

FANFARE



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1951

1952

"LOUISIANA WEDDING"
LIEBESTRAUM

RUDOLPH
"HELMANNLAND
"QUEST"

Plus:

TEPHRA=
MANCY

by:

Andrew Duane

WMAX KEASLER

15¢

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ENTR'ACTE

BLAGUE was helped along a lot by our artist's laxity! It will appear, however, before too much longer (if we have to draw all of the copies of the illustrations by ourselves by hand)!

I hoped to have a whole page to myself for such things as fanzine reviews, etc., but last minute difficulties forced me to cut it out. Several people have written to me asking whether I have any back issues for sale. I have one or two copies of #1, #4, #9, #10, and several copies of #6. They are all available at 15¢ each. If you wish, you may write a letter for the letter column for issues I don't have and perhaps another reader will sell you what you want.

Forget not to read the other fanzines issuing from the western NY area. Also forget not to drop into the vicinity during the Bufflocon, now shortened to May third and fourth. Each day one long movie (fantasy) will be shown, plus shorts on rockets. Come on around!

This November-January issue of FAN-FARE is the first issue that my father has not read. My father, Andrew Arthur Martin Ganley, died on the morning of Thanksgiving day, 1951, in the Veterans Hospital in Buffalo, of Lung Cancer. This issue is dedicated to his memory.

Fan

LOUISIANA WEDDING

by H. S. WEATHERBY

Yvette laughed, and the tiny band played the Beer Barrel Polka. She had been happy for months, but now, with Adrian's blond masculinity gazing down at her, his arms tightly clasping her, she felt like crying for all the folks who never realized her happiness.

"Dear, it will only be two months when I shall have the money for our cottage," he tenderly whispered. His tortoise-shell glasses glittered in the lights. Of pale-blue material, his best suit brushed against her cheek.

'Just like his eyes,' she thought. Then she was glad that Papa Leroux bought her the organdy dress—matching her greenish eyes, instead of paying the house rent to that miserable old Voodooin: Chief Washington Johnson.

Strange, that Chief. Down the dark Bayous he was more greatly feared, in fact, than Herverd Outten who headed the great Narcotic Ring that blanketed Louisiana. Here, in the Bayou Country, he was King of all Voodooins.

"Yvette, why are you so worried?" He gazed at her lovingly while her dusky hair, shining with bluish lights, soared across her face in the summer wind from off the water.

"'Bout Dad. He's drinkin' again. Course Maw won't let him git nowhar; but he's in cahoots with Herverd. And Adrian, I'm deathly scared of Herverd!"

"He can do nothing while I'm with you, and Yvette, I intend to stay with you all the time." Adrian's eyes brushed her with loving meditation. "When I have had another year of teaching, I may gain a professorship at one of the colleges."

She whispered while they danced gracefully toward the piazza: "Stay like you are Adrian. I'm satisfied. I'd be proud to have your name and be able to say I was wife of a school teacher."

"Ain't got no name yit but yer own!" bellowed the coarse voice. Adrian faced Herverd Outten. "Well, my little book-larnin' man, if she ain't got yer ring on!"

Adrian's chin shot upward, and he glared at the cumbersome hulk.

"Do you want to make anything out of it?" he asked in clipped tones.

"She'll never wed yu, son. Yer just a dandy." Meeting over the potato face, the heavy brows threatened more than usual. Herverd's huge paunch had grown sloppier and his greasy-black hair, generally untidy, hung sadly down like an oiled piece of hawser. "I won't let her!"

"You won't?" A grin of determination spread across Adrian's face and, as he swung lightly from the hips, his right fist shot out and met Herverd's jaw. The huge man sprawled on the floor.

"Adrian, you shouldn't have done it!" Yvette's eyes were dark and filled with horror. "Paw won't like it one bit."

"He needed it." Adrian stooped to help Herverd to his feet.

The scar on Herverd's cheek glowed lividly. "I'll git yu fer this!"

"Do you want more of that medicine?" Yvette stopped him from removing his coat, straightening his diamond tiepin.

"I'll git yu!" the huge man roared, limping away.

The din of myriad frogs and the bull roar of the 'gators failed to disturb them as they walked slowly home along a dirt road that wound and crept by the levee's edge—the levee as dormant as a frozen cot-

tenmouth. Yet the waters of the Bayou made soft music for those ears of the lovers.

"Be careful, Adrian," she whispered. "Be, oh, so careful."

"Don't be frightened, Pet. Herverd may be the managerial head of a dope ring, but he doesn't intimidate me."

"He'll put a spell on you. He's wicked." Beneath raven brows her eyes were as deep and dark as the night.

"Excuse me, Yvette. I can't help but laugh. I really don't believe in superstitions." They failed to hear the light splash of oars.

"But they're true, they happen." Yvette's worried face turned mutely to him. "You should've seen what they did to old lady Collette."

"It was her time to die. No one's curse, Black Magic or Voodoo helped those hardening arteries."

His arm brought her closer to him. Nearby, someone plucked a weird tune from a guitar. An oil lamp glowed through the windows of the Leroux home, and Yvette turned sadly at the gate.

"Goodnight, dear," she whispered.

"Sweet dreams," he said, taking her in his arms for the last time. A nightbird called to its mate, making an eerie echo.

2.

"Pape, you should git more fish. Then we won't have to worry 'bout the rent, Chief Washington, or Mr. Outten." The morning sun highlighted the small landing and their fishing poles. Yvette's tattered dress made an elfin picture.

"So Outten talked he'd git Adrian," mumbled the silver-haired father.

"Twas big talk, Dad. He wouldn't have—" Yvette's sultry voice broke into a scream. "Dad, what's that in the water?"

The old man peered into the muddy stream and drew his daughter to him.

For there, with his tortoise-shell glasses, his blond head and slim body, was Adrian floating past them. There were livid welts around his throat like someone, or something, had choked him, and, in his death struggle, he had grabbed a blacksnake. Although it wiggled, Adrian still held it—and a diamond tiepin glittered from its hide.

3.

Mama Leroux complained: "She's just no good, now. All she does is mope an' cry 'round the place. I swar I don think she wants to live with Adrian gone."

"Yvette's gotta come out of it. H'aint no rason to carry on this-away. Adrian died last week. Outten wants her bad—" busily smoking a corncob pipe, he leaned toward Mama, "and I think he'd better git her."

"No, Papa, No! He h'aint no good. He's the lowest trash thet's come to the Bayous. Herverd killed Adrian... I knows it!" On the sunny windowsill their pet crow cawed in sympathy.

"Shut up, woman. The Deputy made his declarshun. He said a blacksnake choked Adrian. Didn't Adrian have the ol' devil in his hand, when he came floatin' by the landing?"

"Yup, and thet blacksnake was Herverd Outten." Her wrinkled shawl murmured a protest that Yvette could lie sick in the other room. "Voodoos kin put tharselves in all sorts of shapes."

A queer sense of desolation overtook them, and in unison they turned to the shanty door. Giving a low moan of fear, and followed by Papa, Mama hobbled to her feet.

As from the Bayous, a fog blanketed the low-slung entrance. Chief

Washington Johnson stood and leered at them

"We's planned to give you——" Her protest faded to a sickly whine. Papa couldn't find his rifle. They failed to hear the footsteps from the sleeping-room.

"You has bought a dress foh Yvette with the rent money," declared the skinny black man, "cheating me outta what's mine."

"How'd ya know 'bout the money?" Papa trembled and scratched his dirty-white beard. Now forgotten, the corn cob rested on the arm of the worn-out sofa.

"In the Glorified Persons Order, we Voodooins knows all." Cat-like, the Chief crept into the room. "Where's yer daughter?"

Then Mama took over: "She's in her room, and she dasn't come out 'cause she's sick."

"Sick from not havin' her man!" said the Chief. "Wall, she don't hev to fret 'cause I got her one. He'll pay yer rent and keep you in victuals."

Mama blanched: she seemed to know what was coming. "Yeh? And who is it?"

"Mistuh Herverd Outten!" The witch-doctor's eyes tried to magnify the room, taking everything in their scope—hypnotizing, commanding all. Papa found a scrap of rag, sank on the sofa, and retched.

"No, ya won't," stated Mama. "Yer not weddin' our daughter to thet murderer." Her withered eyes puckered, and she used her torn apron to stop the flow of tears.

"Yer on the Black List of early deaths!" warned Chief Johnson, slowly. "We knows how to use folks who don't pay their rent."

A dragging scuffle sounded when Herverd entered. Mama and Papa frowned at him. From a nearby tree a jaybird screeched.

With a panther's quickness the Chief whipped a snub-nosed revolver from his pocket. "No arguments," he threatened, pointing the gun at the old folks. "Git goin'!"

"I'll wed Herverd," said Yvette. She had listened to them talk from the bedroom door. "My folks won't be on yer list."

"Now thet's the fust sensible thing I've heerd you say." Herverd's blue suit was clean and neat, his shirt and tie—of corresponding hue—immaculate; and his black, square-toed shoes glowed with Dyanshine.

"No, you won't!" screamed Mama. "Papa and me won't letcha. No chile o' mine kin wed a swamp rat." She whirled on Herverd, and her hair fell around her face like the loosened white batting from a mattress. "Yer a beastie with an idiot mother; with a no-good old man who hated ya so much he threw ya agin the wall and broke yer leg."

"Shut yer mouth, woman!" growled Herverd. He was sweaty beneath the arms from the swamp's steaming heat.

"But Maw, I has to wed him." Yvette started to cry. "You and Paw has gotta live."

"Better think on it, gal," Chief Johnson grinned.

Yvette felt inspired, as though she were being guided by an unseen hand. In her head—her inmost brain, He was telling her what to do. She turned a mystified expression on Herverd.

"Suddenly, I knows!" Her eyes focused on him. "But how do I know you'll take heer o' my folks?"

"Yer smarter than I thought. I likes my women smart." Herverd noisily cleared his throat, taking a document from a pocket. "Here's proof. Half o' my money goes to you, and half to yer folks." He smiled "That is, if somethin' happens to me."

"I'll wed him," said Yvette, simply.

4.

With readiness and bustle, the Bayou people hurried to the Church of the Voodooins. Cleaned, decorated, the Chapel shone with the industry of Chief Johnson, Mrs. Susan Johnson, and the willing help of many housewives.

Garlands of silver lace hung from the newly painted ceiling; the jet candles to be placed on the revellers' heads were ready and waiting for the nuptial ceremonial-dance. In tune, the clapper of the heavily laden with black roosters, Obil and potent powders of varied Chapel rang madly through the swamplands, while the many families—heavily laden with black roosters, Obil and potent powders of varied color, came from far to celebrate the wedding.

"Ya's lovely, darling!" Mama Leroux exclaimed, fixing Yvette's bridal gown—all satin with a slowing whiteness. The bridal wreath of orange blossoms topped the pinched, ashen face. "But yer pale. Are ya sure we're doin' rightly?"

"I'll wed him," murmured Yvette, fighting to with-hold the tears—scalding tears that would spoil the rouge so deftly applied by ebony-hued Susan Johnson. Plaster-peeling, the room personified her grief.

Dressed in brightly colored gingham, Susan asked: "Where is Mistuh Outten?"

A white-haired priest stood sadly by the door, his grim face showing a silent protest.

With feline motion, Chief Johnson moved from the window: "Whatta yu mean, Susan?"

"I mean it's late," she declared, her ugly wrinkles tightening. "Herverd's late, de guests am here and de whole shebang is held up."

"How late is it?" A sudden fear touched the corners of his mouth.

"Rosie Bisbee am de only gal who owns a watch." Susan rolled her eyes. "She says we're late an hour."

The fear thickened on Johnson's face. "We've gotta start a searchin' party."

The heavens darkened while the men rowed with silent motion. A rumble of thunder startled them so greatly one man dropped an oar. Seated in the first boat, Yvette trembled and tightly held herself. Moist and fragrant the wind blew her bridal veil above her tightened face—heralding the coming storm. Those lips that were generally full and red, like ripe, luscious cherries, now were pinched and ashen, despite Susan's deft ministrations.

A thin spray of rain pattered down the stream. Silent were the birds, and the little creatures of the woods seemed to know their danger.

With her folks behind her, Yvette lost her fear. Then too, she felt as though someone were there, pressing her hand—giving her consolation. The impression of an astral personage was so real she glanced to one side, thinking Adrian was in the boat.

How could he be there? He had been buried the day he was taken from the Bayou; with the purplish marks around his throat, his blond hair matted and soggy.

Then she smelled it: Adrian's Old-English shaving lotion. Was she losing her mind? No, she couldn't be, for she saw Him: A loving, nebulous mist seated beside her. He tenderly pressed an arm around her waist. She broke hysterically and cried. With sympathy her mother moved beside her, saying:

"He was here, Honey. I know! I saw Him, too."

During a vivid lightning-streak and a clap of thunder, the rowboat rounded the stream. They edged softly in toward the rotting vegetation of the flottante. And, across it, there were wet footprints.

Stumbling to her feet, Yvette screamed:

"He's got him. He's got him!" She moaned. Her father caught her in his arms.

For there in his wedding clothes was Herverd. They floated in closer. Like he had thrashed for an eternity, Herverd was coated with slime—swamp-mud.

In a last attempt to remove the cause of his apoplexy, tightly constricting his wind-pipe, Herverd had clutched his throat. Imbedded in the rolls of fat beneath the heavy, hanging jowls there writhed a blacksnake. Oddly pierced with a glittering tie-pin, it hissed at the intruders.

With each hiss she heard: "Yvette, Adrian. Yvette, Adrian!"
Then the blacksnake slid into the water.

The End

d a r k s i d e w a n d e r e r

Even the cutting cold was quiet here
Where silence was a deep and solemn blue.
The dim effulgence from fluorescent rock
Illumined all the narrow length of road
That rises through the valley's radiance
To the steep and icy mountain's pass.
Grimly guarded by the glistening snows
Is the black uncrumbled barrier before
The first long finger of the frozen dawn.

Many months of madness in the marshes
Behind me lie on blackened bogs of night
Under dark and diamond dusted skies.
The lambent stellar flarings marked no road
And weary were my wand'rings till I saw
The first faint trace of phosphorescent blue.

The high thin wind was whetted fire-keen
Raising the rimy snow in restless clouds
And provide in silver voile the violet stars.
But now the wind is wet and weary blowing
Over tossed and tattered rags of snow.
Before me bursts the brilliance of the day:
Far I have come, but farther need I not
To find the sun.

.... Keran O'Brien

ASSAY REPORT

You people have NOT been sending us your ratings of the stories!!
How about it? Get in your list for this issue and for the last one,
okay? Meanwhile here's the way the March issue turned out:

| PLACE | STORY | AUTHOR | POINTS |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------|
| (1) | SHADOWS IN THE FOG | FRANKLIN M. SELLER | 1.83 |
| (1) (tie) | DORMITORY OF THE DEAD | ALICE BULLOCK | 1.83 |
| (3) | DELIRIUM | FRANK E. MCNAMAR | 2.33 |
| and the May issue: | | | |
| (1) | A SIRIUS MATTER | TOBY DUANE | 1.75 |
| (2) | EXPERIMENT | EUGENE DEWEESE | 2.00 |
| (3) | A PARADOX OF DREAMS | TOM COVINGTON | 2.25 |

As we thought would happen, PARADOX OF DREAMS was either liked or disliked. Nobody voted it in second place.

JUST BROWSEING AROUND...

THE CASE OF THE LITTLE GREEN MEN, by Mack Reynolds (Phoenix, \$2.00). This book, while really not a science-fiction piece, is of interest to fans since it is a murder mystery set in a s-f background. The hero is employed by three members of the Scyla Club, the most ultra of the sfan clubs, to investigate the possibility of alien life on Earth. It is there that the mad trail starts, winding through a meeting of the Scyla club, where one of his employers is found lying under a small tree, crushed as if by a fall from some great height, a heat ray being fired at another fan in his bed, narrowly missing, and finally the Anncon, the Tenth Anniversary Science Fiction Convention, at which another fan is found apparently killed with a heat-ray.

This is a murder mystery to end all murder mysteries, and one can hardly believe that Reynolds can bring some logical solution to the whole set of improbabilities. But do it he does, and very easily, one might add. In this novel we run across quite a few well-known personages of the sf field, among them AE van Heinlein, Rog Craig, and a multitude of fans, including (heaven forbid!) one Bob Carr, who Reynolds assures me is supposed to be me. Leave us hope that he is wrong, for said Carr is the fan found dead at the AnnCon. —Terry Carr

THE DARK CHATEAU, by Clark Ashton Smith (Arkham House, 1951; \$2.50). This book is the first volume of Smith's poems since the publication of the reprint collection Nero and Other Poems in 1937. Following the trend of recent Arkham House books, it is a lamentably slim volume of only 63 pages. But since it follows as well the trend established by Smith's previous books, it is well worth the price, and guaranteed to thrill all lovers of macabre poetry. Approximately half of the forty poems included have seen previous publication in magazines, some as long ago as 1934—among them "Lamia" and "Hellenic Sequel" from Arkham Sampler, "Averoigne" from Lilith Lorraine's defunct Challenge, "The Old Water-Wheel" from Poetry, and "Luna Aeternalis," "In Slumber," and "Sonnet for the Psychoanalysts" from Weird Tales. Here are the exotic images, the flights of an untrammelled imagination, the lyric beauty that made Smith's previous five collections such rare and sought-after volumes; and here, also, in such poems as "Sinbad, It Was Not Well to Brag" and "Twilight of the Gods," is a new note, a seeming reaction to the almost unconstrained imageries of the earlier poems. In these poems the classic and mythic figures which aforetime stirred only respectful and colorful pictures in Smith's poetic imagination are now the butt of sarcasm. Imagine the man who wrote "Shadows," "The Outer Land," "Beyond the Great Wall," and "Fantasie d'Antan" speaking thus:

'My incubus is the classic hag

Yclept the Muse,'

or in the "Surrealiste Sonnet"

prating of "Lyrebird giblets in the frying pan." This is, and I give fervent thanks to the "classic hag" for the fact, only one facet of Smith's talent, and is but lightly represented in this volume. For my money it can just as well remain unexercised as long as Smith can still write such vivid poems as "A poet Talks with the Biographers," or such richly imaginative pieces as "Amithaine." A note on the interior of the dust-jacket (which was designed by Frank Utpatel, and bears more than a passing resemblance to some of Smith's own paintings and sculptures) furnishes the welcome information that there are three more Smith books yet in preparation, two collections of short stories and one large collection of poems. Until the publication of these three, the present rich little volume, small as it is, will serve as an exciting hors d'oeuvre.

—Andrew Duane

LIEBESTRAUM

by Marie-Louise

No one knew how old she was. "Crazy Kate," they called her, and she spent her days in solitude in the big, stone house on the avenue. There was a timeless quality about the house and grounds. In the daytime, no signs of activity were ever discerned. Drawn blinds shut out the brazen world, and old Kate crept around in the dark depths with only her memories for company.

But at night the house seemed to come alive. Lights streamed from every window, sometimes till the dawn. Passersby on this lonely edge of town were not frequent. Still, there were some who claimed to have heard music and laughter spilling from inside. And the sound of gay, young voices singing to the piano, although everyone knew Crazy Kate lived alone. She had no visitors, and on the rare occasions that she ventured out in her rusty black, looked neither to right nor left and spoke to no one.

Two lovers, passing the house on a crisp, Fall evening, slowed their footsteps and looked curiously at the brightly-lighted windows. Through the long, narrow panes they could see old Kate in the deep, blue chair, an open book on her lap. Her lips seemed to be moving rapidly, and she turned her head this way and that as if she might be addressing her remarks to a gathering. The dark, sensitive face of the boy reflected his uneasy thought. "Wonder if she really does see the people she's talking to?"

"Poor, old soul," the girl said pityingly. Her soft voice hung on the still air. "I hope she does! I hope she's happy. And how do we know she isn't? Perhaps even happier than we."

The young man looked down at her reproachfully. "Now THAT," he said plaintively, "in plain blasphemy." The girl laughed delightedly, and swinging hands, they continued on down the long avenue leaving the night to Autumn and Crazy Kate.

* * * *

Inside the warmly-lighted house, Kate regarded her family contentedly. The big living-room was crowded and noisy, as usual. From the kitchen came sounds of sullen mutterings and crashing of china, obvious evidence that it was Barbie's turn at dishes. At her feet, the two small boys fought joyously over Carrom. Near her, in his favorite chair, sat Dan, his pipe gone dead as he perused the evening paper, and studied with rising indignation the latest bungling attempts on the part of the diplomats to bring about world chaos.

At the piano, Gene and Marney took Hungarian Dance number 5 apart and put it together again in a catchy, choppy arrangement that set Kate's foot tapping unconsciously. The two young men standing on either side of the piano watched the flying fingers and turned pages with the experience of long practice. "Ye gods," Hank said admiringly, "Old Brahms would turn in his grave if he ever got a load of this murder."

The music stopped and Marney gave him thoughtful attention. "Perhaps," she agreed. "Perhaps not. Perhaps he might even enjoy it. I've read a good many biographies of musicians and composers and they all seem to possess one virtue in common. A magnificent sense of humor."

"And when a man's got that," Gene said decidedly, "He's got everything as far as I'm concerned. Deliver me from the smug, pious kind, the 'life is real, life is earnest' variety. Holy poop!"

"Gene, watch your language," Kate said, more from force of habit than conviction. Hank, gazing at his ring shining on Gene's thin finger, laughed fondly. To him, she seemed perfect and everything she said or did was wonderful.

Ann, crouched over her book on the floor beside Dan, lifted a rapt face. "Listen, Mother, isn't this perfectly beautiful? 'And down the long and silent street, The dawn with silver-sandalled feet, Crept like a frightened girl,'"

"Oscar Wilde," Marney said instantly. "Should she be reading him, Mother?"

"Why not?" Kate answered. "Poetry, like music, is a universal language. Read anything and everything, Annie, but especially poetry. Great verse is pure music, pure pleasure, pure pain, and an outlet for our own half-formed thoughts and desires."

Marney looked proudly at Rand. "Have we got ourselves a Mother, or have we got ourselves a Mother?"

"You've got yourselves a Mother," he said obligingly. "Where's your coat, Marney? Let's take a walk along the river road. It's moonlight and the temperature registers fifty-five."

"There's something wrong with that statement," Marney said, frowning. "Romance and statistics hardly go hand in hand. My coat's on the couch."

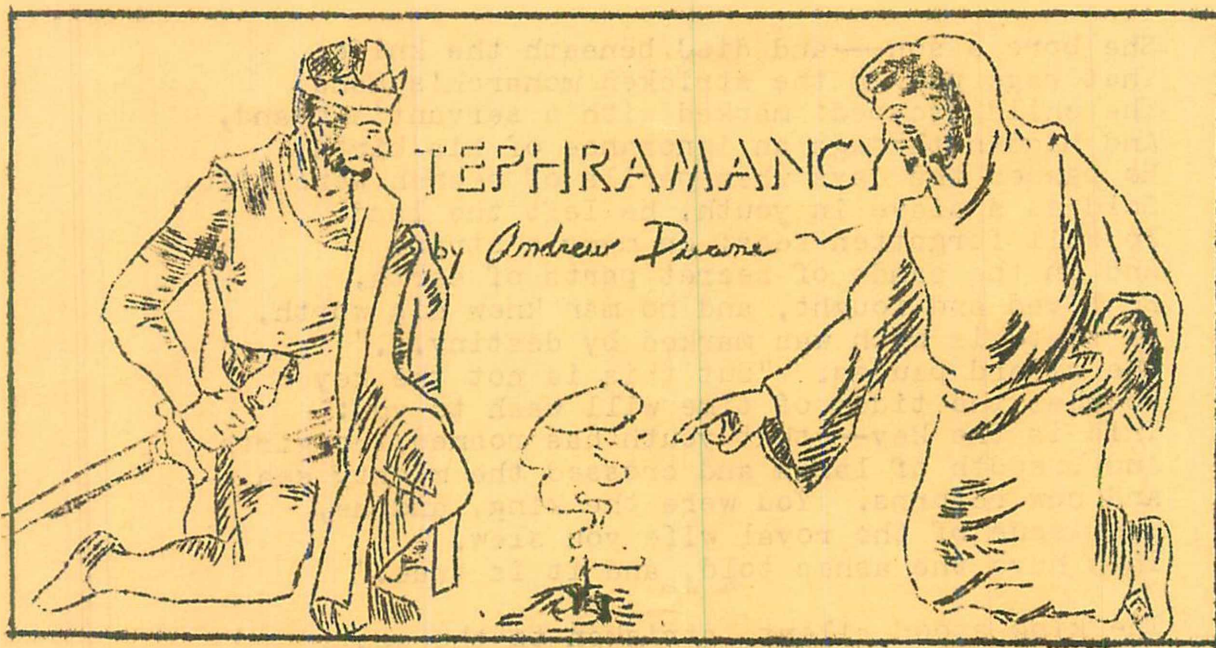
"Who mentioned romance?" queried Rand. "You flatter yourself, woman. I can barely stand the sight of you."

Marney stretched round arms above her head, and the small, high breasts pushed proudly against the filmy, white blouse. "Autumn," she said dreamily. "I love Autumn. Listen to the wind! 'O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being...'"

"One thing I can't abide," observed Rand returning with the red coat, "is a female spouting poetry all over the place. Don't you ever have any thoughts of your own?"

"Oh yes," Marney said cheerfully. "But why bother to be original when someone else has already said it so much more beautifully?"

Kate watched the big, young man helping her daughter into the red coat, turning the collar up under the round chin, listened to their banter and was not deceived. Rand was a fine boy, and Marney, with her passion for living, her intense capacity for sorrow or joy, would be well taken care of. The door opened to a chill wind, and the two went laughing, hand in hand out into the night. And suddenly a chill wind blew across Kate's spirit. I shall never be any happier than I am now, she thought with panic. Don't let go, don't let go! They're still here... Marney, Gene, Dan... Dan! No use. No use. She lifted her head and looked around the long, empty room. Just a moment ago it had pulsed with life. Now it was grey with silence. But they'll be back, they always come back. They've just stepped out for a moment. She sat quiet, listening. The wind came raging down from the mountains and ravished the round maples by the porch. The exulting sound rose to a high whine, and the heavy, oak door opened as if by an invisible hand. Kate rose stiffly to close it. Then she seated herself at the black, shining Chickering, and the long, thin fingers that had never lost their magic touch caressed the black and ivory keys. Passersby, at that moment, might have seen "Crazy Kate" sitting upright and alone at the piano playing "Liebestraum." The tender, nostalgic charm of it filled the long empty room and floated out into the Autumn night.



"Look well into the ashes," bade the king;
 "Look well and see the vision of the years,
 The restless tides of time that sway the spheres,
 And tell me what is held in them for me."
 "To know the future is no idle thing,"
 The wizard spake: "There be an hundred seers
 In this one vale alone who'll have no fears
 To tell you what you want to hear, for fee
 Of sullied gold or promised amnesty.
 I am not one of them; I am no fay
 To sell a divination—I'll but say
 The things the ashes tell me, at your will."
 The king replied: "I, you, the flames—we three
 Shall know the secrets of the future. Nay,
 I would not have it else; what use to pay
 And hear the sly, bribed revelations spill
 Upon a mound of money? Use your skill,
 And tell me truth of what the ashes tell."

Blood of a goat and horn of a gazelle,
 Oil spread on silk cut from the king's own cloak,
 The tip of midnight from an eagle's quill—
 These were the four essentials of the spell;
 Burnt by dark flames within a coral shell,
 These were the ashes when the coral broke.

The wizard, bowed above the ashes, spoke
 In tones wherein a secret wonder dwelt:
 "A king in scarlet on a cushion knelt,
 And took a rustic maiden for his wife,
 Wrapped her that very night within his cloak.
 Ere half a year he saw his passion melt;
 Betrayal grew within his bride, and dealt
 The crushing blow that cost the queen her life:

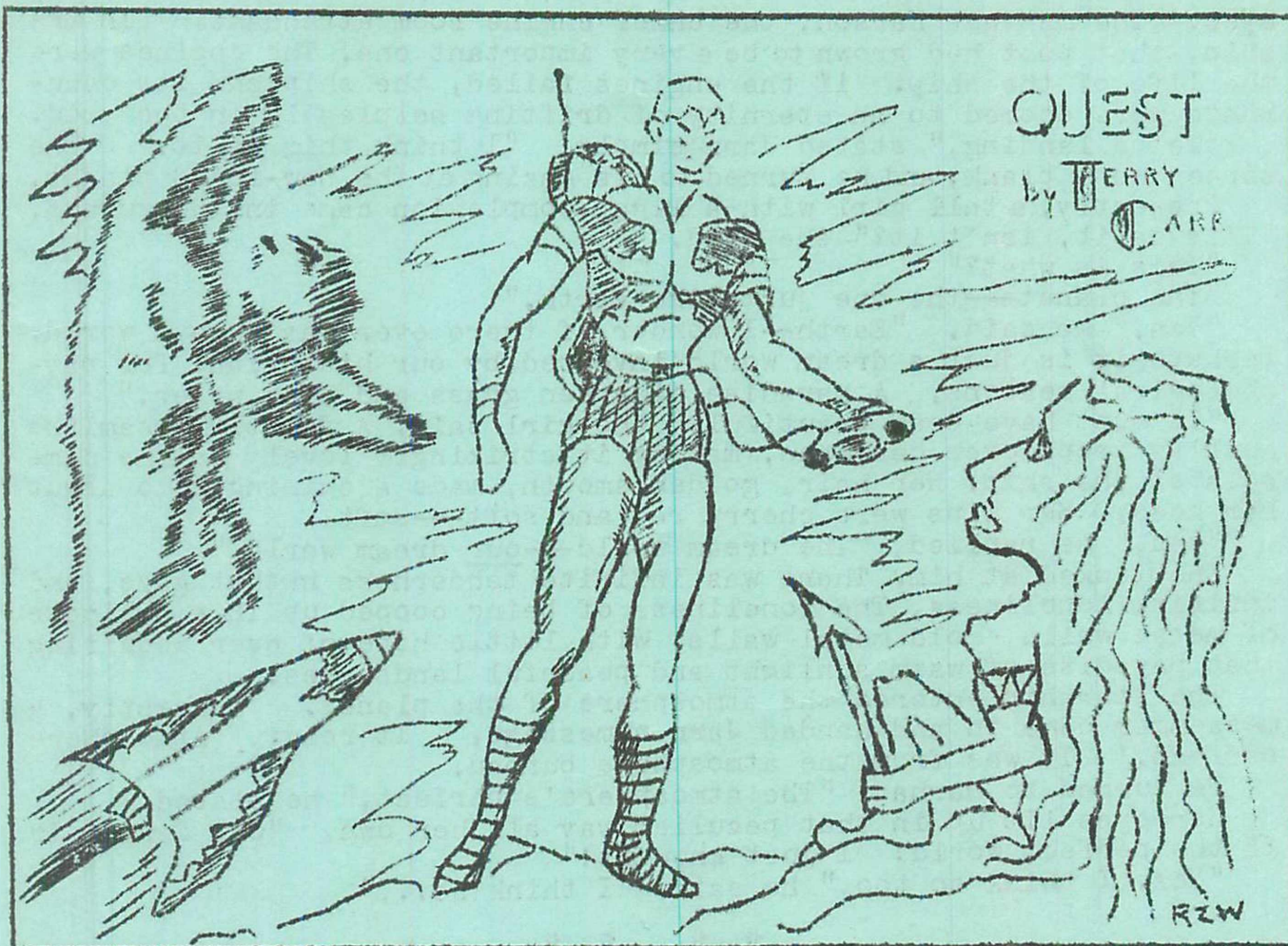
She bore a son—and died beneath the knife
That rage put in the stricken monarch's hand.
The child escaped: marked with a servant's brand,
And hidden through an ignorance of his birth,
He passed the days when perils of search were rife.
Sold as a slave in youth, he left the land
To sail forgotten seas; on many a strand
And in the sands of secret parts of earth,
He lived and fought, and no man knew his worth,
Or that his path was marked by destiny..."
The wizard paused. "But this is not the key
To what the tides of time will wash to you:
This is the key—that youth has roamed the girth
And breadth of lands and crossed the mighty sea,
And now returns. You were the king, and he,
The issue of the royal wife you slew.
This have the ashes told, and it is true."

The king stood silent, stricken to the soul,
Then spoke: "Have not the ashes told the role
That he will play in life?" A growing fear
Disturbed his twitching face, now ashen hue.
The wizard laughed. "The ashes tell the whole
Of what will come. Look thou into the bowl
And see thy fate." The trembling king bent near—
And never felt the knife or heard the jeer
Of sated vengeance as the wizard struck.
He fell, and bleeding like an arrowed buck,
Poured out his life. "See how your course is run?"
The wizard smiled: "I am my mother's son!"

t h e f a u n b y t h e p o o l

by Isabelle E. Dinwiddie

The faun came stepping down the path
Lit by the moon's soft glow.
His tiny hoofs left sharp, deep marks
Like Pan's, of long ago,
He danced around the limpid pool
A flute held to his lips,
The music trembled on the air
In trills and merry quips.
A wreath of cowslips on his brow
Between his pointed ears,
He saw his form within the pool
And then burst into tears.
He wished he had a human soul
To live as mortals do,
To taste the pleasure of their lives;
Maybe their heartbreaks too.



The planet revolved below like a beautiful top. It was a sphere of hope for the occupants of the great starship which was circling the globe. For hundreds of years, the starship which had been traveling the ways of space had been alone, always surrounded by the awful vastness of stars and blackness. The ancestors of the people on the ship then had stopped often, exploring planets, searching for the dream world.

They had never found it. And they were still traveling the dark. Someday, perhaps they would find it. Someday—perhaps this was it. It was an Earthlike planet. Would it be THE planet?

Inside the ship, in the control room, a man gazed at the world with ill-confined excitement. He was Jarn Algo, the pilot and hereditary captain of the ship. The ship had stopped on a planet but once in his entire lifetime. He, like all the other people on the ship, was weary of the tedious journey through interstellar vastness.

He turned to the messenger who stood ready at the door. "Have Marna come to the control room," he said.

The messenger turned and hurried out the door. Then Jarn Algo flicked the communicator button for control room to engine room communication. A face appeared on the telescreen. It was a pudgy face,

with no definite chin. Out of two deep hollows peered a pair of beady eyes. The man was Karson, the chief engine room attendant. In the ship, that post had grown to be a very important one. The engines were the life of the ship: if the engines failed, the ship and its occupants were doomed to an eternity of drifting helplessly in the void.

"We're landing," stated Jarn simply. "I think this is it." The screen went blank, and he turned to his gazing at the new-found planet.

Presently, a tall girl with a light complexion came in. He turned, "This is it, isn't it?" she said.

"This is what?"

"The planet—the one just like Earth."

"Yes," he said. "Earth—I wonder if there ever was such a world. Perhaps it is just a dream world invented by our historians for psychological reasons. A paradise of green grass and blue water."

"It must have been beautiful," the girl said. A faintly dreamlike quality crept over her face, making it strikingly lovely in the dimness of the ship. Her hair, golden smooth, made a shining halo about her head. Her lips were cherry red and soft—soft.

"Yes," he replied, "The dream world—our dream world."

She looked at him. There was infinite tenderness in that gaze, and infinite loneliness. The loneliness of being cooped up in a cylinder of metal walls, cold metal walls, with little hope of ever acquiring that paradise of warm sunlight and peaceful landscapes.

The starship entered the atmosphere of the planet. Presently, a messenger came in and handed Jarn a message. It read: 'Atmosphere perfect.' It was from the atmosphere bureau.

He turned to Marna. "The atmosphere's perfect," he stated.

Her eyes lit up in that peculiar way all her own. "Oh, Jarn! It IS the perfect world! I just know it!"

"Yes, I think so too," he said, "I think so..."

* * * *

The ship had been on solid ground for two days. Tests had been made, and the world had turned out to be the perfect one. It was a perfect copy of Earth. It was beautiful.

Jarn and Marna were in the first exploring party on the planet's surface. As they stepped out of the airlock, they looked around in awe. The world was SO much more beautiful when seen from the surface, instead of from the viewports of the ship.

Off to their right, a rippling stream flowed along. The grass was a marvelous shade of green, and the sky was blue—a cool, light blue. The members of the party, most of whom had never been outside of the ship, gazed around in ecstasy.

They walked over to the stream and Malla, the girl from the Element Bureau checked the water. It, like everything else, was perfect. They all drank the first real water they had ever tasted in their lives.

Then they moved on to the summit of a little hill. From there they could see for miles in all directions. Marna was the first to the top, and she breathed a startled "Oh!"

The rest came one by one, and gazed around, enraptured. The surrounding landscape was to them too lovely for words. Far to their left, a range of mountains stretched. They looked purple in the distance, just as the history books had said.

Suddenly, a man named Pharsen called, "LOOK! Smoke! Over there, by the high mountain!"

They all looked, and sure enough, there was smoke. That meant in-

telligent life, probably. If so, then they must leave this beautiful world, for they could not harm any intelligent form of life.

They darted glances at each other, glances full of fear—fear of leaving the only place where they could be happy. They trudged toward the smoke, thoughts racing through their minds. To Jarn and Marna it meant the possible end to all their plans—plans which they had made for each other.

Gradually, they drew near the mountain. It, like all the other things of this world, was perfect. It had trees and bushes on its slopes, and butterflies flitted from flower to flower. There were birds in the trees, a myriad of different kinds—many more than were mentioned in the history books. Their songs sounded throughout their journey, making it happier and yet more sorrowful, for they knew that they would most certainly have to leave all this.

The column of smoke grew nearer. Gradually, it thinned and disappeared altogether. They bore on, intent on finding if the smoke was made by intelligent beings.

Soon a man called, "There it is! I see it!"

Soon they saw it also. And wished that they hadn't. For it had been a campfire. They knew that the moment they saw it. Yet they insisted on testing it, making sure. And again they were sorry they had done it. For it proved beyond a doubt that there was intelligent life on the planet.

Marna turned dejectedly. She started for the ship. The others glanced hopelessly at each other and followed. It was much the same story for many of them. Love, though severely handicapped, could not be banished, even on a starship.

Marna turned suddenly to Jarn and spoke in a quivering voice, "Jarn, I can't leave! I—I'll fight for this world! I'll—" she shuddered, "I'LL KILL!"

The mere thought of killing made her shudder. The idea had been psychologically extinguished from them all when they were young. Still, the thought of leaving all they had ever dreamed of was unbearable.

She looked at him, her eyes bright with half-formed tears. He knew that she was hoping for a word of assent. And he could not bring himself to say no. Perhaps it was the planet, perhaps it was the plans they had made together. Perhaps it was the way her eyes pleaded to him.

"Marna, I--"

He didn't go on. He simply walked on, a lump in his throat. The others walked silently. He could see that they were thinking the same thing as he. They would not leave the planet. They would fight.

They reached the ship. They were let in by a man with a hopeful gaze, and a small crowd gathered. Jarn Almo told them.

It was as he expected it to be. The men and women were silent. They dared not say what was in their minds. A gloom was suddenly cast over the ship. The planet seemed even more desirable, now that it was lost to them forever.

Jarn drew Marna aside. "Marna," he said earnestly, "did you really mean what you said out there?"

She studied him. "Y—yes," she said hesitantly. "If worst comes to worst."

"Then we'll DO it!"

"I—I don't understand."

"We'll drive the inhabitants to a different part of this world!"

"But the others won't—"

"Yes they will!"

He took her back into the crowd. The people drew aside for them

to pass. He walked to the front of them, leaving her in the crowd.

He addressed them earnestly. "You all know the import of the information just received. It means we must leave this planet."

He studied the faces in front of him. On them were written pages upon pages of emotions. Sadness, grief, indifference, curiosity, wariness—all paraded before his eyes on the faces of the people.

He continued, "I'm sure none of us wants to leave. This is what has always been referred by us simply as THE planet. To me, as well as to you, it's exactly that—THE planet. The planet which we have been searching for I THINK THIS WORLD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR!"

Soon a determination took hold of some of the men. Others looked hesitant. They didn't know if their training would permit them. But they were with him. He could see that. Three-fourths of them were determined, the other fourth hesitant.

"Well, do we fight?" he asked. There was a chorus of yeses. He couldn't tell how many were for and how many against. "All those in favor of fighting line up against the wall."

A large majority started to move toward the wall. Abruptly, they stopped. Into the room strode Kendon, the second in command of the ship.

Kendon was not well liked in the ship. He had his followers, of course. He was old and had lost contact with the trends of thought of the people on the ship.

"Well," Kendon said, "What is your report?"

Jarn hesitated. "There are inhabitants on this world. Intelligent ones. We're going to force them to move to a different section," he said at last.

Kendon looked around in incredulity. "You don't actually mean you're seriously thinking of using FORCE, do you?" he said.

Jarn spoke first. "Yes, we aren't going to leave the place we've been searching for for so long just like that." He snapped his fingers.

Kendon said with firmness, "Obviously, our captain is temporarily unfit to carry on at his post. Until he is able to think clearly, without letting his emotions carry him away, I shall carry on in his place."

Jarn was stunned at this speech. So was everyone else in the room. Kendon turned to the crowd and said, "Well, how many join me in protesting this rank barbarism?"

About a fourth raised their hands. Jarn noticed that they were the ones who had been undecided before.

"All right," said Jarn, "This is rank mutiny. I command you to stop this foolishness. We are not going to leave here."

Kendon shook his head vigorously. Jarn knew then that the ship was divided into two parts: his and Kendon's. Still, he could not blame the other party too much for conforming to their training.

He addressed Kendon, "I've a proposition. You think it would be fair and right to leave this world. We think there is room for all of us here. You and your followers may take the ship and continue the Search while we stay here on this planet."

He looked at his followers questioningly. They were behind him. One of Kendon's men said, "It would not be right to leave you here where you can harm any of the poor natives. We can not let you do this."

Kendon considered, then said, "We will take this offer." He must have realized that his band of followers could not hope to overcome Jarn's.

There were mutterings from Kendon's followers now. They felt as had the man who had first spoken. One man said to Kendon, "We will not follow you and leave these barbarians here."

The others agreed with him. Kandar had been ousted from the party he himself had formed. Jarn was up against the party now. He and his party could beat them, but they were their friends in many cases. They simply had a different viewpoint.

Jarn saw the only way out of their predicament. He quickly ran to the airlock and opened it. He called his men to follow him. Puzzled, they came. When they were all outside, he closed the door on the bewildered faces of the rival party. Then he locked it with his captain's key. The others were now incapable of bothering them at least for a while. In that time, he could get a head start on them.

They all followed him up a hill and over it. On the other side, he stopped and addressed the party. "The people are up in those hills (he indicated some of them with his hand) behind that line of trees there," he said. "That's where we're going."

They started again. Around them spread the unending beauty of the planet. It made them glad of their choice to stay here. They, at least, would know that they had found contentment, that they would not have to be looking for something they had already found and left for the rest of their lives.

They were soon at the base of the hills. Jarn stopped them there and said, "We'll have to spread out from here. We can meet at the camp from where that smoke is coming." Indeed, for the last ten minutes, a thin wisp of smoke had been winding its way lazily upward from a point high on the mountain. He separated them into groups of six and dispatched them. He and Marna were in one of the groups.

As they drew closer, he whispered to Marna, "Got your blaster ready, dear?" She nodded to the affirmative and they went on in silence. They busied themselves in checking and rechecking their guns. It was a tedious climb, but they loved every minute of it. The brisk mountain air and the green trees above and the occasional sound of a cricket and the songs of birds all lent to the magic of the climb. Jarn knew that never would he know more complete happiness than he knew now. Later, he would become used to the beauty and the thrill would be gone. But now, with the splendor surrounding him and Marna at his side, he was perfectly content. He could have wished that the mountain was two miles high.

Finally they came to the clearing in the trees from which came the smoke. They took special care not to be seen or heard. He saw that it was a camp for the inhabitants. The inhabitants were roughly manlike in shape. Their body was covered with a heavy fur, and their faces were those of apes.

Presently, Jarn heard a man creeping toward him from his right. He soon saw that it was Sinka, the recorder of the ship. He crawled up to Jarn and said, "Most of us are here now. What are we going to do?"

Jarn answered thoughtfully, "As soon as the rest are here, we'll walk in and give them a demonstration of our power. I don't want to hurt too many of them, but that's almost an impossibility."

Marna looked at him with a trace of fear in her eyes. "Jarn," she said, "Is there any chance of our—getting hurt?"

"Perhaps," he replied, "I doubt it though. They'll probably be so frightened by our display of power that they'll give up without a fight."

Soon Sinka gave him the word that all were present. He told him to pass the word of their plans around. In five minutes, Jarn blew a whistle and the battle was on.

From all sides of the clearing came men. They stood in a circle around the natives, who were gazing open mouthed at them. One of them

threw a stone knife at one of Jarn's men. The man ducked, and Jarn shot the native through the chest.

At this, the natives began to shout and brandish war clubs. They rushed at the little band of followers that circled them. As they came, Jarn fired like a machine gun.

Nothing happened.

Jarn and his followers were dumbfounded. He saw that the native that he had shot was not even hurt. The beams from the guns of the others were as ineffective as his own, he saw. Everywhere, men dropped, their skulls cleft or rolling on the ground. THE NATIVES COULD NOT BE HURT BY THE BEAMS FROM THE BLASTERS!!!

Jarn called a hasty retreat. The full implications of the development had not yet come to him. His immediate worry was how to get out of there without leaving his head behind. The men followed him quickly.

He dashed down the hill and the men followed him with zeal. There was no one who wanted to stay and fight it out. Marna suddenly appeared beside him. She was running hard and her face was white. He suddenly realized that his was white too.

After ten minutes of steady running, the natives gave up the chase. The band stopped to reconnoiter. Eight were no longer with them. As faces looked around, Jarn heard a woman begin to cry softly. He knew her; her name was Mera. Her mate-to-be was not among the present. He remembered the man falling to the ground with a surprised look on his face. His head had been bashed in.

For the present, the party was content to sit and rest and talk. Jarn and Marna sat together, thoughts racing through their minds. This latest development meant that they would have to leave the planet anyway. No amount of fighting would help them. They were weaponless.

They could not discern the cause of the ineffectiveness of the weapons. They had been checked and rechecked before the battle. They were all in perfect condition.

Presently they started out for the ship. Halfway there, Jarn stopped and aimed the blaster at a tree and fired. The tree fell. He grunted and continued on. Thoughts were racing through his head. This world was so like the legendary Earth that he wondered. Back on Earth before the takeoff, he had read, there were a lot of 'scare stories' going around. Some scientists had warned that the drive of the ship would project the whole ship backwards in time. Something about reaching and passing the speed of light. What if that had been what had happened? What if this was Earth as it had been millions of years ago, when mankind was just a lot of assorted bands of ape-men? That would explain the lack of effectiveness of the guns. If they had been effective against the natives, they would have been wiped out and mankind would have suffered a strong setback. It was not the fault of the guns that they had not worked. It was the displacement in time due to the ship's drive.

Jarn knew that he would have to tell them later. He could partly justify the sorrow that had been caused by the fact that if they had been successful they would not have been where they were now. He knew that they would continue in their search for the Earthlike planet until they died. And then it would be their descendants' turn.

And it would go on until the ship's drive thrust them back in time to a time before Creation. Then it would stop.

REMEMBER- ATTEND THE BUFFLOCON, MAY 2, 3, 4; LIVE DANGEROUSLY--The End
FAN-FARE STAFF, heh heh! MEET THE
burp!

WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN

Address all comments to Robert E. Briney, 1022 Greenwood Ave., Wilmette, Illinois. No letter should exceed 250 words in length.

First off, please note the change of address above. From now on the letters to F-f will be bunched between bouts with calculus and Latin. So try to make them extra interesting, won't you; a steady diet of Horace and differential equations becomes a mite palling if not seasoned with the morsels our little feline brings in. Which brings me to the tidbits for this issue—a meagre lot if I must say so.

Dear Bob: Rec'd the latest Fan-Fare today. Must admit it was darn good. Leverentz's cover is cute, tho it's plain to see he can't draw. (Whup?) Helen Soucy has a good idea there, about having Makronalds do a column commenting on the stories. Since I am a budding author (with thorns, of course) [Could be you mean horns??—Ed.] I'd like some criticism, too. Helpful criticism, nachurly. ##### Well, on to the stories. Best in the issue by a kert's-hair is THE SOFT AND SILENTLY GREY by Aleverentz. It was very, very good. Not good enough for the pros, natcherly, but I think Al could make it so by rewriting it. There weren't too many weak spots. Second place is KEVIN'S CHARACTERS by Alice Bullock (gotta get these authors' names in, y'know—egoboo). [Egoboo—that's the selfish motive for other people's activity as opposed to the creative impulse which inspires one's own—to borrow a definition from Walt Willis.—Ed.] The main thing wrong with this is that Kevin doesn't act realistically in some places; reread it and you'll see what I mean. M'LUWALA'S COOLING SYSTEM by Dave English (any relation to George Allan?) [That's England, chum.—Ed.] was pretty good: nothing to whistle about, but then, nothing to groan about either. ##### The verse this issue just didn't strike me right. Entr'acte too short. Book reviews satisfying. ##### Brian McNaughton's musings about Lovecraft remind me of the controversy about whether Shakespeare would be able to sell his plays nowadays. Lovecraft's type of story has, since his death, become the classic type for weird-fantasy. Today, however, were he just starting his career, I doubt if he would be able to sell to anybody except Weird Tales, mainly because no one prints weird-fantasy besides that mag. (Of course, Fantasy Adventures and Imagination print a few, but even in an age when Lovecraft is recognized as one of the masters of fantasy, they do not print that type. Just imagine HPL trying to sell his stuff to them if nobody'd ever heard of him before. I doubt if he could sell it today to them, well known as he is.) [Which merely goes to show how the fantasy field has deteriorated since the heyday of the Popular Fiction Weird Tales.—Ed.] —Terry Carr, 134 Cambridge Street, San Francisco, 12, California.

Dear Bob: First let me tell you I'm a fairly intelligent lad. Up to now, I have never failed to understand any of the stories I have read—the plot or idea. Now let me tell you that THE SOFT AND SILENTLY GREY was very well written, but so help me I can't understand the plot, if there was one. Maybe I just looked at the words wrong, which I hope is what happened, because I'd hate to see all that smooth writing go to waste. Say, maybe that's why you published it—because it's so well written. [All the good writing in the world couldn't save a story that had no plot or idea behind it. Yes, THE SOFT AND SILENTLY GREY had a plot, and also one of the neatest endings we have ever seen on any tale

either fan or pro. Briefly, the idea of it was this: the amoeba king, or god, whichever you prefer, was in need of calcium to live. When the Earthmen went down into the vault to explore, they walked into a perfect trap. The climax, when they notice that cigarette smoke—the soft and silently grey—floats straight up in the motionless air of the vault, reveals that they are trapped in the vault, a new supply of calcium for the amoeba king.—Ed.7 ##### M'LUWALA'S COOLING SYSTEM was very cute and would have been done for, though well-written, if the idea had been used in another story. KEVIN'S CHARACTERS was fairly well written, but the plot wasn't any too good. From now on don't have any less than four stories in an issue, no matter how good they are. I think it really takes away a lot from your zine when you only have three. —Ted Sarantos, 602 Webster Street, Midland, Michigan.

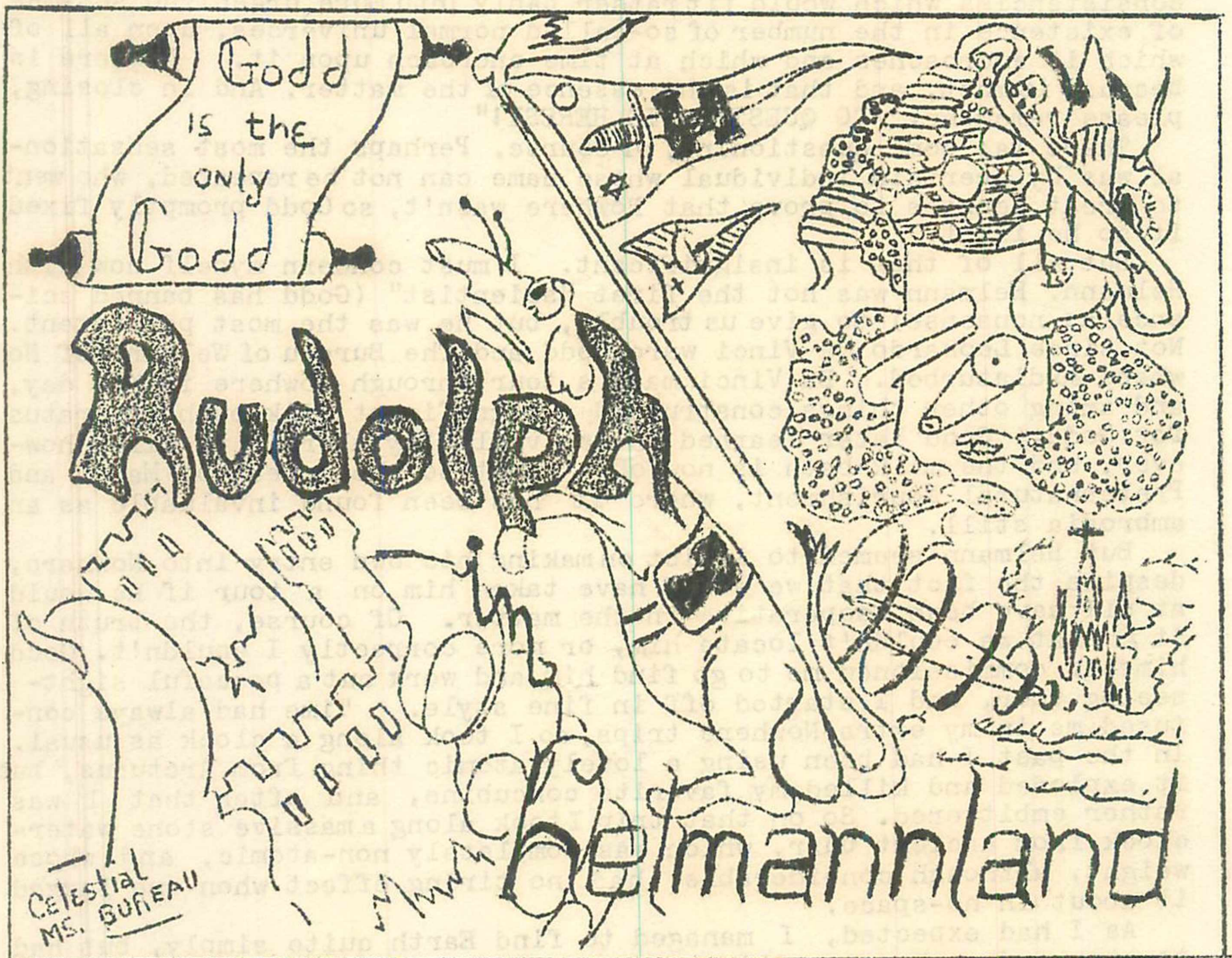
Dear Bob: Have finished Fan-Fare—that's a dreadfully hard name to type—and liked it very much. That colored paper certainly keeps the mag from looking drab. I see that there were a surprising number of people who agreed with me on IT'S A LIE! #### Ratings: 1) THE SOFT AND SILENTLY GREY. Why didn't this appear in Other Worlds? 2) KEVIN'S CHARACTERS—pretty good. 3) M'LUWALA'S COOLING SYSTEM—pooey. ##### Actually it was a very good issue, with even MCS better than the lead stories in some of the earlier issues. TSASG is perhaps the best story to appear in the hallowed pages of F-F. Shows tremendous improvement over the earlier Leverentz. That ending!! ##### What's this about a Japanese T'ank you? NO MORE ROOM was very good. Liked that tricky rhythm.—Keran O'Brien 186-29 Avon Road, Jamaica 3, Long Island, New York.

Mister Ganley: Why you always laugh parts out of my epistles? Day iss not a mess but a real litter... I will not cuss Mr. Russell Twatkins but discuss him (of course he might take the phonetic equivocation of "nausate" implied here when I am thru). Mr. Twatkins should start on suppressing the Unabridged Dictionary; this real and fearful tract is worse than the fictitious necronomicon. Then I might add Mr. Twatkins himself should watch Deaonic ejaculations as they are a form of pious swearing; expressions such as: "Ah, my goodness" being a camouflaged sense of the strong "Oh, my god!" etc. Mr. Russell Twatkins **rightly** deserves the title of Suppressor of Blasphemy. Following the example set by the Government in making coined words out of the combined letters of a specific agency's phrased name (such as C.A.R.E. etc), I should take Suppressor of Blasphemy and call Mr. Twatkins an S.O.B. As I said he rightly deserves to be called one. As to Mr. Twatkins' success I care not, but rest assured I will inform you of his failure to clean up Fandom. ##### I will not sign this letter "yrs. truly" as you have intimated I am both not a friend nor am I honesttruly. However, my signature should be valuable to you; some people would give money for it—autograph hunters. I hope this finds you ill and unhappy. —Dorg.

[This is as good a place as any to remind our readers that statements and opinions of persons whose works appear within these pages are not necessarily construed to be those of the publishers.]7

THE GAP IN THE CURTAIN

As lead story for the next issue we have a brilliant tale by Andrew Duane entitled DREAD HUNTRESS—a story that I think proves that yet another FAN-FARE regular is ready for prodom. Following it, we have TO BE A GOD, by Walt Klein. Thirdly there is RETURN FROM TERROR, by professional poet James E. Warren. Plus another, undecided on as yet. This year we aren't putting out an Annish, not in quantity; in quality, however, I think the next issue will surprise and please you all. I hope!



(Being the further adventures of the time traveler, as chronicled by Holmes, late scribe to the late ruler, Godd, of this place once called Nowhere but now being Hermannland.)

Prior to the Great Ousting, in my capacity of scribe, I was perhaps, next to Godd, the most well-informed man in Nowhere, and as such I was fully acquainted with the many intricacies of running the place. Nowhere is a rather difficult place to describe. Indeed, the best estimation of it can be found in Volume 57 of THE COLLECTED WORKS OF GODD, the provocative essay entitled "Nowhere; Our Beautiful Land of Enigma (with notes and comments by Richard S. Shaver)." The oft-quoted passage reads: "I, as Godd, being Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnivorous, etcetera, after prolonged study, have at last analysed Nowhere to be The Realm of Spirits, Daemons, Mortals, et al

which lies midway between both ends of its three-fold extension, in time and space, where-in are preserved all manner of wonders and inconsistencies which would fit rather badly into more organized schemes of existence in the number of so-called normal universes, upon all of which it encroaches and which at time encroach upon it. Nowhere is because it must, and that is the essence of the matter. And in closing, please remember: TO QUESTION IS HERESY!"

There was some questioning, of course. Perhaps the most sensational was by a certain individual whose name can not be repeated, who went to great lengths to prove that Nowhere wasn't, so Godd promptly fixed it so he isn't.

But all of that is insignificant. I must concern myself now with Helmann. Helmann was not the first "scientist" (Godd has banned science as nonsense) to give us trouble, but he was the most persistent. Not since Leonardo da Vinci were Godd and The Bureau of Welfare of Nowhere so disturbed. Da Vinci made a tour through Nowhere in his day, and among other things constructed a magnificent milk-bath apparatus for Godd. Godd later learned he was violently allergic to milk, however, and the milk-bath is now on a grant to the Bureau of Manna and Preternatural Nourishment, where it has been found invaluable as an ambrosia still.

But Helmann seemed to insist on making his own entry into Nowhere, despite the fact that we would have taken him on a tour if he would at all have been cooperative in the matter. Of course, the truth of it is that we couldn't locate him, or more correctly I couldn't. Godd himself commissioned me to go find him and work out a peaceful sight-seeing tour, and I started off in fine style. Time had always confused me in my extra-Nowhere trips, so I took along a clock as usual. In the past I had been using a lovely atomic thing from Arcturus, but it exploded and killed my favorite concubine, and after that I was rather embittered. So on that trip I took along a massive stone water-clock from ancient Urr, which was completely non-atomic, and whose weight, although considerable, had no tiring effect when one lugged it about in no-space.

As I had expected, I managed to find Earth quite simply, but had to stop and work out my time problem to orient myself. I alighted in the midst of a desert, sat down the clock, and commenced consultation of my conversion tables. I, of course, was invisible (the clock, being originally of earth, was not) so I had no fear of any mortal coming upon me. Indeed, when a great number of earth-people did approach, I took no notice of them, or of their leader. I only did look up when they commenced a rather frightful chorus of what was obviously some prayer, and their leader, a big buffoon dressed outrageously even for the desert, lashed out with his Penang-lawyer and slugged my poor clepsydra. As chance would have it, the idiot hit the plug, and all the water promptly ran out of it rendering it quite useless. The white-bearded ape and his entourage had a wonderful time about it, but I had no choice but to return to Nowhere.

When I got back, I received a red paper from Godd, calling me a bungler and cancelling my commission, and on its heels, a yellow paper from The Bureau of Miracles and Manifestations, which was a lovely reprimand for perpetrating a miracle without official clearance.

It was about that time that Helmann's vortices began to get rather bothersome. One penetrated directly into the midst of a combined meeting of all bureau heads, and swept away, before our very eyes, the

Minister of Sewage, Godd's major-domo, and seven seraphs, who had been playing Chelle behind one of the many banners.

Godd, considerably distressed at the thought of having all those individuals spew out into the terrestrial laboratory of Helmann, immediately dispatched retrievers, the Hounds of Tindalos (Tindalos was also the owner of the Chelle set, so he was equally upset), to bring them back.

After such an unnerving interference, Godd gave very strict orders to the Bureau of Security and Prevention of Intervention to clear up the Helmann matter at once. However, before a messenger was dispatched to finish up the job I had begun, the Lovecraft scandal tore the Bureau wide open, and necessitated a complete reorganization of the department.

The Lovecraft matter was rather colorful, and my own flair for such variety forces me to include it here. At the time, Shaver was still operating on earth, as a "spy" for the BofS&PofI, relaying news of bothersome individuals who were a threat to Nowhere's Security. It seems Shaver sent a message concerning a certain H. P. Lovecraft who had written a tale entitled the Dunwich Horror, which revealed a great deal about certain inhabitants of Nowhere. Shaver suggested that the book be suppressed at once.

But Shaver, as usual, was broadcasting from one of his "holes," which never adds to the clarity of his communications, and the clerk on duty, one Seraph Sneary, might also be somewhat to blame. In any case, the report filed on the matter listed the book as the Dunwich Whorer, and when this, along with the author's name, was considered by the board, it was decided it constituted little menace to Nowhere, and that Shaver's interests were just flowing into some of his more favored channels.

Naturally the error was soon discovered, but not after considerable damage had been done by circulation of the story. The whole department, as I said, was overhauled. Seraph Sneary was removed from his post and re-assigned to the ambrosia still. From all reports, he is much happier there. Richard was also reprimanded, and commanded henceforth to make all calls from the surface, else Godd would be forced to open the fountains of the deep and flood his precious caverns.

With that matter out of the way, plans were again formed in the Helmann affair, but before anything could be done, there came the worst of the vortices. This one appeared in the boudoir of the daughter of Godd and completely engulfed her dressing table, sweeping it into oblivion. The daughter, more angry than frightened, dispatched a half-dozen eunuchs to recover her belongings, and to bring back the meddler through the vortex itself. Godd's daughter, needless to say, had little tolerance for peeping Toms, across-time or otherwise.

The attendants brought Helmann back, although he was a little stubborn, and put up something of a fight on the way. But by the time they had regained the woman's bedroom, Helmann was reasonably well reconciled to his fate.

The daughter took an instant liking to Helmann, and he to her, and he spent the night there. Quite innocently, however, teaching her how to play euchre, which she found most interesting. Normally all she played was Chelle, and that with Nick Tindalos, who, rumor has it, often smelled rather more like his hounds than did the hounds themselves.

Godd was a little upset by the matter, especially when he received a blue paper from the Bureau of Morality, and a letter (which had to be sent to the Bureau of Communications, Cryptography and Cross-word Puzzles for translation) from the ex-Seraph Sneary who said he took a very

dim view of the whole matter and demanded immediate marriage.

Godd, not so much from Sneary's demands as his daughter's entreaties finally consented to the wedding, and Helmann, the scientist, became Godd's Son-in-law. However, under such a relationship, Helmann could not remain a scientist, so it was decided to make him a bureau-head. Strangely enough, all such positions were filled, so it was necessary to initiate a new bureau for the occasion, and that turned out to be the Bureau of Immigration, for lack of any better ideas.

That was the first step in Helmann's rise to power and his insidious anti-Godd movement. Hiding behind his wife's skirts and his Bureau, Helmann began to gradually take over the reins of government. One of his first moves was to transfer Sneary to his own department, and the two soon became fast friends.

Next, using the powers to which his office entitled him, he brought in no one less than N. P. Lovecraft. The BofS&PofI protested this in an orange paper to Godd, saying Helmann had done it just to throw the whole matter up in their face, but Godd paid them little attention. It seems he was busy re-installing the milk-bath apparatus in his palace, for it had assumed anew fascination for him after some radical changes introduced by Sneary.

Lovecraft didn't come alone; he brought with him a score or more of filthy little cats and an objectionable individual with the equally objectionable name of Yog Sothoth. Lovecraft instantly took over the Bureau of Communications, threw out the complete staff, and ran the whole place on his own, writing (it is said) all letters by hand and in a most atrocious and illegible manner. No one knows exactly what happened to the cats, but there are some evil rumors about Tindalos, who was still angry at being jilted after so many Chelle games.

It was Yog Sothoth who organized the Great Ousting. He merely went into Godd's palace, told Godd to leave, and settled himself on top of the ambrosia still which now occupied the center of the palace garden. Sothoth made some wild claims in Godd's presence (when the latter refused to go) concerning something which was beyond Nowhere, and quite an impressive oration on someone called Azathoth.

Godd left after that. Exactly where he went is unknown, but it is often said he is now with Shaver, and the two of them are working on a re-write of "Nowhere, Our Beautiful Land of Enigma" in the light of what Yog told him.

And so Helmann came to power, having some kind of pact with Yog Sothoth to that extent. Yog seemed content to just squat on top of the still, and he and HP exchanged voluminous correspondence, without interfering with Helmann.

I miss the old days, and though this is hardly a cruel oppression, it is an oppression none the less. This place is called Helmannland, now. (I really don't know what Godd'll do if he ever comes back. I can just imagine him bursting in with a big smile on his face and his manuscript in his hand, only to find that Nowhere no longer exists. It is so pathetic.)

They say Lovecraft is importing a new batch of cats in a short time, and Helmann is working on a television station. Oh, the blasphemy of it is revolting! Science!

If only I were not so susceptible to neuralgia, I'd go look for Godd and the caverns, but then I'd probably never find them anyway. I've given up water-clocks now, and other varieties I've given up long ago, and it seems all Helmannland has given up concubines! Lovecraft is bring up another mortal by the name of Long to build some kind of mechanical love-slaves or something. There's talk about a new bureau for that matter.

How I miss the old days!