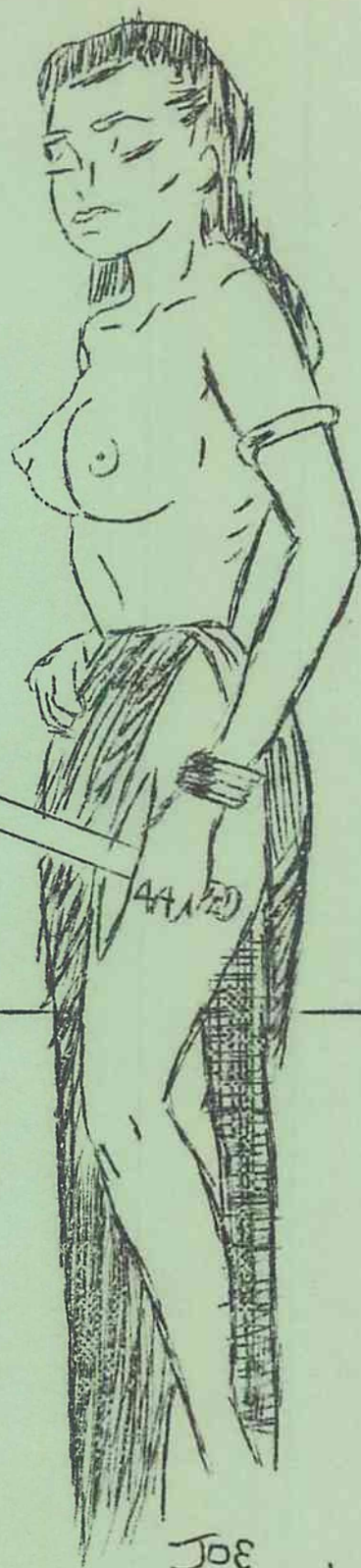
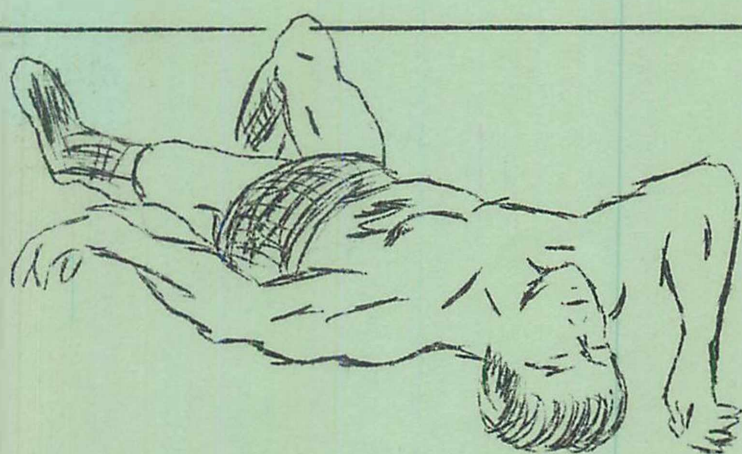


EXCALIBUR  
(5)



JOE  
STATION



# EXCALIBUR

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LEN BAILES  
ARNOLD KATZ

Hearken! This is Excalibur 6, which was once in the dim and murky past known as CURSED. It is published 4 times a year for the Neffer Amateur Press Alliance and genfandom, on the Tower of Power. 25¢ a copy, 5/\$1. Also available for Trade, printed LoC or contribs.

send contribs to:

Len Bailes  
1729 Lansdale Drive  
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14284

note coa,

loc's go to:

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98 Patton Blvd.  
New Hyde Park, N.Y. 11043

this is Fugghead Publication #7



DEEDS OF THE

Hi, goodfen. Welcome to the big sixth issue of the world's most famous illegible genzine. This is our annish, and to celebrate that fact, I have gone out and bought some corflu. Once again, all credit (good or bad) for the layout and stencilling goes to yhos, and credit for dupering goes to Arnie.

It looks like our attempt to make Long Island the fan center of the Universe will be a dismal failure. Due to a switch in my father's job, I am relocating in glorious North Carolina. I'll show all those SFPANS, just you wait. Just think what I'm giving up; No longer will I be able to attend that fabulous focal point of Diplomascists, nuts, and gefiated fans, the ESFA. No longer will I have the pleasure of bombing over to Katz's house for wild oneshots and mimeoing sessions. But above all, gone will be the School duplicating facilities which have so nobly(albeit unintentionally) supplied stencils and paper for at least four issues of this genuine, and several assorted apa zines I've run off for various people. Bawwwl, Sniff, sniff, (choke) Do you realize, people that we are actually going to have to (gasp) spend money on our next issue. Please sub, pretty please with grottled greeps on it. There ain't no danger of our folding our

tent for some time yet, and we are as good as any six issue old  
gen zine has a right to be. You know we have out done every issue  
by 50% with the one right after it. For example, in this issue we  
introduce layout and(hope) legibility. Who knows ~~what will happen~~  
what fantastic innovation will be introduced next time. We don't  
even know yet. We want contriubs too (Arnie can faun ch for them in  
his editorial) but most of all we need money, cash, kale, ~~and the~~  
~~number to call in New York is...~~

As a sort of addenda to the Burroughs article which should be in here somewhere, I thought you might like to know that Dell has come out with a reprint of the John Carter comic book that they first published in 1952. It follows the original Princess of Mars with remarkable fidelity. The most important deviations are the cutting out of several bit characters, and the absence of the Great Riot



Scene in Zodanga. In several spots, the dialogue comes directly from the novel.

After three trial periods, DC has finally decided to give Hawkman his own magazine. That makes four successful revivals of old characters from the JSA( Five, including the conglomerate JUSTICE LEAGUE.

#### THE IDIOT BOX

I suppose most of you have seen the American attempt at a satirical review on TV. It's a lemon, tho I don't see how it could be anything else compared to the satire on the BBC. The several British satires that were imported here, such as WHAT'S GOING ON HERE were riotously funny because they never left the audience a chance to catch its breath. The one that Bob and Ray did on the Ed Sullivan Show was up to the usual Elliot and Goulding standard. TW3 (the american version) fails in that it tries to make the show into a variety hour. This just doesn't go. In addition, the cast can't get nasty, like the Britishers did because we Americans are a lot more sensitive to ridicule. (Probably because we are a lot more ridiculous. I think that the most detrimental facet in the show is the attempt to add Music. Even tho the gags are unfunny when compared to the British attempt, several one liners are ok, and if a steady barrage was kept up the laughter might build up and become contagious. Of course there's also the sponsor problem. NBC doesn't want to say anything nasty about any product which buys ad time from the network, they have allowed several attacks on cigarettes, however.

#### HUGOS

Of the new books written in 1963, to my mind, one stands out over all the rest, THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH by Walter Tevis. To tell you the truth, I didn't care overly much for any of the 1963 crop, but of them, I enjoyed this the most. Tevis's work takes one of the tritest plots in sfdom, the "Alien among us, paving the way for Invasion is gradually assimilated into Earth Culture" and he tells it in what I consider, a very poignant way. The other novels which might give it some competition are SPACE VIKING and ~~GLORY~~ WAY STATION. I have read the expanded forms of neither of these two novels, but judging from the magazine serials, they aren't as good. As far as SPACE VIKING is concerned, John Boardman hit it on the head when he said that some writers use sf as a means to write a lazy man's historical novel without having to look up any dates.

For short fiction, I like NO TRUCE WITH KINGS by Paul Anderson in F&SF. I notice that this year they are giving an award for best publisher. This isn't really a sfnal catagory, but if I had to pick one, I'd pick Pyramid. Of course, if you're a Barrington lover pick either Ace or Canaveral, but I'm not one of them. For best prozine I'd pick FANTASTIC or WORLD'S OF TOMORROW. I'm a confirmed Analogophobe, and neither Galaxy nor the Magazine of Fuggheads and Sultry Fiction have been very outstanding lately. Of course, we could try to get everyone to vote for GAMMA as a gag...

When it comes to best fanzine of 1963, we are unanimously behind that stalwart miser and disliker of huge press runs, Buck Coulson. Just think, if YANDRO cops the hugo, Buck'll be flooded with orders from neofen and have to print up even more copies. Help Drive the



Coulsons out of their minds, vote Yandro best fanzine.

This ish of Excalibur is the stupendous annish, and Ghu willing is also legible. Do you hear that sigh in the background? That's Bruce Pelz fainting with joy at the prospect of no longer having to bind crudzines. Hear the Dull thud? That's Fred Patten, the fearless OE collapsing and going into shock as he opens the package with the 46 N'APA copies and discovers to his surprise that he can read them. Hear the ripping noise? That's 150 copies of Ex being torn to shreds. That's what we get for letting people read our material.

Once again we are in full color. I had a heck of a hard time convincing Arnie to do it because he kept moaning cryptically, "Remember what happened the last time we had colored paper?" This issue is dedicated to Judi Sephton, without whom we might never have gotten into fandom in the first place.

You should have seen the first issue of CURSED. I didn't know how to run a ditto, and as a result, I ran the whole thing off on the slip sheet instead of the master. It was 9 pages typed on one side of the page and double spaced. At any rate, Judi managed to get a copy, and told us about the N3F from which we gradually learned about the existence of genfandom (The N3F doesn't really like to admit that there is a genfandom, but we found out anyway.)

The idea for the thing first came to us in November of 1962. I had just moved to Commack, and was bored out of my skull. Without knowing of fandom's existence I decided to put out a fanzine and asked Arnie if he wanted to contribute. It turned out that he had been thinking along the same lines, so we decided to co-edit one. Not at first being aware of ditto, we at first envisioned a carbon reproduced zine ala CRAP. However since Arnie had no typer, and I have always been exceedingly lazy, I never stopped looking for a way out. I finally found a ditto, and the rest is history. Come the third issue, Arnie got fed up with me not knowing how to run a ditto, and commenced to show, that not only could he run one worse, but he could

(to pg. 42)

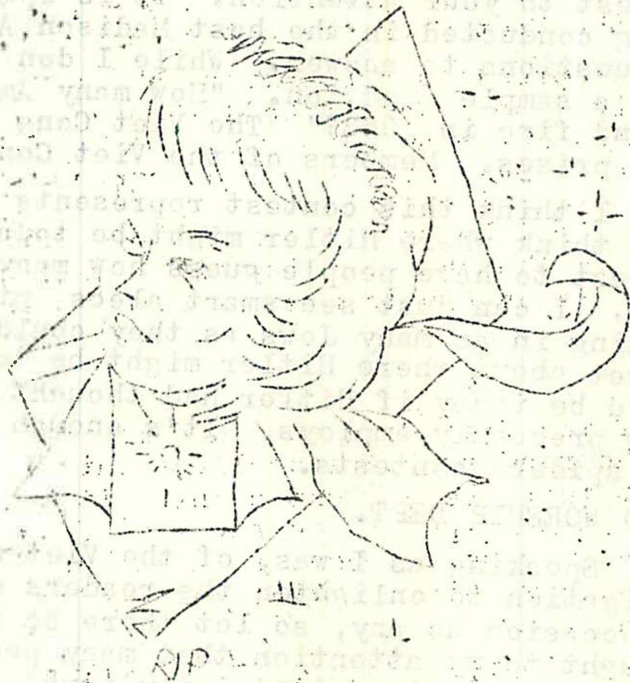




# EXCALIBUR

Before I relate some of the nuttier things I've seen and heard lately, I'd like to say some things about EXCALIBUR. Some of you jokers have been freeloadng since #5 without having responded in any way. The only thing you non-responders have done to keep on the list is not move to an address I don't have. I will admit that not a few of you have tried this ploy, but it doesn't work, does it?

Len and I are both poor downtrodden students with meager allowances, who just can't afford to keep dropping a wad on each issue of EXCALIBUR. I don't ask for much, just money ~~or your life~~ or some kind of contrib. There are sitting among you, many luminaries of fandom. Aw, don't laugh. I can't stand it when I can sense cackling while I am being serious. Later on in this editorial (and this fanzine) you can die laughing for all I care, but for now let's sit up straight and listen. You, too, Wally File 13 Weber; just because you're funnier than I am is no reason to skip this. I digress, I would like to ask you once again for positive response. I'll send you Ex for loc's that are printed, Len will send copies for accepted contribs. Send me a quarter and you can buy the next issue, or send a dollar and sub for 5 issues. A word to letter writers, play safe when you send that brilliant letter, send a quarter too. If your letter is used I'll carry the quarter over until an issue of Ex lacking a letter from you comes out. Contributors, writer-types especially might do the same thing, but it's less necessary, because unusable manuscripts are returned promptly. Certain fen, R.E. Gilbert, George Prector, John Boardman, Joe Staton, et al have contributed as of this writing, but they are only a small fraction of our readers. You article writers are alerted to the fact that Len and I want good articles of just about any length. Naturally, fiction and art (I love art) are also wanted.





Things are picking up in all phases of Ex, and you can help by responding.

#### BUCK COULSON IS A GOOD MAN DEPT.

I'm not sure which zine Len digs for the hugo, but I would like to suggest a fanzine called Yandro. It's true that Yandro has only run 130 issues, but I don't think that we should hold that against the Coulsons. YAN has been a top fanzine for a long, long while as fanzines go. Xero has come and gone, but Yandro goes merrily along, month after month being just as entertaining as ever. So it's everyone for Yandro for the Hugo. Buck likes rocketships.

#### HOUND DEPT. (or attention, nuttiness begins here)

In Torquay, England, there is a group of people called the Hunt Saboteurs. On January 11, 1964, in a master campaign, the Saboteurs struck at the heart of Britain, The Fox Hunt. The sly Saboteurs lured the hounds into a trap by strategically placed pieces of fresh raw meat. Another scheme used by the anti\*Hunt group was to blow hunting horns, thus confusing the dogs.

Let it be noted that the Upper Crust rose to this flagrant desecration of the hallowed institution which is near and dear to every English Lord. Yes, let it be said that the hunters did indeed come out on top. After seeing their glorious hunt ruined, they were seized with that inspiration which all men of action and dynamism have. The fox hunters retaliated by running down the Hunt Saboteurs with their horses.

#### CONTEST DEPT.

Everyone likes contests and p\*r\*i\*z\*e\*s, so I bring this unique contest to your attention. It is sponsored by the Viet Cong, and is being conducted in the best Madison Ave. tradition. There are seven questions to answer. While I don't have an entry blank, I do have a sample question. "How many American Planes were downed by ground fire in 1963?" The Viet Cong promises that there will be many prizes. Members of the Viet Cong are not eligible.

I think this contest represents a breakthrough in war strategy. Just think where Hitler might be today if he'd thought of having a contest to have people guess how many Jews would be gassed in, say, 1944. I can just see smart alocs picking high numbers and then turning in as many Jews as they could find over to the SS. Hey, forget about where Hitler might be today, think where Bailes and I would be today if Hitler had thought of using the technique the Viet Cong presently employs. It's enough to make me give up these "name the spider" contests.

#### HERO WORSHIP DEPT.

Speaking as I was, of the Viet Cong reminded me that it was my obligation to enlighten the readers occasionally. This is as good an occasion as any, so let there be enlightenment. It has been brought to my attention that many people equate Viet Cong with Communist. This is not strictly true. There are a number of non-Communist anti-government groups within the Viet Cong. One worth knowing about is the Cal Di Band.

The Cal Di are fanatical religionists. They will go to any length to fight and die for their God, Victor Hugo, and I do mean the great French writer. I have heard that Charles Dickens is in the process of being elected to Sainthood by the Cal Di, but I think



that that must be a joke. The Victor Hugo bit is right out of the New York Times, so I am sure it is accurate.

Now that I have thought about it a little, I guess it's not really that fantastic. After all, there's a group right here in America that also worships a writer. They're called the Burroughs Bibliophiles.

#### WORLD'S FAIR DEPT.

There are a lot of pretty weird things about the fair, and I will report them as they come up. There are some really good ones too.

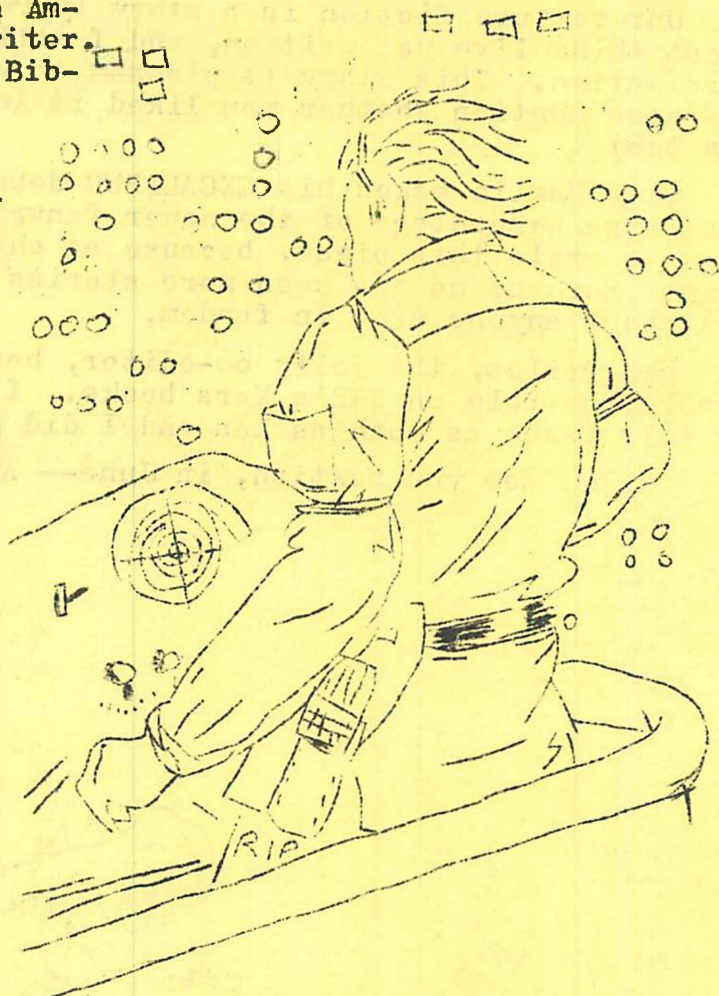
There is a very interesting mind working at the IBM. The IBM exhibit will include a grove of stainless steel trees. To place the shiny new trees in position, a grove of real and very much alive trees. Stainless steel trees, I have been told, are much superior to real ones because they are easily cleaned when dogs do what dogs do on trees.

Another feature of the fair is a structure called the Identity Building. This building, it seems to me, is true symbolism. The building, you see, is temporary.

They're going to open the time capsule which was closed during the first fair in 1939. They want to "update" it. In plain English, that means they want to take some of the embarrassing stuff out. It seems to me that the things truly representative of our time will never find their way into a time capsule. One thing I'd love to see put in the capsule is the Health Service Report on Smoking, along with a sheet listing the sales figures for cigarettes for the years 1963 and 1964. If that doesn't symbolize today's society, than what else does?

#### GOSHWOWOBOYOBOY DEPT.

This issue of Ex is not only the First Anniversary of the zine, but also the first anniversary of my advent in fandom. It's been tremendously enjoyable, and I hope to be around for many more years. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the fen who've been so helpful and kind to me.



IN THIS ISH DEPT.

As noted previously, this is the annish, and I think the contributions are suitably outstanding, even if it does seem like self-aggrandizement to say so.

Our feature fiction is a story by me. This is, I feel, the finest thing I've yet written, and I will await your verdict with anticipation. This story is planned to be the first of a series, so please mention whether you liked it in your loc's (and N'APAan mc's too)

Clay Hamlin makes his EXCALIBUR debut with exclusive ratings of a large percentage of the newer fanwriters. Clay is well qualified to write this piece, because as chairman of the N3F story contest Bureau, he has seen more stories by these newcomers than just about anyone else in fandom.

Len Bailes, the jolly co-editor, has a long, and I think, enjoyable, article on ERB's Mars books. I hope you'll enjoy reading this issue as much as Len and I did putting it out.

RSVP, See you nextish, in June-- Arnie



YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE YOU CAN SUMMON FORTH ASMODEUS!



# DATA

# AND

# ANALYSIS

by CLAYTON HAMLIN

All analysis and judgements of talent are those of the author and not necessarily that of the editors of this fanzine. Use at your own risk. This is presented to better coordinate the needs of the fan editors and the writers of fandom, with special emphasis on new and little known writers.

BAILLES, LENE. Basis of judgement, one fanzine (Excalibur, Bailles and Katz). Extremely clever satirist(stories). Thorough and complete satire; Excellent humor. Competent book reviewer, well researched judgements of books tend to be sound. Probably generally available to other faneds, recommended.

BOYEDMAN, JOHN. Story Contest(1 story) Does not write stories, only anecdotes at rather extreme length. Poor by fanzine standards, on this one at least.

BOLAND, JOHN. Story Contest(1) Extreme and excess length for fanzine publication. Inventive in plotting, understand use of rewriting, reasonably competent in holding up interest. Recommended if fanzine length stories are available.

BRZUSTOWICZ, RICHARD JR. Story Contest(2) From these two stories, I would say he varies from fair, to very good fan fiction. Biggest flaw is using all narrative and no dialogue, but ideas are especially good. Fanzine length too, try them.

BRUCE, LARRY. Story Contest (1) This one drives me nuts. Extraordinary vocabulary, fascinating and colorful writing, but I'll be darned if I can figure out just what he is trying to say. Weird, perhaps you might call it esoteric.

BUCKLIN, NATHAN. Story Contest (1), others(2) he writes well(I think) Ideas as original as any fan ever did, characters make me mad(which takes some doing), but if a fanzine would use it, I don't know. Too long anyway, But try it.

DEBRA, EDDIE. Story Contest (4) Fanzine length stories, mood and sometimes philosophical pieces. Generally with surprise endings, that don't surprise especially. An early Mike Deckinger type of writer. Writes in considerable quantity, and competent within his chosen limitations. Make your own judgement.

DUBAY, WILLIAM. Story Contest (1) Mood pieces, with tendency to horror. Very strictly amateur in many respects, but well within standards of many fanzines. Possibly fine and competent artist(one picture available for judgement) You might look into this.

EICHER, MARGARET. Story Contest, 1961, second prize winner ) four

other stories. NOT a fan. Attempted professional, unselling so far. Plotting and dialogue, excellent. Clever at setting scene, but no conflict to speak of. Tends to overly sentimental endings. Ties up all loose ends to story. Can write fanzine length stories but defects of style limits potential selling. TOP GRADE fanwriting. Definite recommendation if available, but editing will almost certainly be required.

ELLIOT, DOUGLAS. Story contest(1) Fine plotting, fast paced story excellent conflict, good characterization, length of story makes it just slightly long for fanzine, but shows considerable polish. Definitely recommended.

FRYE, ROD. Story Contest(1) Former faned, seems to be gafia at the moment. An attempted pro from the looks of this story. Prozine length, but from former record can easily be adapted to needs of fanzine, if available. Unknown whether available for fanzines, but well worth asking. One story now available.

GILSTER, PAUL. Story Contest (1). Inventive, but somewhat ridiculous in science used. Top grade fanwriting, but will probably require editing. Has tendency to stop at wrong point, and fit a different ending and different story on at end. Good characterization, fast paced, exciting, sometimes pro quality, but does not necessarily understand needs of a story. Highest recommendation for fans, but care will be needed in editing. Excellent, but with flaws.

GLASS, BILL. Story Contest (1) Exceptionally developed sense of mood in a story, action and with fine characters. Definitely top threat for fanzine fiction, young and probably with considerable time. Definitely one of the top fanfiction writers with a bit of practice. Also, has brother Dick, exceptional fan cartoonist.

HALL, FRANCES. Story Contest(first prize winner 1963) half a dozen other stories. Just one of maybe three almost professionals in fandom. Possibly available with rejects (which will be better than just about any fan fiction) to friends. Definitely worth the effort of asking. No time, but strictly a serious writer with large stock of stories, if you can get them.

HAMLIN, CLAYTON (That's me) Generally available to new faneds, writes almost anything. Most popular seem to be articles and reviews of old time stf classics, with tendency to colorful and enthusiastic reviews, rather than well researched. Very good on weird and far out humor. Does some stories, mostly humor. Adapts to needs of specific faneds. Not reliable as a steady contributor, hates deadlines. Lack of time for writing. Co-editor of Lunatic. Best material goes there.

HUTCHISON, DON. Story Contest (1) finalist, a bit too long for fanzine. Fine sense of story, almost all qualities needed for professional sales. Careful and adept at rewriting, extremely colorful writing, almost any type. Just might be available to fanzines, a new Neffer. Highly recommended if available. But ask for SHORT stories.

JACOBS, PIERS. Strictly a professional, with several sales, but at least two stories from file(which is extremely large) have been made



available for fan publication. Just might be best fiction writer, you name subject desired, in fandom. Definitely no time, but the surplus may be available, and is worth nearly any effort to get. Try and good luck.

JACOBS, ENID. High grade story writer, fanzinetype. Fanzine length with strong tendency to mood and emotional pieces. Good on articles, with original ideas, well thought out. Regular staff contributor with Lunatic, but generally available to other faneds as well. Will be well known fan writer in short time.

JOHNSON, JANEY. Numerous pieces have been available to friends in past half dozen years. Probably more empathy with reader of any writer in fandom. Excellent poet, clever on humorous articles, likes to write about cats.. Seldom available lately, except to close friends simply no time for writing. 108

KATZ, ARNOLD. One fanzine, Excalibur, see Len Bailes. Seems reasonably competent on fan articles, reviews, conreports etc. Typical, nothing really outstanding. An all round, enthusiastic, generally competent, but not outstanding fan writer, but well above neo average. Active in fandom, so probably generally available to others. Definitely one to watch when a personal style emerges from the all to typical fan.

KUSSKE, JOHN. Story Contest(1) and a couple of others. Quite inventive, and clever in fiction, strictly fanzine length and style. Can create quite believable characters in short fiction. Fine ideas for stories, well done within his limits, mostly lack of experience. Should be top notch fan fiction contributor, seems generally available to faneds, possibly more time than most fans. Well worth a try.

LADONKA, ASKOLD. Story Contest, 1962 winner, also contributed 1963. Much better than average fan fiction, mood, setting, characters, plot, continuity all fine but just a trifle below pro standards in all. Uses words well, but lack seems to be that special touch that makes anything outstanding. Fine research, with stories tending to mood pieces. Very much worth an effort to get for fanzines. But seldom contributes from my own personal knowledge. Is involved in research in psi at the moment, and extremely competent and makes for interesting reading if articles are available. May not be available to any great extent. Try anyway.

LAMONT, GIL. Staff contributor to Lunatic, one of best fan humorists in years, with emphasis on fannish types of humor. Uses words well, excellent vocabulary for maximum effect. Competent on reviews of stf, but not exceptional. May well be one of the fannish stars of the future. Probably available to other fanes, and certainly recommended.

MALLARDI, BILL. Publisher of Double Bill, so not generally available to others. Fine on humor, fannish type, very good on serious and controversial articles. Well, you can dream he might write something for you, anyway.

MARGROFF, ROBERT. Story Contest (5), a dozen or so others. Without question the best fan fiction writer of them all, if you can possibly get him. Professional standards, second prize winner of storycontest



with only slight suggestions for revisions to be made and it will be purchased. Probably best epic and narrative poet in fandom. with tendency to satire, has all qualities needed for pro sales. But may be available to faneds, from stock of rejects, or stories fever sent out. Not a strong possibility that you can pry anything loose from him, but it is worth just about any effort if you can, almost bound to be top writing in any fanzine. Very serious writer, so lots may be available.

MARSH, C.E. JR. Story Contest (2) probably most unbalanced writer of them all, from extraordinary talent, to absolute amateurishness in the same story. Good places has definite high grade professional impact. Strong mood writing, understand need of pro stories, but can't always seem to write it properly. Very clever and inventive, at times, far beyond usual fan fiction, but you had better ask for short lengths, mood stories, which may well be a top smash hit in any fanzine if you get a good one. If he gets this talent under control with practice, will be a definite fan fiction star of the future. But even ~~the~~ three readers couldn't really make up their minds on this guy, how can a person be so good and so bad all at once.

MITCHELL, MIKE. I have no doubt that this is the most inventive fan writer of them all, Especially well adapted to fanzine length. Immensely creative with new and original ideas for fan material. Can do almost anything a faned would want or have need of. Does own editing of stories, very precise with use of words as might be expected of ex-newsreporter. Excellent empathy, puts reader into a story. Extremely clever at plotting for top impact. GAFIA and available to close friends only. Often writes under pen names. Not a fan, but definitely a top fanzine writer, who doesn't want to be well known.

PATRICK, DAVID. Story Contest, several others, especially in Luna. Definitely one of top stars of early Luna with high quality fan type fiction. Still has defects of the young writer in pro writing. but seems to work hard to correct it, and is well worth the effort of trying to get to write for you. One of the best and probably best known of the young fan fiction writers.

THORNE, CREATH JR. Story Contest (1) No definite opinion as yet. His story was too long for general fanzine publication, but he is definitely a new fan who is not yet well known, and may well be a good and active fan. Certainly worth the effort of asking him to contribute, looks like he may be in the top rank of fan fiction writers. Has his words well under control, and has some nice clever touches that lift him out of the so-so class. Worth a try.

STODOLKA, FRANK. A fan editor himself, and busy, so maybe not generally available to others. Quite fair fan writer, excellent humorist. rather far out type( or maybe neo type, but under better control than most neos) Fair artist, does everything reasonably well, but needs experience. Learns and improves rapidly. Not a top fan writer by any means, but an especially good fan editor, understands the desires of what the neo fan prefers in reading matter, and is well able to get material that will suit them well. You MAY be able to get material on an exchange basis, ask anyway.



SHUPP, MIKE. A regular and well thought of contributor to DOUBLE BILL. Does thoughtful and well researched articles. Very good on there, especially with emphasis on space from a realistic point of view. Also good on short humorous fillers, strictly far out humor. Can definitely be a top fan writer, and perhaps is already. Extremely versatile on almost anything that fanzines might use.

SCHULZ, EARL Story Contest (1) in collaboration with Mike Hill. Hard to judge on Basis of one story, but looks like sure winner. Does darn good on science, with a touch of humor, characters are much better than usual fan fiction, well developed. Some things in this writing tend to be obscure, is likely to put several different ideas into a story, and it tends to clutter up the narrative. But definitely a better writer than most from this specimen.

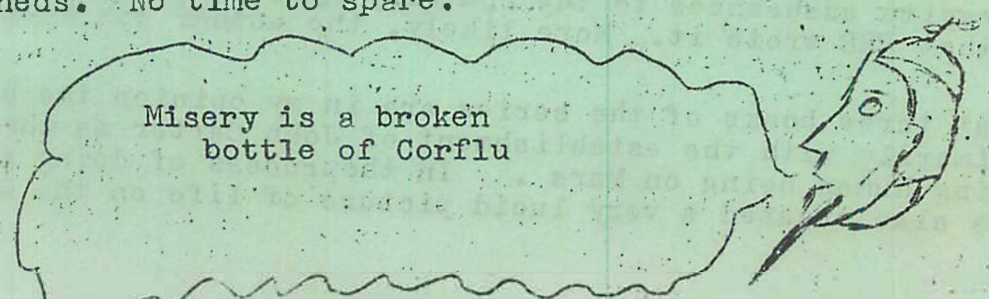
RANDALL, MIKE. Story Contest(1) Strictly action, and good action too but way too long for fanzines, in this story there was too much repetition. (though with lots of impact on the reader) and probably would require lots of cutting and editing to fit in fanzine, But definitely a better writer, except for these flaws, than most fan fiction. Good ideas, inventive, but you will have to judge for yourself whether they are too long to be used in fanzine.

WARREN, BILL Story contest third prize winner. Does not even seem interested in fanzines at all. Tremendous potential, though stories do go beyond fanzine length. Wonderfully clever touches to his writing, fine empathy, fine plotting at times, knows very well how to cut stories for maximum effect.

Fred Pohl says of his finalist story that he is at times the best writer of all seven finalists, and gives definite suggestions on how to make it saleable. I went overboard on this youngster, enormous promise for the future. May not be available to fanzines, though he said to send to manuscript bureau if it was not saleable. Doesn't write often, but if you can possibly get something, worth almost any effort to do so.

WEINBERG, ROBERT. Story Contest, (1) Awarded prize for most promising fan writer who is not a winner of contest. Short, fanzine length, lovely humor. Very imitative style, but who better to imitate than Arthur C. Clarke, after all. Delightful characters, weird and wonderful sense of humor under good control. Well polished fanwriting. This is definitely a good one, judged number four of forty in story-contest, by Fred Pohl. Don't know how readily available he may be.

WYSZKOWSKI, PAUL Edits DIFFERENTIAL. Excellent on short and well thought out philosophical articles. Fine poetry. Very humorous and far out humor pieces. Good artist. Probably not generally available to fanzines. No time to spare.



Misery is a broken  
bottle of Corflu

THE ALEXANDER

THE RECORD OF

THE MARS CO. OF

NEW YORK

J. J. NEW 13 MAY 1925

Placing second only to that popular pastime of calling John Campbell names, putting down Edgar Rice Burroughs seems to have become fandom's chief sport.

I have said my share of nasty things about ERB, yet for some reason I continue to read his books. The following study of the Barsom series is really almost as much for my benefit as for your enjoyment.

The Mars series seems to have been broken down into three main types, the discovering Barsom phase, the Relatives phase and the total escapes and captures phase. There are signs of a fourth phase in Burroughs' later work such as Skeleton Men of Jupiter. The novel, John Carter and the Giant of Mars, does not seem to fit in anywhere, and despite assurances to the contrary by Sam Moskowitz, I don't think that ERB wrote it. More likely, the author was Raymond Palmer.

The first three books of the series are in my opinion the best. They deal primarily with the establishment of John Carter as the greatest living human being on Mars. In the process of doing so, Burroughs has also created a very lucid picture of life on the dying planet.



In the original UNDER THE MOONS OF MARS which first appeared in All-Story Magazine in 1912 we are taken on an extraordinary adventure with one John Carter, former Colonel in the Confederate Army. The theme of this book is the uniting of the Red and Green races of Martians for the first time in Barsoomian history. Burroughs shows how this could only have been achieved through the efforts of Carter; and with the science available to him makes it rather convincing. The one glaring flaw is in the celerity with which Carter comes to learn the Martian language. Burroughs explains this by giving Carter an "amazing aptitude for language learning" but the idea of learning a completely alien tongue in three weeks is a little hard to swallow. Based on the premise of Mars' lighter gravity making the inhabitants less powerfully muscled in proportion, Carter becomes a veritable superman, outdoing the inhabitants in everything. Wisely, Burroughs does not exploit Carter's talents to their fullest extent, else there would be no plot, but even so, the "Superman image" hangs over all the books in the series. The only reason Carter has any adventures at all in subsequent books is because he has an incredible lack of imagination.

The means by which Burroughs has Carter act the saviour is by characterizing the Green Men as childlike mentalities. Although he does not mean to convey this point, Burroughs makes his savages seem like children playing Cowboys and Indians; utterly fair within their own code, yet completely bloodthirsty outside of it. Carter is like the "big boy from across the street" who gradually wins the respect of the little kiddies by showing himself to be even more bloodthirsty and violent than they are, and who then tries to initiate "Peace." Since by the conditions of the novel it would be impossible for a Redman to best a Green in sheer physical prowess the way Carter did, you can surmise that if he hadn't come along the Tharks would never have respected anyone long enough to listen to overtures of peace. When, in the second part of the book Carter leaves the Greenmen and commences to show that he can also do anything at all better than any Redman, he reaches a status with them which is high enough to get the "good guy" Heliumites to enlist the aid of the Tharks in conquering the bad aka "unchivalrous Zodangan Redmen.

One thing which comes naturally to mind is the question of why Carter cares at all who slits whose throat. The motive for Carter's escapades is his "passionate" love for a woman whom he's known all of two or three months. When she gets kidnapped, he naturally goes out to rescue her. The business of succeeding captures and escapes is not so objectionable here in the first book because they are not the sole gimmick about which the plot hangs and they do serve as an effective means for Carter to encounter alot of civilizations at once.

In the style of the times, Burroughs generates a sequel by introducing after the actual action of the novel is over, a situation where Carter must again sally forth to save Mars. The lapse is 10 years, during which Carter has become a prince of Helium. He and Dejah Thoris have a son just ready to hatch (Or didn't I mention that Martians are oviparous.) The keeper of the Atmosphere plant has been murdered, and only Carter knows the way to get in and keep the oxygen pumps running. In his valiant attempt, Carter loses consciousness and winds up on, of all the furshlugginer places, Earth. This neatly accounts for how the first manuscript was passed into Burroughs' hands; sort of reminiscent of Lost Horizon. Again, here in the



first book this isn't objectionable. I did, at least in my case, stir up a desire to read the sequel.

The second book in the series first appeared in 1913 in All-Story, and was put in hardbound edition in 1918 as THE GODS OF MARS. It differed slightly from the first tale in that Burroughs decided to throw in a little satire on religion; if it could be called satire. Rather, he attempted to allegorize and show up the ridiculousness of ritual. In that, I believe that he succeeded, but if you logically follow the cycle of events you can see that Burroughs failed to complete the chain. After debunking the religions of Mars, Burroughs shows nothing to replace them. Most sociologists accept the theory that a society must have some religion(not necessarily a worship of a god) to exist purposefully. After this book, there is difficulty in justifying Burroughs' warrior civilization. The only motivating ideal possessed by the Martians is gone. This does, in a way, contribute to the general image of a dying planet, and even gave me upon reading a slight taste like that of the DYING EARTH by Vance, but Burroughs doesn't develop it. I assume, therefore, that Burroughs didn't deliberately leave Mars godless to create this effect, but to vent his own spleen by saying, "See, religion is all rotten" without regard for the effect this event has on his later Mars books. I may of course, be wrong.

As far as plot synopsis goes, Carter manages to transfer himself back to Barsoom by "dying" again, to find himself in a totally strange area. Instead of the dry, barren wasteland he had grown to know and love, he finds himself in a sort of Garden of Eden. The paradise doesn't last though, because he soon finds himself attacked by a hideous new sort of creature, a plant man. In the course of hacking the plant men to bits( he conveniently finds a sword lying around) he meets up with his good buddy, Tars Tarkas. As they fight side by side, Tarkas explains the religion of the Martians,

which, in brief, states that at the end of the cold river Iss is a paradise where after a thousand years, the souls of all Martians may come to live in eternal peace and happiness. The religion, unfortunately for countless Martians, neglects to mention the plant men.



In the course of his escape, Carter comes across two more races, one comprised of Whites, and the other of Blacks. Burroughs reflects, either consciously or unconsciously, by having Carter philosophize about how one must treat these poor inferiors kindly, and about how handsome and strong they are and what a pity that they are lacking in all the merciful qualities of the Reds, thus making them "less than human. I don't think that Burroughs has laid it on here as thick as in the Tarzan series, tho. I conclude that most of Burroughs' racism is unconscious. I support this belief with an episode in CARSON OF VENUS wherein Napier confronts a civ-



ilization which consists, in essence, of the Nazis transplanted to Venus. This civilization has a habit of killing people known as Atorians for the reason that they have large ears and would tend to pollute the race with varying ear sizes. This is obviously an attempt to show the foolishness of Nazi war crimes, but again, Burroughs has Carson Napier tsk tsking over the poor inferior Atorians, and has one of them speak to him in a typically slavlike manner.

This convinces me that Burroughs subconsciously had deep prejudices which he attempted to mask by his attempts at expressing "humanitarianism" and "brotherly love"

After meeting his son and other assorted people, Carter escapes from the Black Pirates and returns to Helium, only to find himself branded a heretic when he tries to tell the people what he has seen. He elicits a truce until such time as the Jeddak, who has been out searching for Dejah Thoris, (who is lost, as usual) returns.

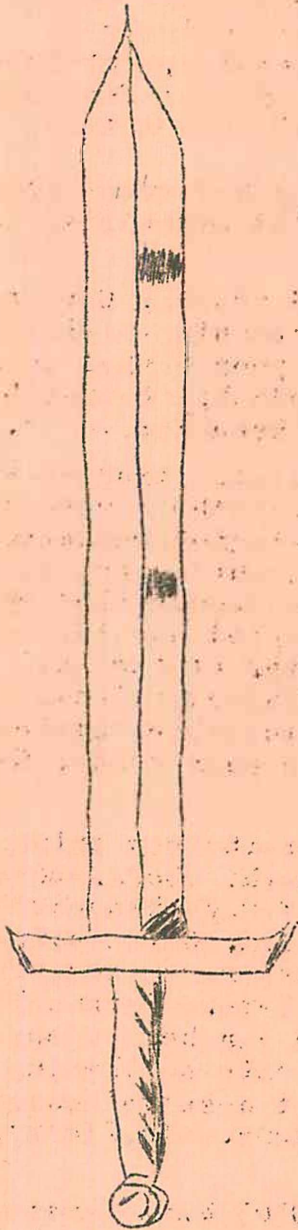
Mustering a tremendous fleet, the Heliumites trap back to have a titanic battle with the Blacks. During the course of events Carter overturns several more religions. Religion on Barsoom had been a case of the Redmen believing in a God which was controlled by the Whites, and the Whites believing in a God controlled by the Blacks and at the top of the heap the Blacks worshipped an old hag called Issus, whom Carter eventually killed. However at the last minute (to set up another sequel) Dejah Thoris and a few friends are locked up in this rotating prison, and just as the cage rotates behind a wall of rock from which it will emerge one year hence, Carter sees someone pull a knife on Dejah Thoris.

This book, too, is enjoyable because of the new twists which ERB introduces into Barsoomian culture. In this book, we first learn how incredibly stupid Carter is. About half way through the novel he meets a teenager and within 10 pages, even S.E. Cotts could tell you that the kid was Carter's son. However, Carter remains blithely unaware of this until the book is almost complete. I take back calling Carter stupid. Within his own frame he can be incredibly shrewd. His logic is impeccable, given his basic premises; the only thing is that he is incapable of using his powers of observation to assist in arriving at a rational solution to problems. As I said, It's just that he has no imagination.

The third novel in the series, WARLORD OF MARS first appeared as a serial in All-Story Magazine from Dec. 1913 to March 1914. It was first published in hardcover by A.C. McClurg & co. in 1919. Warlord really reads like just an extension of Gods. It is the concluding chapter in the Planet roving saga of John Carter. It doesn't come up to the caliber of the first two. The "New Race of the Month" is the yellow men of Okar, but surprisingly, Burroughs doesn't treat them as stupid, or evil or inferior or anything. They are characterized just like ordinary Redmen. In this book, more than in the first two, Carter really starts using that sword of his, and by this time he has a reputation, and everybody is out to get him. In this story, Burroughs sets the stage for what will be the basis of all the remaining Mars books, the Escape and Capture syndrome.

Tracking two baddies, Thurid, a Blackman whom he has previously bested in a fight, and Matai Shang, Hekkador, or ruler of the White or Thern race, Carter discovers that there is a way to get to Dejah Thoris before the appointed year has elapsed. He plows through dark cavern after dark cavern (Freud anyone?) and in the end, just misses





saving Dejah Thoris. Instead, she is captured by Thurid & Co. The rest of the book is a planet wide chase, with Carter always one step too late to rescue the princess. In the course of his wanderings, he is joined by Thuvan Dihn, Jeddak of Ptarth, whose daughter, Thuvia, Carter rescued last book and who has also been captured by the scoundrels. Together, they penetrate through a cave piled with Dead bodies and trail Thurid to the North Pole, where dwell the Yellows. Enlisting the aid of a good guy yellow(Whoops, I mean a Yellow Good guy,--no, a benevolent Okarite, there) There, Carter encounters the duel of his life with the guardian of a huge magnetic machine which wrecks airplanes that get in range. This was the only battle, I believe, where Burroughs acknowledged that someone was as good a swordsman as Carter. Finally, Carter wins by luck and saves the day. Who should be conveniently flying overhead but Carthoris, and the whole Helium Space Navy, and who should Carter find being held prisoner but Tardos Mors, Jeddak of Helium, and Mors Kajak, Jed of Lesser Helium, and who should come storming through the gates but Tars Tarkas and his whole band of warriors. I'll always remember that one scene. Every goddam hero in the whole series manages to show up and give hell to the evil Okarite Jeddak. Leaving the Good Yellowman(Oh, hell, I'm not going through THAT again) in command, they return to Helium, and for his outstanding services, Carter is made Jeddak of Jeddaks, Warlord of Mars, Yay, JC! (disclaimer)

To tell the truth, all that schmaltz is kind of appealing in its own way. I guess anything can be enjoyable once or twice. By rights, the Mars series should end right here, but being in need of Money, Burroughs continues.

This brings us to the next phase of the series. In the original trilogy we have been given a reasonably enjoyable tour de force of the planet Mars, as seen by Burroughs. Not content with this, Burroughs now proceeds to fill us in on every single area of the gruesome place. He does this through John Carter's numerous relatives.

One of the poorest in the series is the fourth book, THUVIA, MAID OF MARS. First published in 1914 in All-Story, it was put into hardcover in 1920. The book concerns itself with the wanderings of Carthoris, son of Carter and Dejah Thoris. One of the questions which comes to mind is how did Carter and Dejah Thoris manage to have a child. I sense a parody in here somewhere, but for once I'm going to lay off(DISCLAIMER) writing it. The book has little to recommend it, and it would be difficult to pick out its flaws, because at the time of writing, this was the formula that the public was clamouring for. The Original hardcover does have a glossary of Martian Names



which can serve as a Who's who of Barsoom, if you really care enough to find out. This glossary was reprinted in the Ace edition of Mastermind of Mars.

The plot concerns the efforts of Carthoris to win the love of Thuvia. We do meet one interesting civilization here; the people of Lothar, who can materialize warriors out of thin air. We are also introduced to a character who never appears again, Kar Komak, Odwar of the Bowmen of Lothar. Eventually, Thuvia's fiancée sees that it's Carthoris that Thuvia really wants, so he says ok, and Thuvia says ok, and Carthoris says--- Anyway they live happily ever after.

Burrough's next book is kind of a paradox to me. It is the longest and most stilted of the entire series, yet it is one of my favorites. It's sort of a Burroughsian Mash raised to the nth power.

The book was originally published in hardcover in 1922. The hero is Gahan, Prince of Gathol, and the "terribly beautiful but snobbish young girl" is Tara of Helium, daughter of Carter.

Burroughs again interjects some humorless satire in his portrayal of the Bantoomian race, a group of beings composed only of Brains. They, of course, manage to ambulate by seizing control of headless human bodies. When with rykor( the body) the brains or Kaldanes, are still capable of indulging in the pleasures of the flesh.(something which doesn't add cheer to Tara's predicament when she is captured, as all good Burroughs heroines must be) Gahan, sounding just like Bud Wilkenson on those films urging physical fitness, delivers a few sermons. Tara, in the meantime meets an extraordinary little character in Ghek, one of the Kaldanes who befriends her. When he goes along for the ride, Ghek is wearing his body, but later, when captured again he performs many amusing little tricks on the guards, like leaving them to find a headless body one instant, and the next minute a seemingly normal human being.

The book's title derives from the Capture of the whole little group by a race of Redmen who play a sort of Martian Chess(Jetan) only making the moves with real people. Being a chess fan myself, I enjoyed the notes at the end of the book on how to play the game.

The characterizations in this book seem to me to be more penetrating than in most of his efforts, and instead of the usual way that he usually cuts off a story, or drags it on and on intolerably, Burroughs seems to have hit just the right length.

Actually the preceding books can scarcely be called science fiction. Burroughs used pseudoscientific gimmicks that even Richard Shaver would abstain from. The next book in the series approaches closer to pure stf, and it is apparent why. Mastermind of Mars was the first Burroughs story written expressly for a science fiction magazine. In this case, the magazine was the Amazing annual, and Burrough's name was written on the cover larger than the logo.

It shows what a big name Burroughs was at the time that Hugo Gernsback would deviate from his rigid policy of strict scientific extrapolation to run his stuff. For a change, in this story, Burroughs injects some(in my opinion) really good religious satire. It is superior to that in the Gods of Mars, because it is subtler. This time he really does make religion look kind of stupid. (This doesn't mean that I think religion is stupid, altho the scene where one of the hero's friends goes to his church cracked me up.)

It might be significant to note that for this particular book, Burroughs imports a new hero, Ulysses Paxton, from Earth. This was done, I believe, because Burroughs wished to portray a hitherto unmentioned portion of Barsoomian life through the eyes of an Earthman the way he did in the first book. Since by this time, Carter is God as far as Mars is concerned, he obviously won't do. It is also noticeable that most of the lengthy dialogue so common in Burroughs-ania is lacking from Mastermind. The story is spun in a straightforward way, and though nothing exceptional, it is a moderately entertaining effort. ERB has introduced the typical stereotype of a Mad scientist complete with fantastic laboratory in Ras Thavas. Later in the series Thavas reforms. The brain transplanting theme of this book is almost comically reminiscent of the old Frankenstein movies, in several spots. Swordplay is also at a minimum. Mastermind of Mars illustrates the way Burroughs slanted his writing to a particular audience. If some of his writing is terrible, I suspect that it's because he knew bad writing would sell and good writing wouldn't.

With the 7th in the series Burroughs' writing again shows a shift. A FIGHTING MAN OF MARS was written in 1930, and in the light of several new discoveries in science. In the later Mars books, science is used as a buffer to augment the basic Escape and Capture theme. In the seventh chronicle we have the introduction of the John Carter coadventurer. We find that in the remaining books the action centers about a fighting man of helium and Carter is given a relatively bit part. In FIGHTING MAN, ERB introduces Invisibility Rays, superscientific spaceships and the rest of that bit. There is one memorable sequence however, that being when the hero, Tan Hadron, and friends encounter the Spider of Ghasta. There is an enchanting lethargic style in this passage which reminds me for some reason of the seduction of Brandoch Daha in the WORM OUROBORUS.

Evident again is the incredible stupidity of the hero. It seems he starts out on this quest to rescue a snotty noblewoman and rescues a warrior girl on the way. During the course of their travels, Tavia, the warrior girl, flips for him, and tho the noblewoman tripletimes him, he doesn't get it through his skull till the last chapter that Tavia is the one he loves, etc etc.... There are several revisions herein of popular Burroughs gadgets. With the advent of Jet planes, Burroughs correspondingly soups up his Martian fliers till they go 600 miles per hour.

Undoubtedly the most drawn out pedantic and Victorian novel of the whole bit is SWORDS OF MARS. In this epic good old Carter is again in the lead and Dejah Thoris is once again kidnapped. Despite valiant efforts to discover new worlds on Mars's moons and to recreate the old sense of wonder, SWORDS is almost unreadable. I have a hunch that ERB saw what was happening to him and in trying to compensate and return to the CHESSMEN type style he went over the other edge. This is an exception to the Co-Adventurer syndrome I mentioned above. In this book the co-adventurer plays the bit part. Burroughs lapses back to his mystical pseudoscientific way of explaining things in an unwitting satire of himself when he explains how when you fly to the moon you shrink until when you get there you are six inches high. After all, based on the Burroughs theory of gravity/strength, Carter could hardly have been imprisoned on Deimos anymore than you could imprison Superman. This book typifies Burroughs at his worst to me. All the elements of the things people gretch at about ERB are included in it. The unifying theme is



of all things, Carter's attempt to wipe out the Assassins' Guild. Guess he just didn't like any competition.

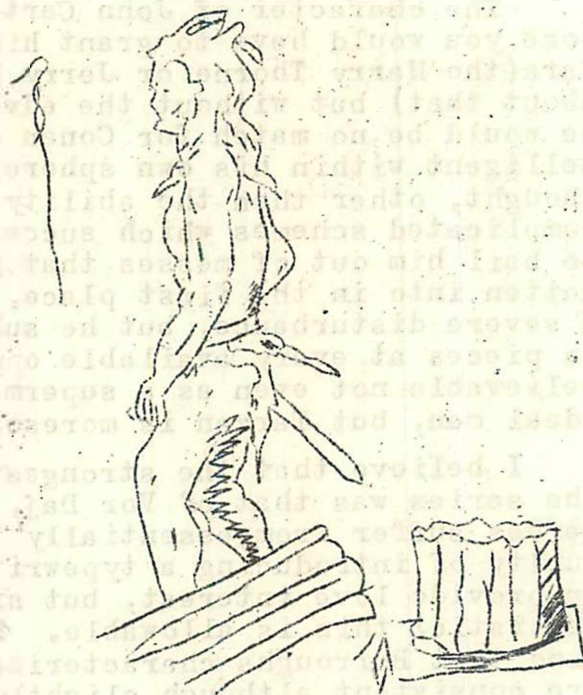
In the ninth book, SYNTHETIC MEN OF MARS, Ras Thavas returns conveniently, just as Carter needs him for a crucial operation on Dejah Thoris. Although Thavas plainly states that Ulysses Paxton is just as good a surgeon as he is, instead of simply obtaining Paxton, Carter and co-adventurer trapse through all manner of swamps looking for Thavas. In this process they get captured by a bunch of Thavas' synthetic men, who are so revolting that even Thavas wants to destroy them.

It was first published as a serial in Argosy in 1939, and put in hardcover one year later. The brain transplanting theme which ERB merely touched on as a means to an end in MASTERMIND is fully developed here. In order to serve a girl with whom he has fallen in love after talking with for 10 seconds (a record, even for Burroughs heroes)

Vor Daj- the coadventurer- deliberately has his brain transplanted into the body of a synthetic man. Burroughs does a fairly good job of picturing the plight of this poor sucker when Carter and Thavas run out on him. Burroughs, running out of ways for guys to make chicks at this point, resorts to a sort of "Beauty and the Beast"-ish plot for Vor Daj to gradually win the love of his lady in his grotesque form as they cavort through several escapes and captures, till finally the lady in question loves him more in his beastish form than as handsome Vor Daj. When she finds out that they are the same person, she is, of course, overjoyed. Burroughs continues the tales of the countries of Amhor and Jahar which he had begun in FIGHTING MAN. I would say that this was the most enjoyable book in the later portion of the series.

The final volume of the series is straight escape and capture. It is the only one of the Mars series to first be published as a string of independent novelettes, these in Amazing Stories 1948. Of these the first one in LLANA OF GATHOL (it just occurred to me that I didn't mention the title, there) is fairly mundane Barsoomian stuff. Carter finds a remnant of the long Dead Barsoomian race hiding in one of the abandoned cities. He picks up a co-adventurer, Pan Dan Chee, who naturally falls in love with the Warlord's grand daughter, the afore mentioned Llana. One of the other novelettes, entitled Black Pirates of Barsoom was fairly good reading, tho pallid when compared to the adventures among the Black Pirates in the second book.

The plot concerns the successive escapes and captures (or should that be the other way around) of Llana, Carter, and a few warriors they pick up along the way. Burroughs has the group run into another set of Invisible men (he just had this thing about invisible men, like every three books he introduced a new set) and revives a character from





the very first book in a bit part, there is also an adventure at the north pole. This book will always stand out in my mind because of Carter's famous quote, "Although I deplore bragging, in all modesty I must admit that I am the greatest swordsman that ever lived."

The character of John Carter can't be assessed easily. I suppose you would have to grant him the title of greatest swordsman on Mars (tho Harry Thorne or Jerry Morgan might have something to say about that) but without the advantage of the lesser gravity of Mars he would be no match for Conan or Fafhrd. Carter is reasonably intelligent within his own sphere, but utterly incapable of original thought, other than the ability to think up fantastically impractical complicated schemes which succeed through sheer coincidence in order to bail him out of messes that no one with half a brain would have gotten into in the first place. His attitude toward sex indicates a severe disturbance, but he sublimates well by hacking other people to pieces at every available opportunity. In brief, Carter is not believable not even as a superman. He was obviously meant to be the ideal man, but Tarzan is moreso.

I believe that the strongest characterization Burroughs made in the series was that of Vor Daj, in Synthetic Men. But all Burroughs heroes suffer from essentially the same blindspot. Burroughs is guilty of introducing a typewriter in the sky technique in order to provide love interest, but since the books weren't meant to be realistic, this is allowable. Based purely on the romantic scale, I find that Burroughs characterizations are acceptable; at least they are consistent although slightly odd. It is the style where the chief defects of his writing emerge.

His stories simply do not bridge action with narrative successfully. ERB relies on coincidence as a crutch, and seems incapable of effecting a scene transition without abducting somebody. And, be sensible, not even such a man as John Carter could walk 3,000 miles across a desert in a week, yet we find all manner of Burroughs characters walking across the entire planet, just for the fun of it. His choice of adjectives oftentimes includes exceedingly verbose words which take away from attention to the story. This was done chiefly to effect an attitude of Barbaric Splendour, but somehow, I don't think the idea was successfully conveyed.

But even more important, the man got lazy. Once he saw a good thing, he milked the gimmick to the limit. The imagination introduced in the first book is almost totally lacking from the last. Granted, not many are capable of stunning and overwhelming the reader in every single book, but Burroughs didn't even try much after the first few. The fact that he has written such highly imaginative pieces as LAND THAT TIME FORGOT and good sf like THE MOON MEN seems to indicate that he certainly could have put more effort into the latter Mars books. And the funny thing is that in spite of all the faults in the series, I read and got some enjoyment out of all of them. Possibly ERB was shrewder than we give him credit for being. If he had written his stories on a more literate level they might not now be as well liked.

Is ERB good literature-- Heck no.

Does he insult the readers' intelligence? Whenever possible

Does his writing reflect a lazy archaic style?-- Typically antiquarian.

Can he spin a good story?-- He relies frequently on formula for plots.

Do you enjoy reading ERB?-- Dammit, yes, for some reason. -LB



# SAVERS AND CURSES

## LETTERCOL

This month's lettercol is a little bit confused. Loc's came to both Arnie and myself, so the replies will be labled accordingly. In the future, LoC's go to Arnie and Contribs, including art go to me. Please people, we're confused enough as is.

\* \* \*

STAN WOOLSTON 12832 Westlake St., Garden Grove, Calif.

The postmailing to N'APA isn't finished yet, and won't be until I read CURSED and I want to write some comments as I read through it. .... Editorial comment by Katz notes the ability in running off copies is increased. My first ditto mster was okay except after about forty copies and then, I was told, it faded quite a bit. This was just a month ago, run off by a fanfriend who told me that for stencils you remove the ribbon but for ditto you get more ink, and therefore more sharp reproductions, by keeping the ribbon on. Of course there could be too much fluid which tends to wash out the image, but I've never run the machine and I can't say how to tell whether liquid is too prodigious or too mean.

Three days ago I got the election results, and see Arnie Katz didn't make it this time. As Len said, Arnie has been a real asset to the club in a place where it helps a great deal-- in N'APA and in recruiting. As Don Franson mentioned to the candidates, if not elected, don't feel you've failed--there were quite a few people there, and someone had to get the most votes. If you look at those who were elected you'll see the others have been in the club quite a while and active in it too--and there will be other years. I'm sure Arnie will be active in 1964, and he can run again with more people knowing him then. Perseverance pays.....

I enjoyed the con notes from Len, and agree that a rambling editorial has real merit as far as fun in reading goes. His views that people joining/ the N3F/ in September or October shouldn't vote is ok to make, but to change it would take a Constitutional Amendment. The method is to send out petition for signatures of members{{ Better forget it, you know what happened the last time people were sending out petitions-LB}} but careful word whatever amendment is desired. It is definitely true that the second year of membership is much more meaningful to almost any member than the first.....

GLORY ROAD: I liked it but didn't think it was perfect. Seth Hohnson thought it was very good; it's theme fit his dreamworld, I guess you'd say. It may well be that some who criticise it find it so much fun to jab that they forget to mention if they like part of it. I really didn't read GLORY ROAD with symbols in mind, but there could definitely be some very natural sex symbols in the matter of inter-dimensional travel, and the pain in breathing after awhile in the poison world where the "treasure" was kept reminds me of a certain trauma.....

Arnie Katz's write up on Laumer and the reviews by all 3 editors are by me preferred over the stories. That fan-satire as well as a collection of tortures here and there makes me wonder if the magazine has a satiristic streak. And how did you like James H. White in #5, Stan?--LB)--.....

You mentioned readability: I could read it all but the back cover. Price increase shouldn't bother me as long as I'm in N'APA. ....About your mag in closing, I'd say I prefer a mag of the smaller size than one larger with more cost. With too many pages fatigue can set in, and the dangers of gafia can be activated. So if you decide to cut back later it won't shock me a bit: I'd rather have you move ahead steadily than a brief fan-life of many pages.

SCORRY I HAD TO CUT THIS SO MUCH, STAN. ALTHOUGH THIS LETTER IS A LITTLE DATED WE COULDN'T BRING OURSELVES TO DISREGARD A FIVE PAGE LOC. THANK FOR SENDING IT AND HOPE YOU LIKE THISISH. #LB

\* \* \* \* \*

AND NOW TO COMMENTS ON #5

HARRY WARNER 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

I thought that the editorials were in many ways the best parts of the written material. This may betray my preference for faanish slant in fanzine material or it may simply be the result of good Editorial writing.

The DisCon report was also pleasant to read, since this one is a little more goshwow than most of the con reports I've seen about the Washington event. It even told me some things that I didn't see or hear about through other means, principally the way someone tried to help people find the NFFF hospitality room. And Judi Sephton was probably the most surprising encounter that I had at the convention, too, because those photographs had made her look so tall and gawky.

The Mudlark of Space was a surprise, because I thought people had long ago given up writing parodies of E.T. Smith. This one is better than most, I believe, for the way in which it extropolates from the basic characters of the people in the Skylark stories and keeps them in their exaggerated ways of doing things all the way through the parody. I suspect that Smith would enjoy this one himself. It's strange, how well this bit of nonsense reminded me of the delight I used to get from reading the original Skylark stories. I haven't tried to read them recently, but they always had much the same effect on me that the Burroughs stories did on many other fans: so enthralling as narratives that I loved them even though I was always conscious of the stylistic and narrative matters in which the writer was quite deficient.

The fiction is the weakest thing in this issue. Maybe I shouldn't have received Excalibur just after re-reading Thomas Mann's "Mario and the Magician". This is bad preparation for the Enid Jacobs story, which seems awfully innocent and mild in comparison with that parable on Hitlerism disguised as mental contact. Discovery is just another little story that has no real plot or suspense, I sense that there's a trick ending ahead and the shock doesn't register fully. Jard suffers because it leaves the reader wondering too much, particularly the question of why this was the first human to try to go down fighting, a procedure that would normally have occurred to many before him.



.... I gather that your previous issues were pretty terrible as far as reproduction is concerned, but there's nothing wrong with this one. Some additional experience won't cure. That bottle of correction fluid will help, and if you don't spill it before you've corrected the stencils for the next issue {{ No danger of that, Ed Meskys is at least 3,000 miles away-LB}} use celophane tape to seal shut the area between the cap and the glass....

I liked the reviews, fanzine and paperback type, although I have no particular reactions to go into detail about. And even if these comments sound in general rather disgruntled, I enjoyed reading the issue....

I DIDN'T CARE OVERLY MUCH EITHER FOR THE FICTION IN LAST ISSUE, BUT IT'S THE BEST WE'VE GOTTEN. C'MON GUYS LET'S SEE YOU SEND IN SOME FICTION. GLAD YOU LIKED MUDLARK AT ANY RATE.-LB

\* \* \* \*

BUCK COULSON Route #3, Wabash, Indiana 46992

Must you publish crossword puzzles? I know that all sorts of fan editors do it, and I've never been able to figure out why. Are there fans out there who actually work these things out? I suppose there must be, but I can't visualize it. {{ Tell you what, I'll delete the answer to the crossword from this issue and publish it next ish if even one fan wants to see it. Tune in then to see if anyone does crossword puzzles-LB}}}

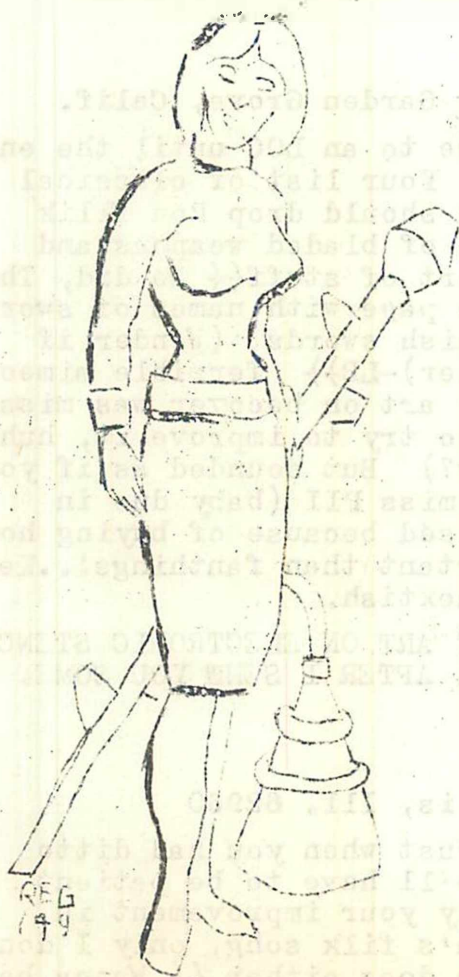
Len should get better reproduction out of a Gestetner (and he should also capitalize it {{It-LB}} it's a brand name), even with free paper.

There is a rival mail service. Look up United Parcel in your nearest telephone directory. Honeywell in Wabash sends stuff by it, so surely it should be available in the civilized East.

The fiction was quite fictional.

Overall: good editorials, lousy reproduction (you'll never get artists to contribute that way; they like to see the results of their work), average fiction, with Enid Jacobs doing the best job, good reviews, very poor lettercolumn {{But Buck, we didn't have a lettercol last ish-LB}}. Not really a bad job at all, tho I'd have enjoyed longer editorials and less fiction.

I could look at the stories with a critical eye and note good points here and bad ones there (mostly attributable to the fannish syndrome of trying to pack a short story plot into vignette length) But the one by Enid Jacobs was the only one that I enjoyed reading. The



others had no particular faults, aside from the length problem, but they just weren't particularly enjoyable to read.

LEN ISN'T RESPONSIBLE FOR BAD REPRO, I AM. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I MIMED EX. I'LL TRY MY BEST TO DO BETTER. LEN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ART STENCILLING; GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO LEARN, PLEASE. HOW DO YOU LIKE THE FICTION THIS TIME?-Arnie

\* \* \* \*

DAVE LOCKE Box 335, Indian Lake, NY 12842

What's this X-mark doing here in the inbcover saying that I'm a BNF? You crazy or sumpin? I'm a neo who's been in fandom for about three years. I just never give up, is all.

Nice fanzine you've got here. Co-edited. Virtually self-written. Fiction, reviews, crossword puzzle. Nice Fanzine. I like your writing Arn, you're developing a good witty line of nattering. It's the best kind of writing to develop in fandom. Really. I'm going to have to develop a new kind of writing style myself, I say redundantly. Buck Coulson says I'm degenerating all over the place. Pity. Just as I thought I was in my Golden Age, too.

THANKS, DAVE, FOR THE COMPLIMENTS. WHAT IF I TOLD YOU I WAS DEAD SERIOUS? I WASN'T, BUT WHAT IF I TOLD YOU I WAS? I'M MERELY TRYING TO POINT OUT SOME OF THE NUTTINESS THAT OFTEN PASSES BY UNNOTICED. GLAD TO HEAR I'M ENTERTAINING, BUT I WISH YOU'D WRITE LONGER LOC'S- Arnie

\* \* \* \*

BJO TRIMBLE 5571 Belgrave Ave., Eastgate, Garden Grove, Calif.

Hi! This is as close as you will come to an LOC until the end of the semester at least; 18 units, like. Your list of classical swords at the end of EX makes me think you should drop Ron Ellik a note and ask him for his great long list of bladed weapons and who they belonged to. He collects this sort of stuff. We did, Thanx for Larean, Ron, now we could fill a whole page with names of swords, but we are trying to list only famous fannish swords. (Wonder if Bruce Pelz has a name for his 4ft 10 pounder)-LB}} Terrible mimeography! Couldn't read some of it, and the art on bcover was missing..... You've got a good attempt here, so try to improve it, huh? Conrep spotty (didn't you see the art show?) But sounded as if you enjoyed it..... I sure missed DC; and may miss PII (baby due in August) but will try to get there. DC missed because of buying house. So, you see, mundane things are more important than fanthings!..Keep up the fun; will try to write longer LOC nextish.

I WAS SORRY TO HEAR THAT YOU CAN'T PUT ART ON ELECTRONIC STENCILS FOR FANS AFTER ALL. DIDN'T FIND OUT UNTIL AFTER I SENT YOU SOME. THAT'S THE WAY THE COR-FLU TUMBLES-LB

\* \* \* \*

KENT MCDANIEL 620 Metropolis St., Metropolis, Ill. 62960

Back to the stone age, repro-wise. Just when you had ditto nearly mastered.{{ Disclaimer?-AK}} Now we'll have to be patient again while you master mimeo. Fortunately your improvement in the field of repro continues. I liked Len's filk song, only I don't quite agree with it, and I don't think Len does either {{ Wanna bet? -LB}} Len should satirize things he really thinks need satirizing. {{ Well Amazing sure needs something-LB}} not things he finds easy



Your satire on Retief was a real riot. You did get carried away a little tho--- with the violence bit. By the time you got Eatteeth beating up the little kid it was starting to cease to be funny. The ending helped the story a lot, tho. I'd give it a 7 rating in a 10 point system.

The other stories (MUDLARK and ORAL REPORT) excepting Jim's were quite good too. Harkness's theme was so used, but the writing was o.k.

You all pretty well wrenched my title for "worst illo cutter" gained by OUTRE #1's cover, from me. I'd suggest you use Dave Locke's ingenious idea for a mimeo-scope in Dol-Drums#1. You could use Proctor's backcover over again. All I could see was a few black spots here and there.

Funny you should mention Omnibus in your reviews, Len. It was my first contact with sci-fi. I have the first copy. All the stories seemed great to me. Of course, this is probably all nostalgia. Or maybe they did seem great to me then. I can still remember getting up early every Sat. to read this till 9 or 10 O'clock{{ You must be a slow reader-LB}}

I DON'T HAVE THE ISSUE OF DOL-DRUM YOU MENTION. HEY, DAVE, DO YOU MAYBE HAVE AN EXTRA COPY OF DOL-DRUM. THEN AGAIN, I COULD BUY A WHOLE SETA MAILING TO GET IT..... UGH! WE WILL RE-USE THAT ILL0, TH0- Arnie

\* \* \* \*

DICK SCHULTZ 19159 Helen, Detroit, 34, Michigan 48234

It really is cursed, you know. It is cursed with some of the worst editing, typography, layout, duplication and contents it has been my pleasure to see since SCIENCE FICTION READER. And Coulson tells me it used to be worse...

I don't really believe him. Actually there are a couple of points where things could be worse. For instance you could have written in your Editorial what caused this issue to be late or so poorly published. and so on, ad nauseum, ad infinitum.....

And, hard though it may be to realize it in my subconscious, the duplication could have been worse. I point a quivering finger at GYRE and a horrendous OMPazine once published by Norman Genes Wansborough called STIX..... A hint or two, drop crossword puzzles. I mean after all, no one actually works it, do they?{{ See Coulson's letter-LB}} Also, anyone who would need a full page to run SUPER-MIND down and uses only half a page on OMNIBUS OF SCIENCE FICTION obviously has something wrong with his review column. {{ I'm not sure, but I think that the copy of SFO just put out in pb is an abridgement like the one Pyramid just did on Astounding. Besides, I believe in devoting more space to novels than anthologies anyway, and if you don't like it, go read S.E. Cotts-LB}}

A DisCon report that short, by the way, should never have been a chronological capsule report of the Con. Rather, Katz should have concentrated on what points of the con(as a whole) impressed him....

THAT'S ALL RIGHT DICK, YOU CAN BE AS MEAN AS YOU WANT, JUST KEEP SENDING IN ARTWORK-LB

That's all for this issue. We also heard from R.E. Gilbert, John Boardman, Lou Pochet and probably from some others whom I can't remember at the moment. C'mon everybody, write these LoC's, Like now.

-Len

# THE SIA OW SLAYIR

13 1/2

11 1/2

11 1/2

# M

uron walked down the road, his shuffling steps kicking up whirling clouds of dust. His vuna skin pouch hung from a rope around his slim waist. As he strode the weary miles, his broadsword, which had known the taste of the blood of many men, bumped reassuringly against his right hip. Suddenly, he felt a chill, and looked up in time to see a zorthang bird dive straight at him. Beating its huge red wings furiously, talons extended to grab his flesh.

Muron dove off the road into the adjoining thicket. He rolled over and over trying to bury himself amid the closely packed bushes, where the large zorthang would have trouble maneuvering. He came to a stop, hands digging into the ground to avoid tumbling into a pond. Even as his hand clutched at his sword, he heard the shrill "kree-kree" of the zorthang. He rolled to his feet and crouched, swinging his sword slightly from left to right. With a triumphal "kree", the bird was upon him. The same closeness which hampered the zorthang



prevented Muron from bringing his great sword around in a fierce killing blow. He clenched his teeth against the pain as the beast's talon grabbed his shoulder. With his free hand he gripped the zorthang's white neck and strained to hold the sharp beak away. The claw bit deep into his shoulder, and Muron knew he would have to act quickly if he would act at all. He shifted his grip on the sword and instead of swinging the blade around in a flat arc, he thrust it straight forward. The sword end, of course was rounded, but Muron's thrust was so mighty that the sword pierced the zorthang between its two round eyes. As he held on his shoulder loosened, he put the pain wracked hand on the sword hilt, too and twisted the sword into the wound.

"Kree! Kree!" cried the bird as it flapped its wings. The flapping grew progressively weaker as the bird's rust colored blood squirted from the wound in its forehead. Finally, completely exhausted by its futile efforts to escape, it hung limply, dead.

Muron sighed and began to methodically skin the zorthang. This done, he sank to the ground to rest. He built a small fire and cleaned off his wound. Oger the Warlock would, he thought to himself, cure the wound when he, Muron, arrived at Baronai.

When he had rested and had cleaned the blood off his sword, he started back to the road. Muron strode on toward Baronai.

As he hurried down the road his huge shadow ranged ahead of him. The road turned and twisted through the countryside, and many times Muron halted and took a tentative step to the side of the road. Always, he forced himself to hold to the more round about but safer route. At last, as twilight deepened into night, Muron saw the smoke from the fires of Baronai.

## II

"Hail, Tregom," Muron called to the gateman. The gateman, a tall fair haired giant, raised his pike. In the dark, one could not be too careful.

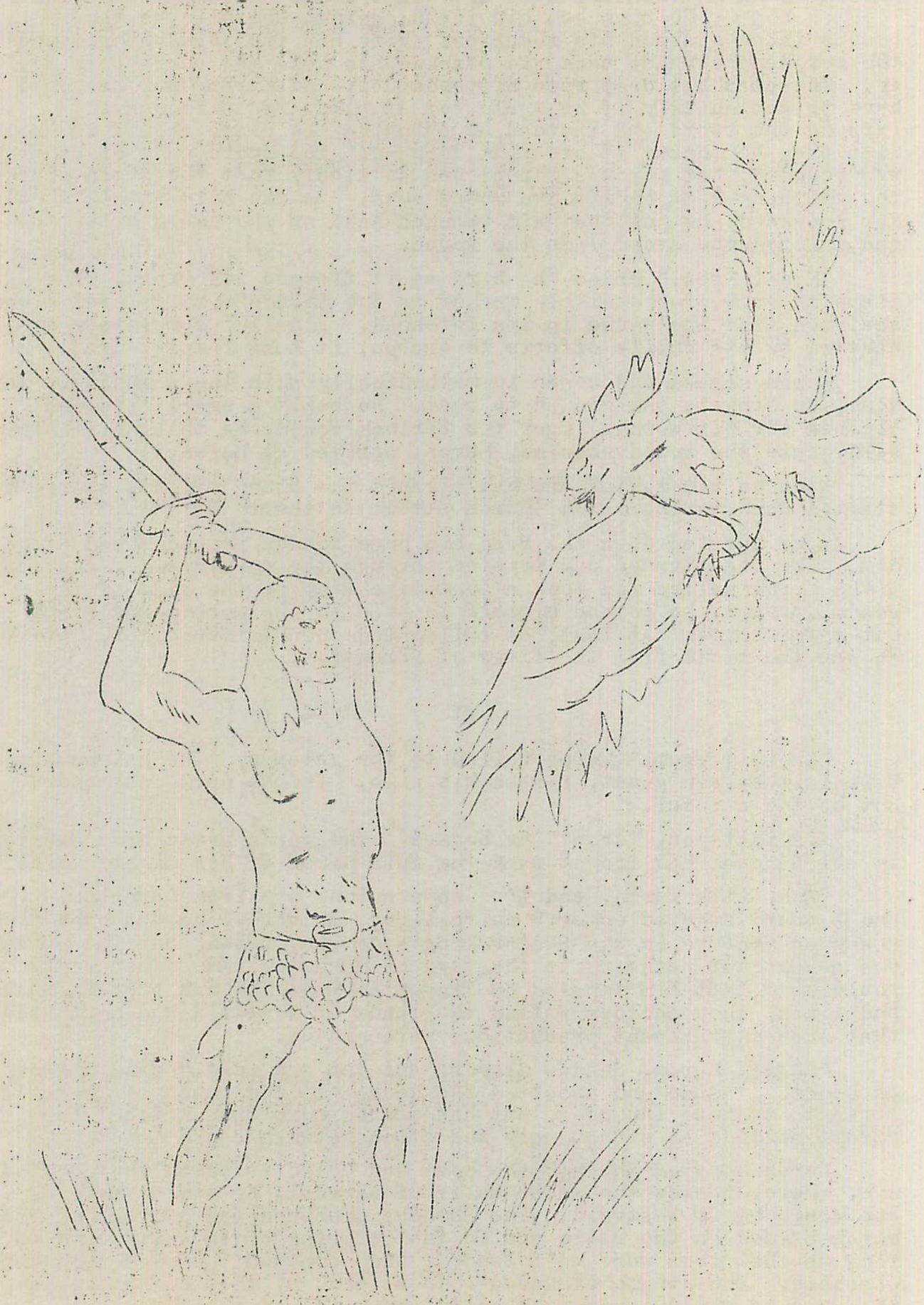
"Is that you, Muron?" he boomed. The words would have carried to all Baronai had Tregom used the full power of his mighty voice.

"Aye, it's Muron, and I've come a long way from Marnelle, and I would like to enter," he replied. Actually, he had come from a spying venture in the Shadow King's domain, Arbon, but the phrase was a personal password to the town of Baronai. Any other reply would have left him impaled on Tregom's pike. It was only in these bad times, when Shadows walked the lands of Westveld and Northveld that such extravagant precautions were needed.

"Enter, Muron, Shadow Slayer, and eat and rest," said Tregom as he stood aside and unbolted the door. It took much of Tregom's strength to move the door, but his muscle more than matched the effort needed; an effort only the strongest men could match.

Muron hurried through the door and heard it creak shut behind him. Here, inside the stout walls of Baronai, he was as safe as one could be in Westveld. The Shadows disliked the pillars of fire which blazed on the walls and in the interior of the city, and as long as the fires were well tended, they avoided the city whenever possible. The people of Baronai knew, though, that on Battle Day, the Shadows would ignore the petty annoyance of the fires.







It was a paradox of sorts that the final solution to the menace of the Shadows had been found only to be lost again when Erlich... the Wise was killed by a Shadow just after intoning his spell on the walls of Baronai. The spell made the walls impenetrable to Shadows. A Shadow spy who was already in the city had stabbed Erlich just as the spell was completed. The damage, however, had been done. Even Oger the Warlock could not hope to recreate the intricate incantation.

Muron went to the Silver Sword Inn to obtain lodgings for the night. Raspid, its jovial owner, was an old friend.

"Hail, Raspid, Innkeeper, have you a room for me?" asked Muron as he stepped through the entrance.

"Muron, my boy, there is always bread and board for you here," Raspid said. He turned his plump body and called, "Calea, come here, daughter, and show our guest to his quarters." He turned back to Muron and said, "You're in for a pleasant surprise. My daughter has grown considerably since you were here last. It has been a long time since you last stopped here, Muron, hasn't it?" Muron was about to relate his adventures of the past year and a half, when he saw the girl walk gracefully into the room. Her long hair fell in black cascades onto her shoulders. Her figure was lush and well proportioned. She smiled at Muron.

"Do you remember me, Muron?" she asked. Her breath caught and she gazed at him, a strange light in her eyes. Muron glanced at Raspid, who nodded his head slightly and beamed.

"I do not know how it could be, but it must. You are Calea, though you are far from being the one I saw last." He said. "You are the most beautiful maid I've seen in Westveld." The girl blushed and glanced away.

"Yes, I am she," she replied. "Thank you for saying that I am beautiful. It is an honor to be deemed so by one of your great renown," Calea said, "And handsomeness," she added. Now it was Muron's turn to smile and turn his head away. Raspid saw his opportunity to speak during this lull.

"Show Muron to his room, Calea. He has no doubt travelled long and far."

"Yes, father," she said. "Come this way, Muron, Shadow Slayer." She walked to an arched doorway, and then down a hall. Muron followed her.

"Such a beautiful couple," Raspid said after they had gone.

### III

It was morning when Muron arose. The sun streamed into his room after he had flung back the heavy shutters.

He buckled on his sword, washed his face in the wash bowl which stood in one corner of the room and hurried to the Silver Sword's Tavern.

"Good morning, Calea," he said as he entered the tavern. "Can a hungry man get some food?" Muron asked. He had been far too tired the night before to bother eating. Now, after a full night's sleep his stomach pleaded for sustenance.

"Of course, this is a tavern," she bantered. "As I remember, you



like your stranger meat rare and big." Before he could say something, she turned and went to the kitchen. 15 minutes later, she set a steam-heated table before him, along with a loaf of long brown bread. He tasted the wine and found it strong and cold. The meat he found tender and tasty. Calea watched him as he made short work of the food.

"Delicious, the Silver Sword's food has improved since I dined here last. I didn't know, or I would have hurried on my way even more than I did."

"I cooked it myself," she said, "I'm happy you have found it tasty."

"You'll make some man a fine wife," he replied. Yes, he thought to himself, you certainly will.

"How about you, Muron, Shadow Slayer. Why have you not married," she asked. 28

"I have not married because I am Muron, Shadow slayer. I have no roots and live a life of adventure and danger. No woman I know could stand the kind of life I lead. What girl can wield a sword or shoot a bow? No, I shall not marry until I meet such a girl, if ever that should come to pass," he explained. As he talked, his hands moved restlessly. He fidgeted a bit and he desired nothing so much as to get off the subject under discussion. On the contrary, Calea was smiling as if she could conceive of no more interesting subject.

"Ah, Muron, then it is a warrior maid you want to marry!" she paused. Her eyes darted downward and her cheeks flushed. "I-I am an archer of some note, Muron. Would you marry me?" Muron sat bolt upright. Had he, he wondered, heard the girl correctly. He looked her over. Medium height, black hair and eyes, ripe body and clear smooth skin completed the picture of a beautiful, but decidedly indoors maiden.

"Well, this is all so sudden, Calea, and most unmaidenly," he said, trying to rebuff her gently. In his heart, Muron doubted that Calea was being anything but boastful, but wished that she was what she claimed to be. "What would your father say if he heard you speak thusly?"

"He would say that Calea has never spoken so sensibly, or truthfully in her life," said Raspid, who unnoticed by the young couple had entered the room. "Don't let her pretty face mislead you, Muron. My son, she is the most able archer in all Westveld."

"But--but," Muron stuttered. It was not like him to lose his steady voice.

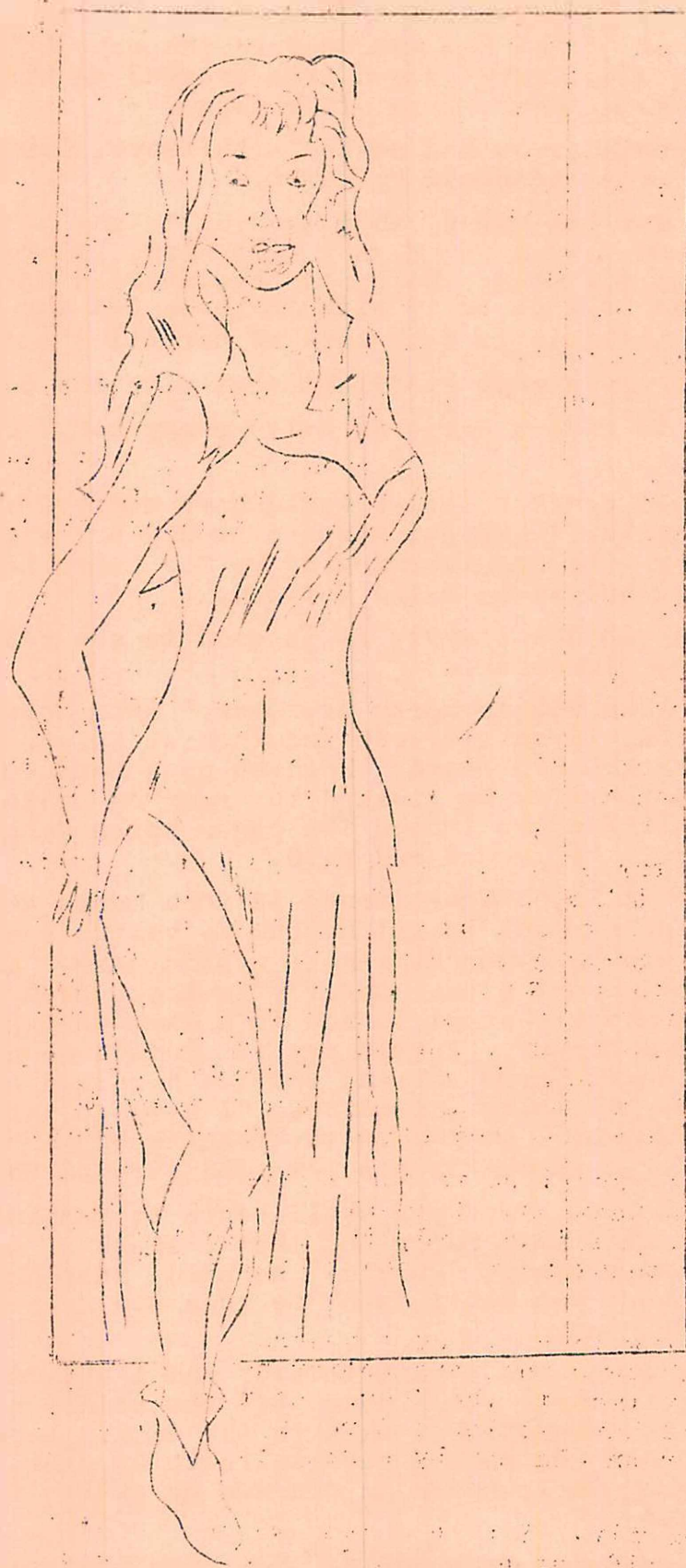
"You were serious about wanting a woman who could fight by your side, were you not?" Calea said. Muron's heart pounded so heavily that he was sure that Calea must be able to hear it.

"Yes, Calea, and I could desire no more beautiful a wife than you." Raspid winked slyly and left the room. Calea edged forward and slid her arms around Muron's neck.

"mmmm," she sighed as she kissed him. Muron's arms reached and pulled Calea onto his lap and kissed her with the same ferocity with which he did everything. He buried his face in the raven pillow of her hair and whispered in her ear.

"Calea, if you are half the archer your father claims, I want you





to be my wife." She hugged him tighter and Muron reciprocated.

#### IV

"Call it Raspid," Called Raspid. Before the echo had died, two more arrows whizzed home. Muron stood arms crossed at his chest and watched his wife-to-be loose arrow after arrow.

When the tenth arrow had scored a bullseye, Calea lowered her bow and walked over and stood by Muron.

"Well, my darling Muron, what say you?" she asked as she smiled up at him. Muron was as happy as a Cyli bird. A great weight had been lifted from his mind. He would have married Calea no matter what her prowess or lack of it with the bow, but the knowledge that his love was quite able to take care of herself was reassuring.

"You are truly a most excellent shot with the bow--"

"And able to ride a horse as well as any man," interjected Raspid.

"--but I must confess that I would have married you even had you proved a poor archer." He put his arm around her waist and they walked off together with Raspid bringing up the rear. 15 minutes later, the couple stood before Oger the Warlock.

"Ah, Muron, Shadow slayer, it is good to see you again," said the white haired old wizard.

"We would like you to marry us, Oger," said Muron. Oger looked back and forth, first at Muron and then at Calea. He chuckled a little and stroked his beard. Holding up a hand to signify that he would return shortly, he crossed the room to where his books were kept. His supple fingers turned the pages which crackled as they settled. At last, he paused and said,

"Ah, here it is," Oger turned to face Muron and Calea. "Ito mytopsa zurnis shta atone lopsit herbum ye vertun spentrona dex." Oger paused in his chanting to make a mystic pass. Then he continued, "Menit vret, menet ptum. Seger ytim beson avat ryt. You are now married. I never thought to see this day, when a maiden could tame Muron Shadow slayer. I must say it pleases me no end." Muron and Calea, locked in an amorous embrace hardly heard him. He coughed until he got their attention. "I hate to intrude upon your happiness, but Muron, I must know the results of your journey to Shadowland." Muron turned to his love and stroked her raven tresses.

"Calea," he said, "Now you shall begin to realize what it means to be my wife. It's very important that I speak of those things which I saw on my journey. Raspid," he said, turning to the jolly innkeeper. "I hope you won't think me rude and ungrateful--" Raspid waved his hand.

"I know what you are trying to say, and I understand. There are some things in these black days that are better not to know," said Raspid as he turned and walked to the door. He turned at the door and said, "If you should have to leave Baronai, as I fear in my heart that you shall, honor an old man by coming to see me before you depart."

"Raspid, you judge me harshly. You know that we would not leave ere we said good by to you." said Muron. Raspid waved again and left.

"As you know, Oger, I started out for Shadowland a year and a half ago with just a horse and the barest of equipment. My horse,



I am sorry to relate, drank a draught of poisoned water. Fortunately, I did not take my own horse, White Wind, for fear that he would be recognized. I made my way back to Westveld on foot, and here I am, newly married. In Shadowland, I saw everywhere preparations for war. The black conjure fires burn day and night, giving off darkness instead of light and the Shadow forgers work ceaselessly to fashion an army of Shadows to overrun Westveld. Although my enchanted sword, Nemesis, can strike down shadows, it is the only such in Westveld. How can we possibly defeat an enemy that cannot be struck by blade or arrow?"

"It is just as I feared, said Oger. "I perceive that we must act soon, ere the Shadow King sends his minions upon us. I have fortunately been working on the problem during the past year. I have developed a liquid which when set aflame will burn a shadow. This is merely a delaying stratagem. The Shadows can still pass through walls and go places where real men cannot and the shadow-king has at his beck and call, an army of true men. The real men, we can perhaps defeat if the Shadow King can be stripped of his Shadows."

"But, Oger, can such a thing be done?" asked Calea. Oger turned the pages of his book. At length he ceased his page turning and said,

"Yes, the Shadows can be dematerialized, but the means is one of utmost difficulty. In Shadowland there grows a tree from which the stuff of Shadows comes." A man burst through the door and skidded to a stop. His breath came in staccato bursts, and his face was pale.

"Oger, t-they are coming. The Shadows are at the walls. Do something before they overwhelm us." Muron drew Nemesis out of its scabbard and led the Warlock and Calea at a run to the walls. Although Oger was no longer young, he was still spry enough to almost keep up with Muron's trot. Muron motioned towards one of the guard towers which were placed at intervals along the walls. Calea followed him as he scampered up the ladder. Then, the couple assisted the Warlock, whose breath was coming fast due to the physical effort necessary to keep up with Muron and Calea. As they gazed out at the grassland which surrounded Baronai, across the field of green came a wave of Shadows, things which looked like true men except that they passed through trees and rocks like wraiths and cast no shadows of their own. Muron turned to Oger and said,

"That liquid which produces a Shadow burning flame, have you any?"

"No, I fear my brew is yet unmade and untried," Oger replied. The spell is one requiring much concentration. If I had time, I believe I might conjure the brew, but I fear we shall all be dead ere I have completed it." Muron thought about the Warlock's words even as the Shadows advanced on the village.

"Oger, I have a plan which may yet save the day for Baronai. Go to your magic and with all speed prepare the brew. "The Warlock waited not a second, but descended from the tower. Muron watched as the old man hurried to his home. Muron turned to one of the guardsmen of Baronai, who stood at his side. "Has the city any catapults?" he asked. The guardsman shook his head and said,

"Nay, if you mean those engines for hurling boulders. We of Baronai have always favored the hand sling. I can see no use for



a catapult, Muron. Why ask you such a question? Shadows cannot be hurt by more rocks."

"Aye, that is the truth, else we should not fear inhuman monsters who kill men who cannot even defend themselves. But we have rocks which will hurt Shadows. Send your best marksmen with the sling to the forward walls, and send as many men as you can spare to the rearward wall of Baronai, the one which is built against the high cliffs. Have these men tear down the walls and bring the rocks to the sling shooters. The Shadows will be greeted with a hail of rocks which they cannot pass through." The guardsman ran from his perch to carry out Muron's orders.

The sounds of men chipping and tearing at the wall reverberated through the town. Just as the Shadows moved within sling range, the sling shooters on the walls of Baronai let fly using the first of the rocks taken from the rear wall.

Howls fit to turn blood cold rose from the Shadow army as the stones landed. The Shadows stopped and engaged in heated conversation among themselves. This delay was precisely what the Baronai men needed. Even as the Shadows began to advance again, the second volley of stones was loosed from the walls. Then a third followed and a fourth after that.

Within the town, the old, the women and the children roomed lines which snaked their way through the city to pass the stones from the rear wall to the slingers on the walls. Stones passed rapidly from hand to hand. Even the children who were little more than babes seemed to sense what would happen if the Shadows were victorious.

The Shadow army's advance stopped and a retreat from the rain of stones began. Soon, under continued fire from the beleaguered town, the retreat became a near rout as the Shadow warriors scrambled to safety, out of range of the slings.

As soon as the news of the retreat had been passed to the villagers, cries of jubilation arose. Some danced in the streets others began to sing. For a time, all was gaiety in Baronai.

Suddenly, there came a shout from a Warrior on the wall. "They're coming back! Hurry and pass the stones."

Singing stopped immediately and the once jubilant villagers returned to the task of keeping a steady supply of stones moving to the sling men. Again volley after volley showered upon the Shadows, again they retreated.

Muron understood the tactic well. "They are cunning as they are merciless. They will advance to draw our fire and quickly retreat to safety. When we finish with the rear wall, we shall truly know what trouble is, Calea," he said to her. Turning from his scrutiny of the Shadows retreat he surveyed the city. Not many people danced or sang upon the news of the Shadow's second withdrawal. Here and there a villager stood alone, as if in a trance praying to the Gods for deliverance. Muron's keen eyes studied the rear wall. He saw that already it was noticeably weaker. Here and there, gaps could be seen where stones had been carted away-- Muron heard a shout and looked up. They were coming again. This time, he noticed the Shadows advanced slightly farther than before. After drawing heavy fire from Baronai, the Shadows pulled back. The sling shooters, however, were beginning to tire, and as they did, the range of their





throws decreased noticeably. The Shadows, who at first withdrew to their original position, moved up to take advantage of the decreasing effectiveness of the defense.

Hours dragged by as the Shadow army inched its way up. Now they charged, now they retreated, all the time moving closer to Baronai's walls. The rear wall, built with such long care melted away as the battle continued.

Thinking to catch the defenders off balance, the attackers charged in a wave nearly to the walls. Fighting exhaustion as well as the Shadows, the sling shooters let fly with volley after volley of stones. At such close range, several Shadows died, their heads split open. The rest of the Shadows ran back, leaving the bodies of their dead behind.

Muron shook his head worriedly. He turned to one of the men using the slings. "How much longer can you continue casting your missiles at them," he said.

"I don't know, Muron, Shadow slayer, but I fear the next charge will see them at the walls!" He turned back to the defense, leaving Muron to ponder by himself. The Shadows were still retreating. At last they stopped. The defenders nearly wept to see how close the enemy was halted.

"It's done, it's done," a voice shouted from somewhere below Muron. Muron heard orders given and saw men running to carry them out. Oger the Warlock stood in the street, a dozen tiny bottles in his hands. These, Muron saw, he handed, one each. This done, the Warlock hurried to the ladder next to Muron's station and climbed up. Muron bent and helped the old Warlock up.

"Thank you, Muron. I have good news, I have just successfully completed the spell for the Shadow destroying brew," said Oger.

"But, if your liquid was in those flasks I saw you with, then how can there possibly be enough?" asked Muron. Even as he spoke, the Shadows regrouped for another assault upon the city.

"No, I will explain," said the Warlock. "Those flasks contained the brew I have conjured into being, but the liquid can be added to any other liquid and still produce a blend strong enough to do the task. When the Shadows come up to the walls, the barrels, which you see being placed on the walls shall be over turned, dousing the Shadow Warriors. Then, I will call forth chain lightning from the sky and these shadows will be no more.

The shadows, at last prepared, charged again. There was no doubt that this time they would reach the walls. As the Shadows drew closer to the walls, Oger began his incantations. He raised his arms towards the sky and called upon the God Antor to loose the lightning. Nothing happened. Oger tried again, this time intoning the words more vehemently. Again the spell proved unsuccessful.

"There must be a counter spell in force," he declared. "As he spoke, the Shadows reached the walls and the ponderous barrels were overturned. The liquid fell like a man made rainstorm. The Shadows halted, confused by this strange tactic, and suspecting another trick. After taking a couple of seconds to collect themselves, the Shadows began to throw up scaling ladders. Muron ran along the top of the two foot wide wall, throwing off the ladders and striking

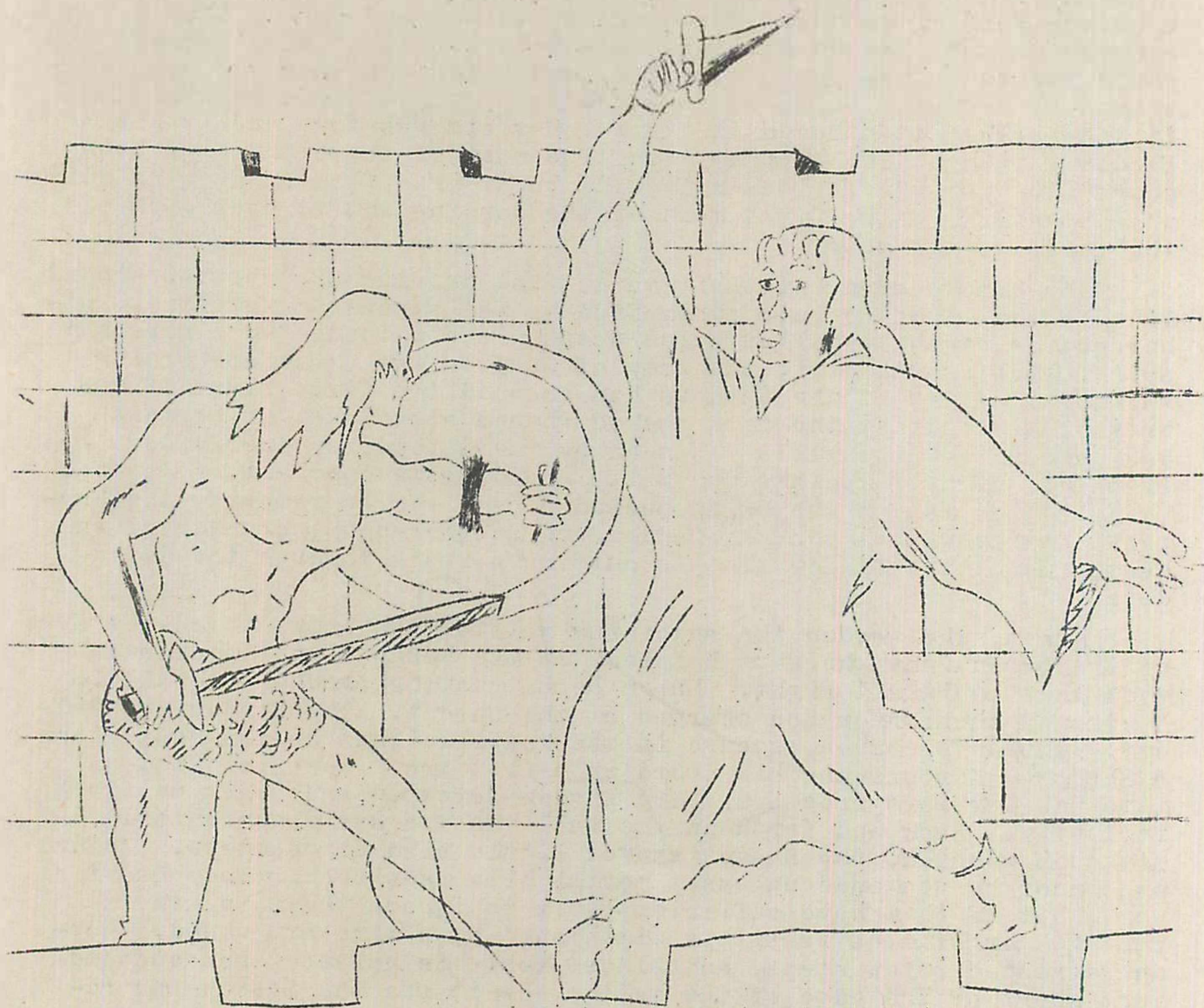


out with his sword to cut the hands off Shadow Warriors who, being quicker than their comrades, had already begun to climb the ladders. All around the city ladders were thrown up on the walls and the defenders just as quickly threw them down. The Shadow Warriors being indefatigable in their assaults, it seemed only a question of time until the city guards would tire and allow the Shadows to scale the walls.

Suddenly, next to one of Baronai's pillars of fires, a slim black haired girl appeared as if from nowhere. She had a bow and a quiver full of arrows. Muron ran up to her and cried, "Calea, what are you doing? Shadow Warriors cannot be harmed by mere arrows!" He could afford to pause not a second, and Muron continued on his way around the walls. Calea strung an arrow, and just before she shot it, she passed it through the fire. Her aim was true and it hit a Shadow Warrior. The warrior, who like most of the others had been doused in Oger the Warlock's liquid, burst into flame. Even as this was happening, Calea fired more of the burning shafts over each of the walls of the city.

The arrows each hit their mark. The burning Shadows ran around like madmen, bumping into other Shadows and spreading the fire. Other guards began to follow Calea's example and though they were not so skillful as the girl, the army of Shadows was a mob of burning warriors. A few of the Shadows had escaped the first flood of Oger's brew, but they too were soaked when a second set of barrels was dumped from the walls. Unseen by the defenders, one Shadow flattened himself against the wall, avoiding the torrent of liquid. Then, as the men on the walls busied themselves by removing the barrels, he threw up a scaling ladder and scampered up, broadsword in hand. Soon, the Shadow man was cutting a swath through the defenders.

Muron, who was on the adjoining wall of the city, heard the cry of the Baronaians who were helpless at the hands of the swordsman whom they could not fight. Muron began running around the walls. He turned the corner and charged at the Shadow. The Shadow, confident, waited for Muron, secure in the knowledge that no man could harm a Shadow. Muron swung his sword in a flat arc. Nemesis bit deep into the Warrior's free arm. The Shadow screamed and began to fight furiously. Back and forth on the wall the two swordsmen battled. Although wounded, the Shadow showed little sign of weakness. A Shadow cannot be weakened unless a mortal blow is struck. They can feel pain, but if they have sufficient will to ignore the pain, their strength or stamina is little diminished by a mere arm wound. Muron retreated a few steps, and almost lost his balance, but stopped just short of the edge of the wall. Now it was the Shadow who retreated, as Muron wielded his sword with all the skill at his command. For an hour the two figures fought on the wall of Baronai. Muron knew that he must win soon if he was to win at all. As the time dragged on, he was getting weaker while the Shadow, of course, was just as strong as when the duel had begun. Muron retreated to defense to conserve his strength and to allow himself to think of some winning maneuver. Suddenly, he brought his sword up trying to get under the Shadow's guard. The Shadow knocked aside Nemesis and landed a glancing blow on Muron's shoulder. Muron gave a cry of pain but kept up his defense. The blow reminded him of his previous shoulder wound. With a shout, he lunged forward. Nemesis propelled by all his remaining strength ran the Shadow through. Muron withdrew the sword and in a blur of motion, delivered the coup de grace, a blow which neatly lopped off his adversary's head. The Shadow man





died before his head reached the surface of the wall.

His effort completed, Muron suddenly felt weak. Before he knew what was happening Calea was by his side. She put her arms around him and kissed him.

"Muron, my darling, you are verily the Shadow Slayer. I was so proud of you. Oger says the one you just vanquished was the Shadow King's chief lieutenant. I'm so proud of you." she said as she leaned her head on his shoulder. Muron smiled down at his bride.

"And I, dearest Calea, am as proud of you as any man could be of his lady.

Your quick thinking saved the day." he said. Hand in hand, Muron and Calea walked along the wall until they reached the guard tower where Oger waited.

"Both of you," he said, "are heroes. The Shadows have been turned back." Muron, his arm around his love, shook his head in negation.

"Yes, heroes we may be, but I think we have not heard the last from the Shadow King."

~~~~~

EDITORIAL (from pg 5)

also lose us money in the bargain. Instead of getting free paper from my school we went out and bought #9 worth. The two of us were so ashamed of #3 that we put out a quickie number four, briefly annexing a co-editor to make a holy trinity (but find more on that subject in our N'APA oneshot) It really wasn't too bad, but ditto is ditto, and we were getting a little nauseated staring at all that purple. Besides, Arnie's perverted ditto busted in the middle of #4 and he bought a mimeo. Ex #5 finally wound up being mimeoed by Arnie anyway, despite what I said last issue. Eirich's church went and hid the stencil adapter and we had to bomb over to Arnie's and crank till midnite one evening. #6 barring act of ghu should also be run off by Arnie, and the reason it's in color is because I filched 11 reams from the Hallowed Halls of Commack. You know how it is, when I leave Commack, I want to take a part of it with me...

Lessee, thisish we got Arnie's Sword and Sorcery story, the Burroughs article and the rest of the usual ~~xxx~~ features. Our lettercol makes a triumphant return after a two issue absence, and Clay Hamlin gives an exclusive scoop on his ratings of all the new fanwriters who've emerged in the past year or so. The opinions expressed, of course, do not necessarily reflect those of the management.

I won't try to commit myself (well not for awhile yet, I'm still reasonably sane) as to what will appear next issue, because I'm always wrong anyway, but we do have some things coming which will appear eventually. If you liked the Muron story in thisish, Arnie has another one on the way. I've got a glossary of Barsoomian names which appeared after the fourth book, as a supplement to the existing index, John Boardman has contributed two stories, Mike Deckinger has contributed a story and we'll probably have the usual crop of reviews and editorials. See you next issue. -LB

AT THE TIME

WE GET

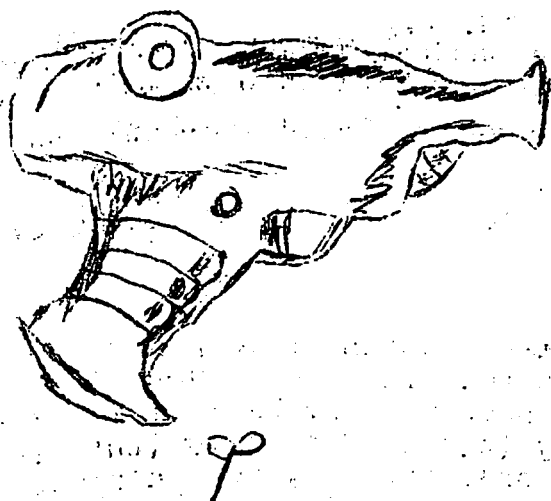
FMZ

FMZ FMZ FMZ

THIS  
COULD BE A  
REVIEW

by ARNOLD KATZ

DAVE



And now gang, what time is it? That's right, it's ~~Howdy Dobby~~ Fan-zine reviewing time. Did you all hear that sharp intake of breath. That was Buck Coulson holding his breath waiting for my verdict on the latest Yandro. Do you know what happens if I give it a low rating? Buck stops allowing me to buy it. Anyway, Robert, you can relax because the first zine is:

YANDRO #130 Buck and Juanita  
~~Howdy~~ Coulson, Rt. #3 Wabash, Ind.  
46992, 25¢ each 12/\$2.50 36pp Mimeo

The Bjo cover on this issue is quite unusual. It is a mass of lines, but the lines form a definite picture, that of a man kneeling beside another who is flat on his back, while a bat-like creature looks down from above. As I said, it's a very unusual and intricate piece of art.

Juanita, who bears the terrifying initials JWC like a ~~trouper~~ oops trouper, mentions a come on she received for a new magazine. This zine interests me no end. It has articles such as "the Utility of Pornography" the Psychoanalytic view of the crucifixion and "Should a Jew buy a Volkswagen" I just don't understand how Juanita could resist becoming a charter subscriber.

Buck, in his editorial (YAN has dual editorials, obviously copied from Excalibur's format) mentions among other things, his dislike of liquor at Con parties. I think we non-drinkers, Weber, Bales, Patten, Warner, Coulson, me, etc. ought to set up a no-liquor party at the Worldcon. It would, I think, be a good Thing.

I really shouldn't spend so much space on one zine, even if it is a good one. The rest of the issue is filled out with reviews, a poem, a review of Skylark letters, and corrections to Jay Key Klein's photos.



DOUBLE-BILL #7- Bowers- Mallardi Bowers 3271 Shelhart Rd. Barberton, Ohio, 44203 Thisish 30¢ Usually 25¢ each 5/¢1 Also Trades, contribs and printed LoC's 100pp Offset cover-rest is mimeo

Ghod, 100pages. That is a hell of a lot, but this is the an-nish and they have a good stapler and I don't, so EX won't be a hundred pages.

This issue has a photocover mostly of the Worldcon Costume Ball. The captions are pretty funny ("Ted Johnstone, Bruce Pelz and Dian Girard from Night's Black Agents (Grey Mouser Group)" had me in stitches. But I can do better in at least 3 cases. The photo captioned "Steve Tolliver as Gahan of Gathol from CHESSMEN OF MARS" I would change to "S'funny, I never even heard of strip pool 'til now." I would also recaption "Larry Ivie as Frankenstein Monster" as "Welcome to the N3F Hospitality Room." No, wait, I just thought of a better one, "Hello Mrs. Finlay, Can Virgil come out and play?"

The big feature of this issue is Part I of the Pro Symposium. The Pros, 19 in this issue alone answer questions about science fiction. By itself, this would be worth the price of the zine, but there is lots more. An article on SPACE WARS by Mike Shupp, Fanzine Reviews by Coulson, a visit to Stratford on Avon, by John Berry, and a satire on the newspaper medical advice column by Bob Tucker fill out most of the rest of the issue. There are also letters poems and fiction.

RATING: 9.8 (no fanzine is a "10")

\* \* \* \* \*

KNOWABLE #6 John & Perdita Boardman 592 16th Street, Brooklyn, NY, 11218 25¢ each 5/¢1 Free for trade, loc or contrib 34 pages, mimeo

This zine is steadily improving both in looks and material. The Story, a tale of Knights and nights, continues with two chapters in this issue. The doings of Dumbert are becoming interesting again. "Science Made Too Easy" is not up to its usual standards, probably because John didn't write it himself this time.

A filk song section is the highlight for me at least of #6. The one I liked best was "O no, John no" an excerpt from the Pro's edda by Randall Garrett. To fulfill the requirement of one anti-Campbell remark an issue, I present a verse by me:

Have Your heroes most courageous  
Fly about in drives by Dean  
And find uses most exotic  
For the Thiotomaline

O, no John, no John, no John, no  
And with that, I think we'd best take leave of KNOWABLE.

Rating: 6

\* \* \* \* \*

STRANGER THAN FACT #3 Jim Harkness, 112 W. Harding, Greenwood, Miss. 25¢ each 4/¢1 free for trade or contrib 22 pages, Mimeo.

This zine is fairly good, but not half as good as Jim thinks it is. That is a Good Thing, because my ratings don't go that high. In fact, nobody's ratings go that high.

STF #3, it seems to be, is at best marking time. The repro was incalculably better than last time, and Joe Staton's art is more like what he can do when he wants to than was his art in the second issue of STF.

The writing however is noticeably poorer. Except for a story vignette really by Wilton Beggs, it was supremely uninteresting. Let this zine be a lesson to neos who rest on their laurels.

Rating: 4

\* \* \* \*

GALAXY REPORTER #5 Dwain Kaiser 5321 Mountain View Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada. 10¢ a copy 6/50¢ bi-monthly free for trade LoC contrib, 12pp

Your enquiring reviewer has gotten the real story behind this zine. Will YANDRO do that for its readers? Not on your \$2.50 sub it won't. I have the answer to the question which has fandom ablaze with talk. "How the hell is GR printed?" After interviewing Dwain Kaiser himself I can report that GR is not as has been erroneously imagined ditto'd using black masters. It is copyfaxed. Do I stop there? No, you fan archivists, I don't. I dig deeper and get the vital information even Starspinkle has not published. The machine used is a Bruning 105 Copyfax! An added tidbit is that GR can only be printed on one side because Dwain's machine is incapable of any other kind of printing.

I've offered to do his dupering, but he'll need someone else when I go off to College. How about volunteering? (Hold on there! I need someone who would be willing to run off some of my zines let me know. If I can't find anyone, EX may have to go on the craziest damned schedule in fan history. I'll also need a pubber for SFPA, SAPS and CULT wler zines. Again, write and we'll talk about it.)

Getting back to GR. It needs material, (and a mimeoer) very badly. Dwain is trying hard, and I think we should all give him a hand. If you haven't read John Boardman's "The Great Secret of Fandom" its reprinted here. RATING: 2

\* \* \* \*

ALEPH AND OMEGA #1 Bill Osten and Enid Jacobs (Enid's address is #914 Brookhill Rd. Baltimore 15, Md. 25¢ a copy Available for loc trade, or contrib. 33pp

Usually I list the process of reproduction, (disclaimer) but this zine uses everything from ditto to offset with allstops inbetween. The repro is neat and the margins are ample. This zine is fiction slanted, so I have trouble commenting on it. The best story is by Enid Jacobs herself. Although the theme is of the hero talking to someone he later finds out is dad, it is handled unusually well in this case. E.E. Evers' story, THE FORSIGHT OF MARTIN GANFIELD isn't too badly done either. I do much prefer his poetry though. This zine isn't really too bad for a firstish, and knowing the editors, I suppose it will improve in the future.

RATING: 3

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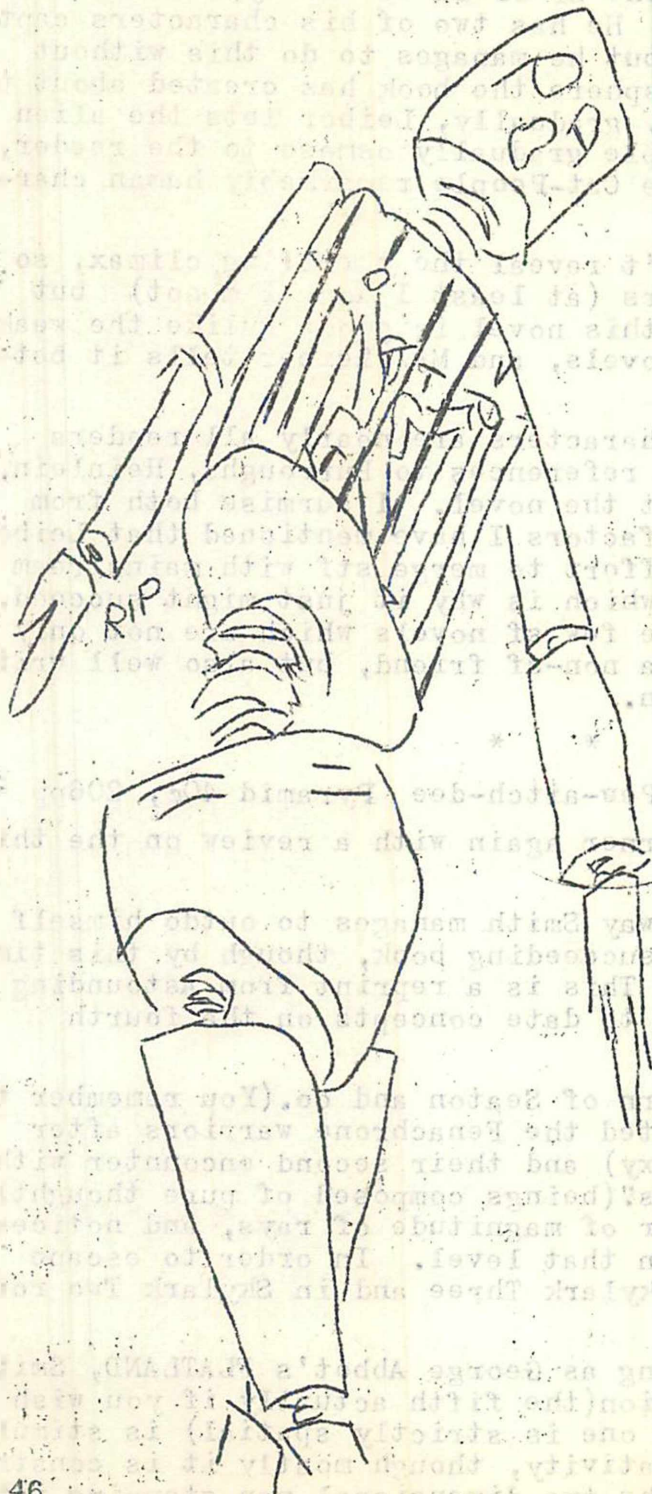
# THE

by LEN BAILES

# BOOK

# NOOK

THE WANDERER-Fritz Leiber  
Ballentine-75¢



Well, here it is, Leiber's attempt to write the definitive end of the world cataclysm type story. In general, in my own mind, I divide sf into two categories, the inside sf and the mainstream sf which is read and acknowledged by John Q. and which the critics deign to review. Examples of this are WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE, ON THE BEACH, ALAS BABYLON etc. Notice that nearly all of this type are end of the world stories. Ballentine is obviously trying to place Leiber's story in that category. A very mundane cover ~~dis~~graces the book, and Leiber's name appears in larger print than the title.

The Wanderer is a planet, and is four times the size of the moon. For no particularly good reason it suddenly appears in the sky. By using the technique of employing several sets of characters all over the globe, Leiber tries to realistically depict how people would react to such a thing. The gamut ranges from a pack of Flying Saucer Nuts in California, who take the thing quite rationally, to a pair of lovers in New York, who half drunkenly believe that they are responsible for the planet's appearance to a scientist in Germany who refuses to believe in the existence of the thing even when it orbits



disobeying over him. The writing is excellent by both the best mundane and sf standards, and the characterizations are superb.

As sometimes happens in this type novel, though, the plot begins to drag midway through the book. The East Coast has gone under water, and all the usual catastrophes have occurred, and the book begins to get the slightest bit monotonous. I can see where it was necessary for Leiber to draw out the ordeal in order to create the right flavor for the book. At this stage, when I was reading it, I thought it was going to wind up as another ALAS BABYLON, harping on misery till it gets sickening, but Leiber proved here the advantage of having an experienced man in the SF field at the typer. At this point, he introduces the aliens. He has two of his characters captured and taken to the Wanderer, but he manages to do this without disrupting the semi-mundane atmosphere the book has created about the whole incident. On the Wanderer, gradually, Leiber lets the alien philosophy of the Wanderer's people gradually osmose to the reader, while at the same time giving the Cat-People remarkably human characteristics.

I'm not one of those "I can't reveal the thrilling climax, so run out and buy it" type reviewers (at least I hope I'm not) but the truth is that the climax to this novel is good, unlike the weak conclusions which mar most sf novels, and Mr. Leiber tells it better than I could.

For some reason, Leiber's characters are nearly all readers of science fiction, and frequent references to Burroughs, Heinlein, and Doc Smith are made throughout the novel. I surmise both from the tone of the novel and other factors I have mentioned that Leiber and/or Ballentine is making an effort to merge sf with mainstream writing, but it is done subtly, which is why it just might succeed. At any rate, here is one of those few sf novels which are not only "respectable enough" to loan to a non-sf friend, but also well written enough to be enjoyed by a fan.

\* \* \* \*

SKYLARK OF VALERON E.E. Smith, Pev-aitch-dee Pyramid 40¢, 206pp

Here we are in the Smith corner again with a review on the third in the Skylark series.

It is really fantastic the way Smith manages to outdo himself in inventing gadgetry with each succeeding book, though by this time it is getting rather ludicrous. This is a reprint from Astounding 1935, but has some remarkably up to date concepts on the fourth dimension.

The plot concerns the return of Seaton and co. (You remember that in Skylark III they had annihilated the Fenachrone warriors after overtaking them outside our galaxy) and their second encounter with the strange race of "Intellectuals" (beings composed of pure thought) Seaton has discovered a new order of magnitude of rays, and notices that the Intellectuals operate on that level. In order to escape them, Seaton abandons the huge Skylark Three and in Skylark Two rotates into the fourth dimension.

While not as clear or amusing as George Abbot's FLATLAND, Smith's conception of the fourth dimension (the fifth actually if you wish to call "Time" a dimension, this one is strictly spatial) is stimulating. It shows some slight creativity, though mostly it is constructed by the familiar analogy of the two dimensional man stepping into



the third dimension. I would guess that Robert Heinlein might have been influenced by this novel when he wrote the short story, 'AND HE BUILT A CROOKED HOUSE'. The chapters alternate Seaton's doings with the slightly more mundane doings of the evil scientist Duquesne. Duquesne is operating his nefarious schemes about on the level of technology of the last book, which is hopelessly out of date. He does succeed in becoming dictator of Earth while Seaton is out in another Galaxy looking for a way to build a 5th order generator. (His previous one having been destroyed in the Skylark Three. Skylark Two actually operated((gasp)) on the etheric level, which of course is no good at all). In the course of doing so, he comes across a 4th order planet, and together they construct the granddaddy of all ships, the Skylark of Valeron. The chief impact in the book is in the trapping of the intellectuals. Duquesne, by this time is no match at all for Seaton, and the attempted suspense about their meeting falls through. We'll see tho, if he doesn't make a smash return in SKYLARK DUQUESNE, the up and coming Smith novel to be published in IF. It would seem difficult tho, as Duquesne is now also an "Intellectual, having been made so by one of Seaton's ray gizmos(no relation to Ray Palmer)

The characterization, as usual, is miserable, and the science outmoded, but as I said, some of the concepts of the fourth dimension he advances make interesting reading, and it's still good space opera in any event. Aw, go out and buy a copy you penny pinchers.

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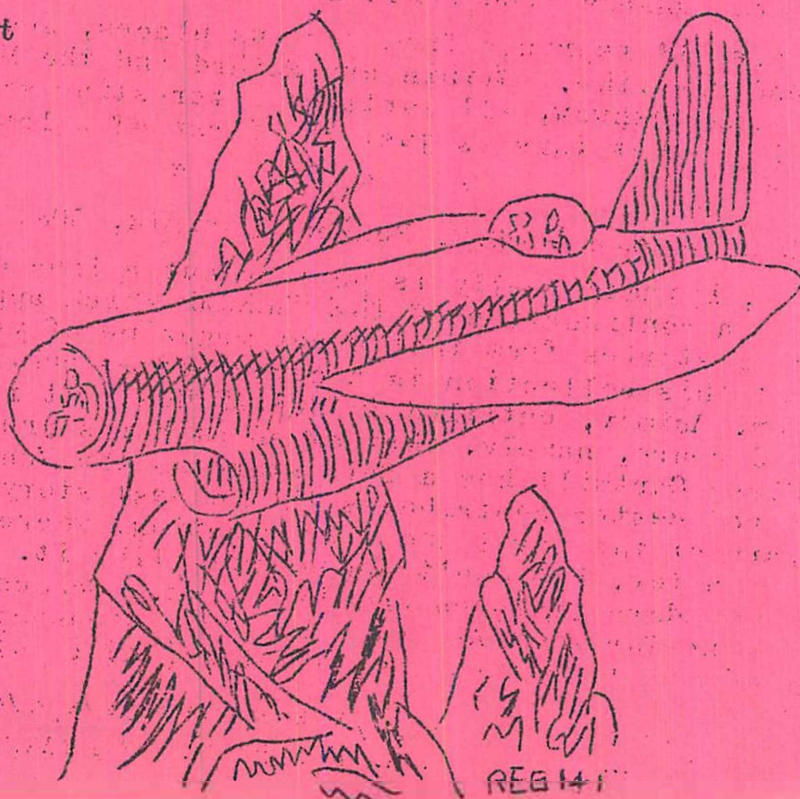
PRINCE OF PERIL Otis Adelbert Kline, Ace 40¢ 174 pp.

This is the second in the Kline series of Venus books, the first being "Planet of Peril". I believe it was first published in hardcover in 1930. Although, in reality, both Venus books were written before Kline's two Mars books, the ace editions were rewritten to make it appear that the Venus books are sequels to the Mars series. I suspect that extensive cutting has been done, if not an entire rewrite job by a new author.

P. Schuyler Miller said that he thought that the first in the series had been cut since the original had 33 chapters, and the Ace version had 18. Yet, all the Ace versions have Complete and unabridged printed on the cover. Thus, the opinions I offer on this book may or may not concern the works of Otis Adelbert Kline.

The book certainly reads better than the Burroughs attempt at a series on Venus, yet there is nothing really outstanding about it.

The plot concerns the adventures of Prince Zinlo of Olba, who is in reality





Harry Thorne of Earth, who is in reality Borgan Takkor of Mars,  
who is in reality a wild hannered reporter on a great Metropol

To clarify, the hero is a Martian who has switched bodies with an Earthman in a mystic way. This man then switches bodies with a Venusian (Venerian, Venutian?) At any rate, his Venus body is that of a deposed prince, and the book narrates his adventures in the wild jungles of Venus as he fights to regain his kingdom. He is, of course, eventually successful.

The weapons that Kline uses in the series, a scimitar like blade known as a scarbo, and a sort of portable bazooka known as a tork, are more plausible than Burroughs' radium pistols and other assorted trivia. The characters behave in a much more rational manner. The only advantage that the Burroughs Venus series has over the Kline is Burroughs' use of satire (if that could be called an advantage). Burroughs injects satire of Supermanism, Communism and several other Things Which Outrage Him. As a rule, the satire is unfunny, but it does make for a more interesting background. Burroughs' Amtor is a far more complex and interesting place than Kline's Zarovia, but Kline's work is better written and more enjoyable as a whole for Kline's method of relating the hero's adventures cuts out much of the boring Burroughs verbiage. Zarovia may not be as imaginatively conceived as Amtor, but the adventures of Kline's heroes makes better reading. On the whole, if you like heroic fantasy, you might consider buying this, tho it doesn't measure up to a lot of that type work, but I wouldn't recommend CARSON OF VENUS by Burroughs to anybody!

\* \* \* \* \*

NOTED IN BRIEF

SWORDS AND SORCERY edited by DeCamp, Pyramid, 50¢,

Ah, my favorite type of story. Here are eight tales of wizards and heroes by the top names. Lovecraft, Kuttner, Howard, C.A. Smith, CL Moore, Lord Dunsany and Fritz Leiber.

These are all reprints from various places, such as Weird Tales, Fantastic and the like. Within are Fafhrd and the Mouser, Conan, Jirrel of Joiry and goshwow, all sorts of interesting swordsmen and magicians. I hope that this is just the first of a long line of Pyramid reprints.

\* \* \* \*

THE UNKNOWN 5, edited by D.R. Bensen, Pyramid, 50¢.

By ghod, Pyramid really is putting out a line of fantasy, isn't it? This is a continuation of THE UNKNOWN which appeared last year with 13 or so stories from that great magazine of years past. The highlight of this collection is a never before published story by the Good Dr. Asimov, entitled AUTHOR.AUTHOR! It is one of a since oft repeated genre, namely, that of an author's creations coming to life. Cleve Cartmill has a fair story on the Wandering Jew Legend and Alfred Bester contributes the longest story in the book, a gripping yarn of the Devil and wish granting, wherein all get exactly what they wish for, but don't necessarily like it. There are also stories by Theodore Sturgeon and Jane Rice. Schoenherr's illos serve to dress up the format. All in all a very pleasant 2 hours worth of reading if you like this kind of stuff (and I do) but I can see where some might not.

[illegible]

EXCALIBUR! — CORTANA, FLAMBURG, GREYWAND, STORMBRINGER



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