. (Walk!, do not run, to the nearest mailbox and drop in your dough for a sub!) Truthfully, I don't see why I was selected for this spot, but oh well,.....WHAT DO YOU MEAN....CARELESSNESS!

T. Zorchfield Piper

are you tired ?

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