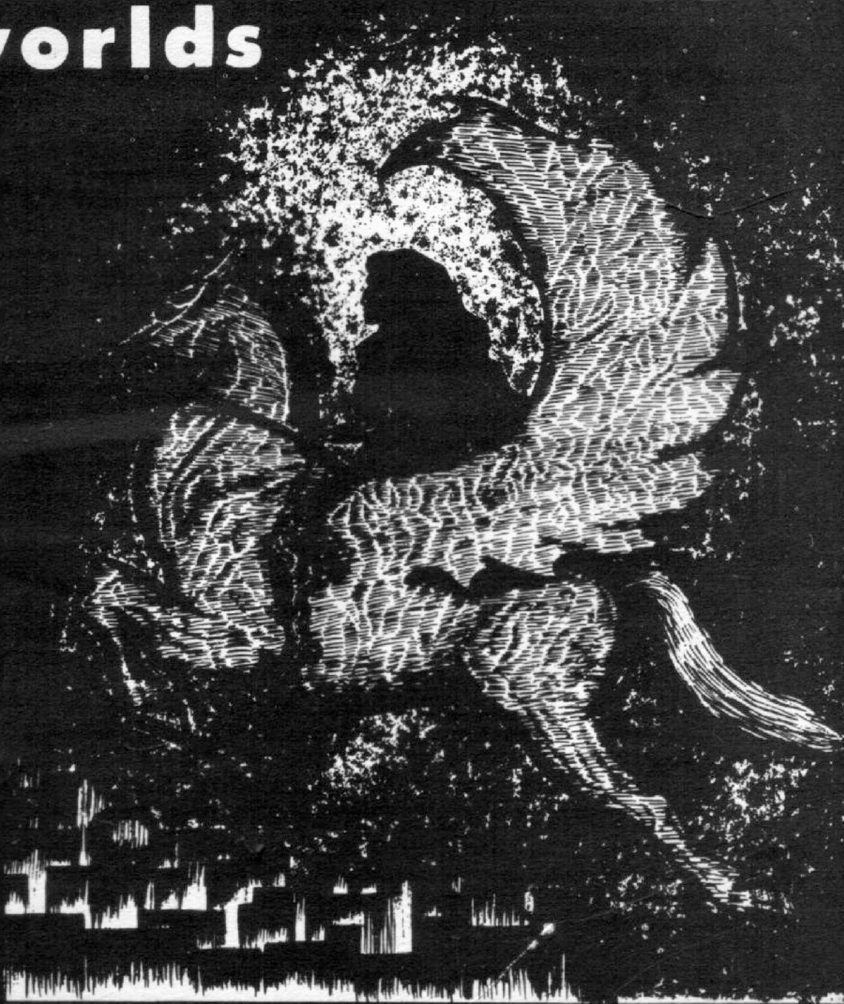


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spring 1953

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P.S. There are a very few copies left of Destiny no. 3, 4-5, and 6. Twenty-five cents each. Sorry, no copies left of our first and second issues. Our ninth issue will be published April 25, 1953, and will feature the last fanzine story by David H. Keller (The Golden Key), The Story of Fantasy Press by Lloyd Arthur Eshbach, Tarzan in the Films by Vernell Correll, Who Knocks At My Door? by E. Rockmore, Personalities in science fiction (Walter M. Miller, Jr.) as well as Sam Moskowitz, George Wetzels, Pat Eaton, John Harwood, Henry Ebel, H. M. Weatherby and many many others. Don't delay in sending in your buck for five wonderful issues. And while your at it, if you like to write or illustrate science-fantasy why not enclose some of your efforts? Destiny desires to be the showcase of fandom and this can be accomplished only with the help of each and every fan. Our standards? Only that the author has a sincere interest in maintaining and improving science fiction.

fantastic

worlds

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SPRING, 1953

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Cover by LEE HOFFMAN

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faint-heart

when man moves out into the spaceways,
the most terrible dangers will come not
from bug-eyed monsters but from within
his own mind. here is a gripping story
of deep space by a promising young author
interviewed by fantastic worlds for its
first issue.

by gene hunter

YOU ENTER YOUR STATEROOM with your knees trembling and your heart smashing with painful fury against your ribs. You lock the hatch behind you, no longer trying to wipe the insistent sweat from your face. There is no need now to hide your fear, for you are alone. Alone, but never so alone as you will be in a few minutes when you are shot from the Jameson's air lock and out into

* * *

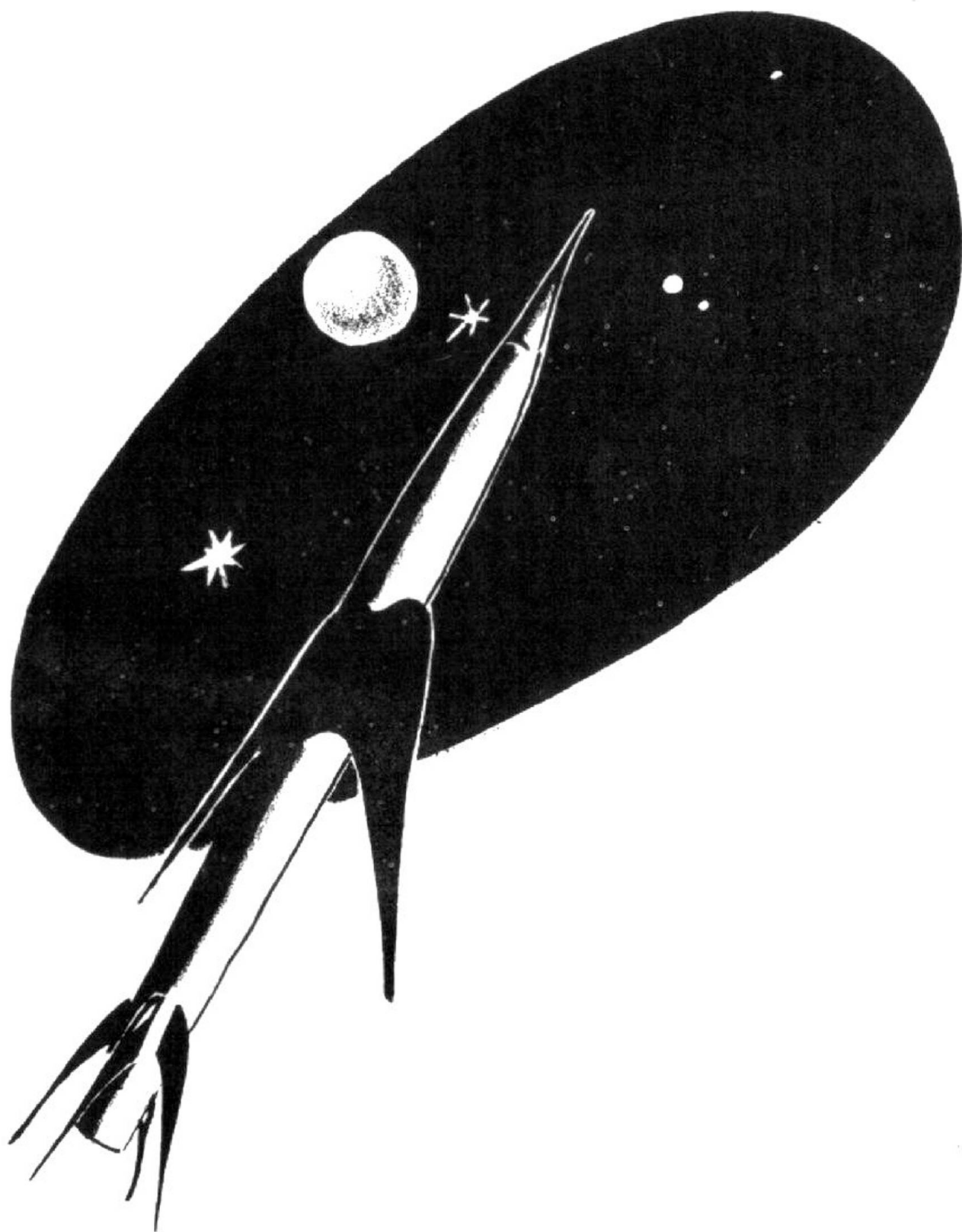
What?

Horror. Terror. An ebon pit of airless, infinite space. Black nothingness, and you encased in a leatheroid tomb. The thought of it brings back that awful memory of the night in your childhood when the walls of the abandoned well into which you had fallen seemed to press upon you and crush you, and you know that the heavy spacesuit covering your perspiring, aching body will bring back the claustrophobia that has cursed you ever since.

You won't be able to clench your nails into your palms hoping that the pain will help you forget, because your hands will be covered with leatheroid gloves, and you won't be able to scream in an agony of fear as you could when you were five years old, because your shipmates will be listening to your every word. But they'll be able to hear you breathe, and they'll hear the gas escaping from your tortured bowels, and they'll hear the wet, slapping sounds from your sweating armpits as you work frantically. Perhaps they'll even be able to hear your heart--the accursed, resounding mechanism that pumps coward's blood through your system.

You finish putting on the spacesuit and you want to move toward the hatch that leads to the decks of the crippled ship, but your body fights against the commands of your mind and you are paralyzed. You wonder whether you will react the same way when you are put into the airlock and out into space with all your friends watching. You know that you will.

The thought of the airlock brings fresh terror to your already cracking mind. Shooting out into that black void will be the same as the fall you took into the pit--worse, because now



Illustrated by NAAMAN

you will know what to expect, and then you did not.

Out there, will you cry out again to God and your mother? If you do, there will be no one to help you, yet everyone will be watching through the viewer, and they'll be praying. But not for you. For what you are doing--or trying to do--and for their own safety. No one watched before, unless it was God, and you have not believed in Him ever since your terrified pleading went unheard at the bottom of that pit so long ago.

Finally, carrying the helmet of the spacesuit under your arm like a fantastic human head, you manage to make your unwilling legs obey, and you lumber clumsily from your compartment, out of Officer's Country and onto the Jameson's main deck. Already your body is soaked with the sweat of fear and cowardice and you regret not having taken sodo-clo tablets to replenish your system with salt, but you know that to turn back now would mean you could never again open that hatch--that you would lock yourself in and remain until you starved or until they cut away the steel to get to you.

Your eyes must be glazed, but in the excitement no one seems to notice. You thank God, wanting to believe in Him now, that the cumbersome spacesuit conceals your trembling.

You are almost entirely dressed, with only your head, like that of some great, bipedular turtle, protruding from the enveloping shell of the suit. You are more thoroughly frightened now than you have ever been, and the two most terrifying steps are yet to come; the first when they fasten the helmet about your head and again when you are shot out of the air lock.

Three-quarters of your ship's crew are dead or disabled, and the remainder are all here, watching you, the one man who can bring them and the Jameson safely back. It occurs to you that they might not yet notice your fear because they themselves are frightened at the prospect of dying here in space, but the thought brings little comfort.

The moment you have dreaded ever since you first went into space is upon you. You are a spaceman, not qualified to do the grueling work of a freespacer outside a ship's hull. The chances were one in a thousand that this would happen to you--you thought when you enlisted that those odds would never reach you.

You sit stonily in the chair while the Maintenance man takes the helmet from your almost lifeless hands and raises it over your head like a metal and glassoid fish bowl. You try desperately to forget where you are and what is happening to you and automatically your thoughts go back to Marcia. And you can recall but one terrible memory.

THAT FIRST TIME IN SPACE, in Ericson's yacht--just a jaunt to Luna and back. You had worried for days before that trip about what might happen to you. Just a glance at the Other Side, Ericson had said, and then back. He didn't even intend to land. You went, with many misgivings, but you hadn't been afraid of space at all. In fact, you had loved it. Rather than feeling shut in and restricted, you had felt a sense of absolute freedom. You had watched with fascination while Ericson guided the yacht beautifully up into the upper stratosphere, circled twice over California and the Pacific and headed for Luna. You had felt no fear.

But there was much drinking and the resulting false courage had decided the little party of young revelers to land after all and explore some of the landscape--the moonscape--despite the fact that private landings were prohibited by law. You had gotten as far as the helmet that time, but when they started to screw it onto the neck of your suit you had nearly lost your mind.

The phobia that wouldn't let you stay locked in close quarters came over you again. The spacesuit had become the confining walls of that abandoned well and you could recall yourself lying bruised and screaming at the bottom of it throughout the long, dark night, unmissed at home until your mother had gone to waken you in the morning, because you had sneaked out of the house unnoticed.

Marcia, red-faced and ashamed, had gone with the rest, while you stayed behind, retching and trembling on a bunk. You had left the ship when it returned to Terra and you had never seen any of the old crowd again. . . .

SOMEONE--THE DOCTOR, perhaps--shoves something towards your face and you gulp down fiery liquid that shocks you into awareness again. Your eyes roll frantically upward to see the dreaded helmet descending upon your head and you feel your bowels squirm uncontrollably, but no one notices for the helmet is already being bolted down. Only the tough leatheroid of the suit keeps you from collapsing. You cannot stand, but a dozen hands are lifting you to your feet, their owners eager for you to commence.

Something crackles in your earphones. It is the Captain's voice, telling you to do your damndest for the Jameson and for Terra. You want to shout the hell with Terra, but you can only gasp. You taste froth about your lips and your near-empty belly writhes and churns.

You feel the liquor coming up and you bend down with a strength that amazes you, ostensibly to check your boots, while the stuff trickles from your mouth and is hidden under the folds of the suit. You lick your burning lips and try to spit.

The voice reminds you that there isn't much time and the hated hands straighten you and guide you to the air lock. You thank God again that your suit is so heavy in the Jameson's tricky gravity that they must lift you, for your knees are like water and you can no longer move under your own power.

There is a last minute check of the three oxy-concentrate bottles, one for each hour, strapped to your back. Your stomach and your throat go through the motions of vomiting again, but there is nothing left inside you and you only gag.

The welding torch and the instruments you need for repairing the shattered electronic forward jets that will brake and control the Jameson's coming headlong plunge into the thin atmosphere of Mars are shoved into your trembling hands. When you came into space you knew that Electronicsman was the one rank that would never be called upon to work in freespace, but you reckoned without the war and now you are the only man, officer or enlisted, who knows anything about the job to be done. The rest are dead--or dying--and only you are left. You want to swear, but you can only make vague gibbering sounds, and you bite your tongue until it bleeds to keep the sounds from your friends.

The inner door of the air lock is open now and you are lifted up to the tiny cubicle between the hulls and shoved face forward into it. There is no longer a will that keeps you from screaming, but your vocal cords are closed tight in paralysis, although your mind no longer functions enough to tell you that. You think that you are yelling at the top of your lungs.

The inner door swings shut. In a few seconds the outer one will open and you will be expelled into the void. But to you that round, dark hole will be the tiny, slimy-walled pit of your childhood, not a glimpse of the infinity that is space. Your eyes, blurred and unblinking, watch with an idiotic fascination—waiting.

Then—

There it is! The air lock is swinging outward and there before you is that awful pit and you feel yourself falling towards it.

Oh, God! Oh, Jesus!
Hail Mary, full of grace . . .
Oh, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus . . .
Mother! Mother! MOTHER!

NOW HEAR THIS

Be Sure And...

DON'T BUY "INSIDE". This zine is no good. If you buy a copy you are just wasting your money, unless you can get mother to buy one for you. It even cost too much for a $\frac{1}{2}$ size mag 25¢. Don't send your sub (4/\$1) to Don Smith, 332 E. Date, Oxnard, Cal., or Dick Main, Rt 1, Box 635- B, Camarillo, Cal, cause if you do, you'll regret it. Yes sir.

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I also need separate comic books about the Walt Disney characters from 1935 to 1943, almost any 1928-1941 book (small or large) and early daily or Sunday W. D. comic strips. I also need copies of

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Buck Rogers Comics	nos. 1- 6
and Pogo	no. 6

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lovers and otherwise

not since the acclaim accorded "a martian odyssey" by the late stanley g. weinbaum have science fiction readers been so vocal or so unanimous in their applause of a new talent as they have been in praising the lovers, a brilliant novel by philip José farmer in startling stories for august, 1952. here illinoian farmer tells the story behind his smashing success. the lovers is being published in a hard-cover edition by shasta press.

by philip José farmer

THE HISTORY OF THE LOVERS is, I think, worth reading. It is divided into two segments: (1) the actual conception and writing, and (2) what happened to it after it was written. The latter is especially intriguing because it illustrates so well the relationship between authors and editors. And the reverberations that may take a long time a-bouncing before there is complete understanding and agreement between the two species.

I was reminded of that when Mrs. H. L. Gold, known professionally as Evelyn Paige, was introduced to me during the World Science Fiction Convention in Chicago. Mrs. Gold is a striking brunette. She has very dark hair and very white teeth, a quite noticeable and very pleasing contrast. She smiles often, is energetic, intense, articulate, and devoted to her husband, whom she mentions frequently during her conversation. She has, both as wife and as assistant editor for Galaxy, been very much wrapped up in its spectacular leap to a place on the top roost of science fiction. (That's a mixed metaphor, but so is the story of The Lovers' fate.)

Mrs. Gold was emphatic in asking if I would please broadcast the truth about The Lovers and its reception at Galaxy. Many



Standing, left to right: Sam Mines, Ted Dikty, and Jerome Bixby. Seated: Philip Farmer (left), Melvin Korshak (right). Photo by Al De Bat.

people had asked Mr. Gold why he had rejected The Lovers; she wished that I would inform those interested that he had not.

I said I'd be glad to. In fact, I was thinking of telling the story in an article for fantastic worlds. So, before the genesis and development of the story itself is told, I'd like to go sidewise in time. Science fiction fans or anybody interested in the behind-the-story dealings of editors and writers should be intrigued.

When I finished the MS. of The Lovers, I was sure I had a pretty good story. Of course, during the writing and even after I'd completed it, I had qualms, moments of doubt, and impulses to rise and throw the pages in the furnace. But these, I'm told, are universal emotions during composition, especially to those who've sold little or nothing. Despite these little plunges into gloom, my general impression was that the story was, in some respects, fresh and original. This in spite of the fact that the story was framed in a setting as old as science fiction itself.

On finishing, I did what every author does. Look around for the highest-paying magazine. Money mattered. Respect for the editors and prestige of their magazines didn't enter the picture. All three of the editors that I thought of submitting to had my highest respect. And as far as prestige goes--there is no such thing.

Rather, I should say that prestige is a very subjective thing. What you consider the highest ranking, the next fellow thinks is rank. Read the fan columns in the various publications; check my statement. I'm continually amazed that so many people can't see what I do. And vice versa.

Anyway, not having an agent, and getting my information about rates for words, reprint rights, etc., from Writer's Digest, I decided that Galaxy would be a wonderful place to send it. Mr. Gold had announced, I believe, that a great deal of freedom would be allowed to writers in his magazine. A close and eager reading of Galaxy from its inception had convinced me of that.

Moreover, Mr. Gold was one of that triumvirate of science fiction editors who had been kind enough to criticize previous efforts. Believe me, that is one of the best things an editor can do to encourage up-and-coming talent. It's heartening to receive a note, even a small one, in which the defects and virtues of the rejected MS. are pointed out.

After having written and having had turned down about twelve science fiction stories, mostly short-shorts, I began forming a liking for these three men. Perhaps the note was a brief statement to the effect that the story was trite, or that it had an original idea but was treated too heavily. But I preferred that by far to the cold and stony printed slip.

And I noticed as time passed that my stories were receiving lengthier and more favorable comments. I was getting some place, and I knew it. That was the thing. I could have been closer to my goal, and if I'd not been informed so in so many words--if nothing but formal forms kept popping out of the manila envelopes--how would I know? I might have given up when I was just on the verge of acceptance.

Believe me, I was--and am--grateful for the efforts taken by these very busy men. The result was that I soon began grading editors--from a writer's, not a fan's, viewpoint--into two echelons, upper and lower. Not so strangely, those ranked in the upper echelon also edited, in my opinion, the best and most mature and most entertaining magazines.

SO, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION various factors, I mailed it to Mr. Gold. And became convinced from what it cost me for stamps that The Lovers had better sell the first or second time, or I'd go broke kicking it around the weary reject circuit. Actually, though, with the undying optimism of the congenital idiot--I mean, author--I didn't think it would come back.

My only doubt, aside from its sexual-biological content, was its length. The peculiarity of the story was that it had to be wrapped in one package to get its full impact. It wouldn't do for it to be serialized. And that, to my naive mind, offered a problem. Galaxy and ASF, I knew, had a limit of 25,000 words for their one-shot novels. Thrilling Wonder printed novels of about 30,000; Startling, 40-45,000.

Here was the difficulty. I wanted the story to be about 45,000, just dandy for Startling. Full development of all I wanted to put in demanded it. Moreover, at that time there were only two editors whom I thought were taboo-free enough to consider The Lovers. Or three, rather, but Mr. Boucher's magazine did not publish stories that long.

The pot of gold at the end of the rainbow twinkled. Three cents a word versus one point seven. So I compromised. I made it a little too long for Galaxy and a little too short for Startling. I cut hell out of it, threw out scenes, characters, and action that would have explained the fascinating--to me--social and political set up of the Ozagens. Also, there was much about the Haijac development of Dunne's theories of time that I sliced. The result was that, unless you'd read Dunne or read of him, you wouldn't understand fully the peculiar synthesis of religion and chronoscience.

However, I tried to show through action just how it worked. The reader who knew little or nothing of Dunne but who was intelligent should be able to deduce the needed facts.

After much heartburning blue-pencilling, though I was, in a way, relieved because it meant less typing of the final MS. (typing drives me to frantic, frantic drives me to beer, beer gives me an eye-ache so I can't type), I ended up with a 30,000-word story. This was too long for Galaxy, but I thought that if it were good enough it might be published in that length. I didn't think it could be reduced any more without its being weakened.

SO I WAITED THE NORMAL PERIOD and formed nerves on my nerves and got a bad case of mailboxitis. And so, in normal process, the suitcase-sized package returned.

Gods! Blasphemy! Tearing of garments, gnashing of teeth, pouring of ashes on my heads! Quelle horreur! Ia! Ia! Cthulhu fhtagn! Ph'nglui mglw'nafh!

Home again, Baby?

My tear-filled eyes read the letter enclosed. And found that The Lovers was not rejected--in toto. Mr. Gold admitted that my story had a good idea, but that he couldn't accept it in its present form and live with himself. Whatever my attitude toward minorities might be, the story was dangerous. It, in effect, justified discrimination because minorities might, if they ever achieved domination, become dictatorial. As far as he, Mr. Gold, was concerned, it didn't matter now if they would or they wouldn't. The present fact was that the minorities were under direct or latent attack. And he wouldn't care to add fuel to that blaze.

However, my notion of imitation females could be excellent, sans racial overtones, if I developed it in a Fortean manner to explain various mysterious phenomena. It would be kept on this planet, and it wouldn't have the elaborate stage I gave it. Should I be interested, and if I thought I could do something with the perceptions and integration of research that E. F. Russell did in his Sinister Barrier, he would want to see it. He was even kind enough and interested enough to offer to help in the plotting, though it wouldn't be easy by mail.

In any case, I was to let him know.

That gave me to pause.

As to the first objection, about the dangerous implications, I hadn't even thought about them. At first, I didn't understand what he meant. It was something I wouldn't have dreamed of. It shook me.

The second idea--having the story take place on Earth--had already occurred to me. Indeed, I was halfway through The Lovers

when such a thought collided head on with me. I stopped and turned it over to examine every facet. And then continued with my original plan. To carry that out would have meant wiping out Ozagen, Fobo, the tavern beetles, etc. I wasn't a world-wrecker; I couldn't do it.

I would have if I'd thought the story and the characters weren't jelling. But they were.

Besides, I was too lazy.

So I sent a long letter to Mr. Gold in which I very carefully --and probably too passionately--defended my position in regard to minorities, persecutions, and prejudices.

Mr. Gold took the trouble and time--and for a very busy science fiction editor this involves a sacrifice--to write a two-page single-spaced reply. In his very forceful and articulate style, he made it clear that, concerning The Lovers, he didn't consider me bigoted. If he had, he'd have merely returned the story and kept me tagged for future rough handling.

This impressed me as a very mild and conservative attitude. If I were editor, and I received a story from a bigot, I would have voiced in no uncertain terms my opinions and told said author I wanted no more of his stories, even if they were world masterpieces and had nothing to do with racial derogation.

However, I'm not an editor.

Mr. Gold went on to the fact that two friends of mine had read the story before I'd sent it in. Both were involved with discrimination, ethically and personally. One was a preacher; the other, a freethinker of Jewish parentage. Neither had objected to anything in the story or even noticed anything that might be misconstrued. But Mr. Gold said that that should not convince me that my view was correct. The real test would be to give it to someone who was bigoted.

I couldn't do that. None of the bigoted people I know read science fiction, nor would they be persuaded to read what they call "that crap." Which speaks volumes for the kind of people they are and illustrates the high type of person, generally speaking, that inhabits the world of science fiction.

Mr. Gold maintained that a bigot would, on reading the story, have the same reaction as any other bigot. The only difference you might get would depend on his literate level. The uneducated would comment that the behavior of the Israeli Republics in the colonization of depopulated France would be just what you'd expect from a Jew or a Negro. Give them a chance and they'd be worse than the worst white man. The educated would have stated the same thing in well-turned phrases and a semblance of logic.

This was not based on guesswork. Part of his opinion was founded on his own dealings with bigots. But most of it came from the reaction stirred up both among biased and militantly unbiased people whenever he'd published a tale with a racial theme. He was, I suppose, referring especially to that wonderful story "Dark Interlude" by Mack Reynolds and Fredric Brown.

THE LATTER PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS been against discrimination. Several of the stories Mr. Gold then had in inventory would, he believed, evoke the same angry reaction. One division of readers, the biased, acutely conscious of the message, would furiously deny its validity. And the unbiased would raise Cain because he'd had a character use the word "n----" even when his and

its significance should be obvious to them.

If you took The Lovers apart, you'd find the neo-Judaic society a vicious one. The reader, who must identify himself with a character, be for him, is pleased by the revolt against the society. A bigot, he'll have his own prejudices fortified by this idea of a culture that hasn't developed and probably never will. A tolerant person will find his emotions fighting each other. Aware there is no Haijac Union, he can be depended upon to recall the Bible and how it tells with remarkable candor the treatment by Hebrews of some of their neighbors. Thus, he might wonder if the same events might not occur again, only on a larger scale.

As Mr. Gold explains it, the tale had mental fish-hooks of which I wasn't aware. His response on reading the story and my explanation was the same as the prayer of Voltaire: "Save me from my friends; I can handle my enemies."

Though he knew that I had the best of intentions, he considered my story potentially more dangerous than the most outrageous rantings of a minority-hater. Why? Because it was well-intentioned and obviously sympathetic and very logical.

By the time I'd received Mr. Gold's second letter, I'd sold the story to Sam Mines.

FOR SOME TIME I'D WATCHED the standards of Thrilling Wonder and Startling Stories rise under Sam Merwin, Jr. When he quit for free-lancing and Sam Mines took over, I noticed that he had used Merwin's work as a sort of base and took off at right angles, like a rocket with the devil on its tail. Changes were frequent and evident and all for the better. Those who've followed the two magazines know what I'm talking about. Very pleasing to the science fiction heart.

Sam Mines, aided and abetted by Jerry Bixby, announced a policy whose only restrictions would be those of good taste. This, I thought, is my meat, for The Lovers will certainly test that policy. I'd made up my mind that I didn't want to rewrite the tale. To do so would have been composing a brand new story. And I didn't, I want to make clear here, think that there would be much, if any, reaction to the use of the Israeli or Haijac societies. The fact that the Haijac was vicious meant nothing. There have been and are sub-societies founded on similar principles. But this is not because the principles are vicious. Far from it. It is because these groups have taken the great and true teachings originated and promulgated by the Hebrew prophets and have hypocritically perverted them.

They have taken what was pure and magnificent and dirtied and twisted it. Sometimes this has been done honestly; sometimes, not. In either case, there has been malformation.

So the Haijac Union.

Anyway, I read Sam's letter of acceptance with even more interest than you would expect. Sam stated that he liked The Lovers very much, with certain minor reservations. It was off-trail for Startling, being basically a sex story. But he was serious in his policy of no taboos and anxious to impose no throttling hands upon authors who showed originality and freshness. Some small revisions seemed necessary; he and Jerry could work them out, but he thought I might prefer to do them myself.

Three points needed clarifying:

(1) The ship's purpose and mission ought to be made clear at once instead of late in the story. The reader wonders too long what the humans are after and what their relationship with the wogs is.

(2) Sam thought the love story would be benefited by an elevation from a simple and slightly sordid sex affair to something a little more noble. The hero could have some unselfish motive in offering shelter to the girl besides a desire to get in bed with her. His training in celibacy was strong. His breakdown should be gradual and logically motivated.

(3) And tying the theology of the future to the ancient Hebrews seemed strained, unlikely, and capable of offending the more tolerant who would resent being linked with suppressive totalitarianism. The story wouldn't suffer in the slightest if the theology were a mythical one, with a mythical god instead of Jahveh. My effect would be the same--might even be better--since it would sound more like the future and less like the past. I could even base it upon the new gods--Einstein, Freud, Edison, Jung, etc.

These changes were slight and would I let him know if I wanted to do them?

Point 1. O. K. I wrote the prolog.

Point 2. I replied that the hero did have some unselfish motive in offering shelter to the girl. She was human (so he thought), she was hiding from the wogs (so he thought), and she would be impounded and treated like a lab animal if he turned her over to his fellows (he knew).

The above was stated or at least implicit in the story. Besides, it was in the nature of the laliitha to go to bed with a desirable man and no bones about it. Their whole evolution pointed towards that.

His training in celibacy was very strong, true. On the other hand, a year or two in a space-ship, plus that old devil Sex Urge, plus a congenital rebel, would lead to a quick breakdown. Moreover, Hal Yarrow had a corner on the market. She was the only available human female on the whole wide planet. Such a number of factors would go to a man's head.

Besides, had he ever met Jeannette? Did he know what she could do to a man?

I knew how she was. Take my word for it. St. Anthony himself would have fallen.

AS TO POINT THREE, as you've read, I'd encountered that before. Seeing it again, from another much-admired editor, gave me to pause. Maybe I was wrong.

So I wrote another long letter defending my viewpoint. The gist of it: The Hebrews have, among other things, been noted for the invention of the world's first really great religion. It is one so virile, so fecund, so strong in concept and truth, as far as basics go, that it has survived no matter what its enemies do and has given birth to two worldwide religions: the Mohammedan and the Christian.

The latter has split into many sects and sub-sects, and where it'll go nobody knows. Such a religion as the Hebrews', having already borne two great ones, might yet deliver another. Especially if it were coupled with a historical figure, Isaac Sigmen, the Forerunner, who lived long enough, due to longevity

(continued on p. 18)

THE ACKERMAN AGENCY

An Amazing Story

TRUTH is stranger than scientifiction: I sell sci-fantasy for nearly 100 writers, yet don't have a single name under contract! Any day in the week CHAD OLIVER, CHARLES BEAUMONT, DAVID GRINNELL, AE V A N VOGT, SYLVIA JACOBS, KRIS NEVILLE, FRANK QUATTROCCHI, SJ. BYRNE, ALBERT DE PINA, E. EVERETT EVANS, GORDON DEWEY,

FAMOUS GUESTS LECTURERS

L. MAJOR REYNOLDS, ED LUDWIG, ROBERT DONALD LOCKE, S. FOWLER WRIGHT, SHERWOOD SPRINGER

An almost regular Monday-night attraction of Mr. Campbell's Science-Fiction Class, or Mrs. Field's History of the Cinema Class on Tuesday or the classes in TV Film Writing on Thursday are famous and successful writers, motion picture and TV producers, or a studio story department head generously giving of their time and experience to appear as guest lecturers.

Among the famous science fiction-eers who have appeared are A. E. Van Vogt, Forrest J Ackerman, internationally known as "Mr. Science Fiction," Chad Oliver, Rog Phillips, Ross Rocklynne, Frank Quattrocchi, Kris Neville and Ray Bradbury whose work regularly appears in the top slicks like SATEVEPOST.

J O E SLOTKIN, L Y N VENABLE, CURTIS CASEWIT, ROGER FLINT YOUNG or any of dozens of others of my clients could up and leave me for Kline, Meredith, Pohl, Altshuler, Blassingame, Matson or any of the other agencies who handle science fiction (altho not exclusively, as does my Agency.) A perilous policy? I operate on the principle that the satisfied client is the best insurance. J.T. Oliver, Lou Tabakow, Mel Hunter, HB Hickey and Cleve Cartmill have just joined me. I've placed "Progress Report" by Clifton & Apostolides with IF, "The Beautiful Woman" by Beaumont with Nebula (British) and PRIZE SF (annual antho), "Chinwell Knows Best" by Neville with TWS, "The Collectors" by Dewey and Dancey with Ziff, "The Duty, The Destiny" by Clifton-Apostolides with Gold, "Green Man of Graypec" (Pragnell) in Italian, "The Mist" (Cartur) Conklin's next antho, "Lysenko Maze" (Grinnell) F&SF, "The World at Bay" with SF+. Reprint, hard cover, antho, pocketbook, translation, radio, video, and 2d, 3d & 4th dimension film s u b s i d i a r i e s all covered.

FORREST J ACKERMAN
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Los Angeles 35



Forrest J Ackerman
&
Diane Reinsberg:
Reacting to rumor that Marilyn Monroe
will write science fiction and Ackerman pay
her 10% to handle her!

serums, not only to found but to cement the structure of his ideas. One who used scientific gobbledegook to justify his religion and a totalitarian setup--all for the good of his people, of course!--to keep his society static.

Moreover, the reader will see that whereas the neo-Judaic Haijaas were vicious, their enemies, the Israelis, were not. This last point will be made more clearly in the sequel to The Lovers--the story called Moth and Rust.

I couldn't buy Sam's idea about a new religion based on the new gods--Einstein, Freud, Jung, etc.

Why?

Because they're scientists, not religious prophets. People don't follow scientists in matters of faith, not religious faith, anyway. And there's nothing in the scientists' works to whip up enthusiasm among disciples. You might take some of their ideas and tie them in with certain aspects or potentialities (for good or bad) of an already established religion. But that's what Sigmen did. I didn't think that the above-named scientists taught anything that could be the longest stretch of imagination be called religious.

Old lightning-wielding Jahweh still lives--in many forms--and it is from Him that you will get your true tablets of stone. Not from pen-wielders.

HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY such thing as Mssrs. Gold and Mines had objected to, I thought it'd be all right if a certain passage were struck out. That is the one referring to the division of France between the Israeli Republic (of Midi) and the Haijaas. A checking upon the story when it appeared in the magazine showed that Sam had come to the same conclusion as mine. Be realistic and logical and trust to the good sense of science fiction fandom, in general, to see what is meant.

After all, a bigot will seize upon anything you say and twist it. As to the militantly unbiased, I'm one, and I wrote the story. I would await the reaction. And while, at the time of writing this article, I haven't seen the letter response in the TEV section of Startling, I've been told by Sam and Jerry that it's been terrific, unbelievably enthusiastic. The gripes are extremely few.

Another reason I wanted to keep the Israeli Republics. The Hebrews have suffered so much because of their religion, been so persecuted, so much, in short, a minority, that it tickled me to portray a future in which they've become a majority. After millennia of hanging on, they win out. Sheer guts and genius enable them to survive and become, finally, top-dog. And, as I'll show in Moth and Rust, they are the best among the four great unions left in my highly hypothetical but by no means impossible future. But I don't portray them as superhuman or subhuman. Just human, with the strength and weaknesses of men. Individuals, not types.

I took a chance on being misunderstood, but I think I was, in the main, justified.

As to whether The Lovers would have been a better story if set in a modern Terran background, no one will ever know. I'll concede that Mr. Gold might have been right. But I was just too fond of Fobo and my tavern beetles and Jeanette (whose death I regret but could not logically avoid) and the triumphant Israelis to kill them off. Besides being too lazy to do all that re-

writing.

But I'm very well satisfied with the way things turned out. So are a number of other people.

Mr. Gold and I did not agree on certain points, but we parted amiably enough. I left still convinced that he was a great science fiction editor, and he probably left convinced that I was a peculiarly hard-headed author, but one who was, apart from that, not so bad.

During my conversation with Evelyn Paige, she told me that her husband was a man who could do the hardest thing in the world, that is, admit he might be wrong. Such honesty and flexibility are things to admire; they are the criteria of a real man. Mr. Gold has done just that; he has evidently changed his mind about one of the objections he had to The Lovers. For he has published a story in the August issue of Galaxy, "Education of a Martian," by Joseph Shallit, whose point is that a despised and persecuted person may himself hold towards another group the same attitude from which he suffers.

A bigot could deduce from this that if you don't keep a minority down, they might some day rise and keep you down.

But Mr. Gold has decided that bigots are the *rara avis* in science fiction fandom and that you may show that minorities possess weaknesses without having someone cry "Shame!" Or that if they do, enough people will understand what you're driving at.

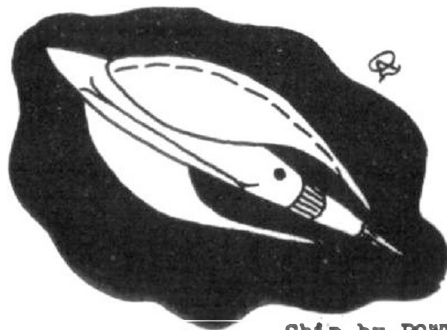
I hope I've summed up fairly this tempest in a teapot.

I'd like to point out that up to three years ago or even later, such a story as The Lovers would have been unprintable as it was. Even today, with the policy adopted by Sam Mines in his search for new things in science fiction, such a sexual-biological story has to be offered with a certain amount of trepidation as to its reception. It took courage to print it.

That it has been given such an enthusiastic welcome is a true indication of the so-called "maturity" of science fiction. Basically biological, unavoidably sexual, the story is not sexy or sensational. It is, simply, a realistic treatment of an imaginative theme, one I tried to do honestly.

I'd like to thank Sam Mines and Jerry Bixby for their faith in allowing the story to remain virtually unchanged and the editors of fantastic worlds for having asked me to do an article on how I wrote The Lovers. It's true I never got around to doing that, that I've talked mainly of its course after being written.

Sometimes, the sideshow is more entertaining than the main attraction.



Ship by FOWLESLAND

villa strega

when you think of terror, you think of the "gothic" north of europe. the mediterranean area, on the other hand, makes you think of gaiety, sunlight, and music. but this first story by the young wisconsin writer andrew gregg, who spent some time in trieste with the army after the recent war, shows that there are depths of darkness--even behind "funiculi, funicula."

by andrew gregg

SUCH BEAUTY COULD NOT BE RIVALLED in all Italy, no, not even in Napoli or Roma. And when I first saw Pina I knew there could be no other for me. I have seen many women, of course, from the Austrian border to Florence. Once, while I was in the Italian Army, I met such a girl as she (of course, not quite such a girl, but she seemed at the time to be) on the Austrian border. I thought then I might marry, but I couldn't ask her to be a soldier's wife. Now I'm glad I didn't.

Pina was a servant in Giuseppe's home, in Rovigo. Giuseppe himself might have cast interested glances at her if he'd dared, but his wife had the eyes of a hawk and the tongue of a snake. Also, she had no children, so she sought one in Pina, and kept her as jealously guarded as if she were her own daughter.

At first the thing I saw was her blond hair, and it reminded me of the Austrian girl, whatever her name was. But Pina was too lovely, I thought, to be anything but an angel. And there was something different, something radiant about her, like an angel's halo.

When I spoke to her of her friends she said she had none, other than her employers. Of course, I was one now. She was seventeen then, and there was no chance of seeing her outside of Giuseppe's house. She did not drink, nor dance even the Raspa. But I was content to stay and talk with her. Giuseppe didn't mind.

Eventually, or so it seemed, I suggested marriage. She was astounded and frightened. She ran from me.

"Giuseppe," I asked, "what's the matter with her? I love her. I want her! She must want marriage. I have a good business in Padova, a house there. I could give her enough. Surely she can't



Illustrated by JAXON

hope for more!

"Mario," he answered, "there is one thing she must have to marry with, and that is love. She must love you, too. She is still young and has no experience. Remember, you're the first one to know her that well."

"How can I get her to love me? She must know me better, but your wife won't allow her out with me, and she won't disobey her."

"Mamma mia!" he muttered, looking over his shoulder. "What sane person would?"

"So?"

"There are only two things for you to do. You must keep seeing her here until she knows you and loves you, or you must find some way to see her alone." With a laugh in his eyes, he added, "Unless you visit Villa Strega."

"Villa Strega! Witch house? What is this?"

"You don't know? Oh, I've forgotten. You're from Padova and don't know much of Rovigo. There is a house near here where four witches live. Not bad witches, just medium bad. They don't cast many evil spells, and even cast some good ones. But they are busy these days. Two of them cast spells on Stalin, and the other two remove them. It is said here that he is deathly sick in the morning and recovered by noon."

I hesitated. "Do they, by any chance, sell love potions?"

"Surely you're not--but, yes, perhaps that is the thing you need after all. Who knows? If you keep on trying for Pina the way you have, Mario, your house and ristorante in Padova will rot to the ground and you will wait here, not knowing while you are talking to her that you have nothing left to offer."

"Take the road to Monselice for two kilometers and turn east. The church of San Paolo will mark the spot. Another three kilometers and you will see a dead tree with a bat nailed to it. Take the dirt road there, and the Villa Strega is the only house you will find."

AFTER BECOMING WELL FORTIFIED with my own witch, Strega, the aptly named sweet, strong liquor so popular here, I drove toward Villa Strega.

The villa was built of the usual stone, with a tiled roof. I would not have known it but for the directions and the voices I heard. High-pitched voices were shouting "Communist" and "Fascist" at each other, and I hesitated as I heard one voice scream, "If you don't stop interfering with my spells I'll cast one on you!"

But, after crossing myself and touching my charm of Santa Maria and my iron nail, I knocked, then quickly took another drink of the witch. I was ready for anything.

Anything did not open the door, but just an old woman who could have been someone's grandmother, and probably was, though he wouldn't care to admit it.

"What do you want?" she spat. "Hate potions, love potions, charms, or more Strega? We have all here. Or have you come to deliver the vino?"

"No, old crone!" I replied tartly. "You've named it. I want a love potion."

"And for what lovely lady do you wish this potion?" Her skinny arms were still barring the doorway.

When I answered, "For Pina," they dropped immediately. She pulled me in.

"Pina, of the lovely blonde hair, the flashing black eyes?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Then come in and be welcome!" She screamed over her shoulder with a loud cackling laugh, "Sisters! He wants a love potion for Pina!" I found myself dragged into the middle of a large and gloomy room.

"Sit down," she said. "I am Adriana." I nodded. "This is my sister Alba."

"And I'm Greta!" said another.

"And I'm Angelina! Our mother, who is now resting in purgatory, would have changed those names if she could see us now."

"But the potion!" Alba was speaking, leaning forward, her eagle-like face in her hands. "You wish a love potion for the girl named Pina, eh?"

"Are not all such potions the same?" asked Greta.

"Quite, except in lasting powers," answered Adriana. "How long should she love you?"

"Forever!"

"And how long will you love her?"

"That item makes nothing, old witch!" I exclaimed. "But of course I shall love her forever, too!"

"To be sure, yet it is important."

"Yes," Angelina added. "We could not think of selling you a potion for her love until we knew you would love her forever, too."

"And we must prepare you properly to receive this potion!" Alba dragged out a boiling pot. The four of them fluttered about it, dropping in the magic ingredients. Into it I saw go the teeth of hens, the feathers of bats, the toenails of snakes, and the closing copy of the Rome Daily American.

"It is ready," announced Angelina. She held up a cup half full of it, then liberally laced it with cognac. "Drink!"

I drank, though it tasted like tired crank-case oil. "And the love potion for Pina?" I inquired when I regained my breath.

"You have it!" screamed Alba. "Pina, come out!"

I WAS ASTOUNDED. Could my own Pina be here? But the girl who came out was not the drab, plain Pina that I had known but a different girl, a taller, more radiant girl, yet with blonde hair and flashing black eyes.

"This is Pina, my daughter," announced Alba. And I was in love with the new Pina.

Of course, we married immediately. I have not seen or spoken to the Pina in Rovigo, nor to Giuseppe. I don't see now how I ever could have loved her, anyway. I am wonderfully happy with the Pina of the Villa Strega, and we live contentedly in our house in Padova. I don't even mind the wolf hair in the bedsheets.



Monster by HOFFMAN

this little o, the earth

one of the most popular of the current
english crop of science-fiction wri-
ters, author of the four-sided triangle,
turns his talents to a witty and de-
lightful essay.

by william f. temple

0

It's nothing.

It's everything.

An invocation. A cry of exquisite pain. Or exquisite plea-
sure. Or surprise. Or wonder. Or admiration. Or contempt.

St. Paul spoke of himself "As having nothing, and yet pos-
sessing all things."

It's the nothing you came from, and it's all you can take
with you when you go.

In the beginning was the Word. The greatest poets chose its
smooth and flawless shape for the word beginning their loveliest
verses:

Keats: "O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms . . ."

And Burns: "O my Luve's like a red, red rose . . ."

And Shakespeare: "O Mistress mine, where are you roaming?"

It's the mark you got at school for composing your own lovely
verses: 0

It's the hoop you bowled along the street in those days. And
the hoop you tossed over the alarm clock at the hoop-la stall.
(But you never got the clock because the guy said the hoop was-
n't lying flat.)

It's the golden hoop he slipped over your third finger on the
most important day of your life (and then slipped off again to
put on the left hand).

It is beauty--the ring through the nose of a cannibal.

It is Time itself, in the form of an annular ring.

It is perfection. It is the 0 Giotto drew with one free
sweep of his brush and sent to the Pope as proof sufficient of
his skill.

And St. Augustine said, "The nature of God is a circle whose
center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere."

It is everything. And it is nothing. The sum on the credit
side of your bank book. The hole in your pocket.

It is the chemical symbol for oxygen. You can live without

food for a month. You can live without water for days. But you can't live for five minutes without O.

Emerson said, "The eye is the first circle; the horizon which it forms is the second; and throughout nature this primary figure is repeated without end."

But nature never used the O for a wheel. The credit for that adaptation is man's alone. His main use of it is fixing it in groups of four on automobiles and running himself down. It is also the wheel on his cigarette lighter, which spins and produces beautiful sparks--but no light.

It's a nickel, a dime, a silver dollar.

It's a Flying Saucer.

It's a revolving stage, the sawdust ring, the Pantheon. It's ^{Mr.}Mr.

It might be your halo.

It is the globe itself. Shakespeare, in Antony and Cleopatra, refers to it as "The little O, the Earth."

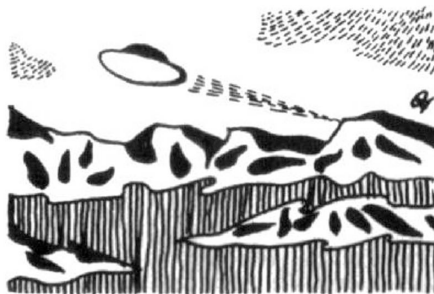
It is more than the Earth--it's infinity. Travel away from Earth, out into space, and you can go on for ever. And ever. You can't imagine going on for ever? And ever? Look at this O. Put a pencil point on its circumference--anywhere. (Charles Fort wrote: "One measures a circle, beginning anywhere.") Trace the circumference around. And around. And around. Your pencil point can go on for ever. And ever. (Unfortunately, you won't.) So is space curved in a great circle through the space-time continuum--ask Einstein.

Lots of circles are essential if you are to contemplate space. You put them after ordinary figures in batches of six, so: 1,000,000. Or 2,000,000. But if you want to contemplate the space beyond the Solar System (which, incidentally, is merely a series of O's one inside the other) you must put your circles in batches of twelve--to begin with.

The nearest star is 25,000,000,000,000 miles away. There is a nebula in the constellation of Bootes which is 1,380,000,000,000,000,000,000 miles away.

There is one drawback about using these O's to measure stellar distances. If you use enough of them, they don't convey anything at all. The brain cannot grasp them. They become meaningless. They all add up to--

O.



Saucer by POWLES LAND

the fireside

THE REGULAR FEATURES this issue, such as "Thunder and Roses," have all been curtailed in order to bring you the complete story behind The Lovers as told by Philip José Farmer himself. We think it's a good trade, on the whole, despite the many interesting letters we had to forego printing.

HERE ARE THE RATINGS of the stories and articles in the second issue, as determined by reader vote. First place, though I blush to report it, went to "The Ackerman Story," which I wrote long before greatness was thrust upon me in the form of this editorial fireside. Second place was Kris Neville's for "The Last Wobbly." Close behind Neville, Wilson Tucker and J. T. Oliver tied for third--Tucker with "The Wayfaring Stranger" and Oliver with "Ceremony." Those writers have all received cash prizes for their work.

PRIZES FOR THE ILLUSTRATIONS went to Jim Bradley for his illustration for "The Last Minstrel" and to Lee Hoffman for her illustration for "Two Poems." Our authors and artists are paid according to the votes the readers cast. If you like something you read, the writer will appreciate your writing in and telling us so, because it will mean money in his wallet.

WE LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCE that it is impossible to forecast accurately the contents of this magazine a whole issue in advance. Lengths, timeliness, the availability of illustrations--all these factors and many others exert too powerful an influence on editorial practice to let editorial judgment have full sway. But it's possible to list some of the material that we have here in the office and have tentatively scheduled for early publication. I think you'll agree that you can't afford to miss fantastic worlds in the future.

SO FAR AS STORIES ARE CONCERNED, we have a moving story about a man who goes on the first rocket to the moon, "Last Day," by A. Bertram Chandler; "The Question," a distinguished tale by David H. Keller, M. D.; "The Eight-hundredth Hundred Day," a yarn of the search for knowledge in the post-atomic future by William L. Bade; "Path of Glory," by A. Bertram Chandler, which shows what would happen if you had made that other choice; "The Mad Man from Machinery Row," a character study of real literary distinction, by David R. Bunch; "Self-Defence," by Clive Jackson, wherein the human race is tried and found wanting; "The Illustrated Chronicles," a parody of a well-known writer who shall remain nameless, by Bob Shaw; and many other fine stories that I wish I had the space to tell you about.

AND WE HAVE A FINE SELECTION of articles, too, about horror movies, television, Fredric Brown--all sorts of things. You'll get a look at them as soon as we can get them before you.

a chat with the editor

did you say reminisce?

alfred j. olsen, ph. b., m. a., first appeared in amazing in june, 1927, with a story called "the four-dimensional roller press." from that time until 1940 he published about fifty stories, all under his pen-name, "bob olsen." he wrote us a fan letter about fantastic worlds, and ed ludwig replied, asking him to reminisce for us. here is the response.

by bob olsen

DEAR ED:

In your recent post card you wrote, "I wonder if you are the same Bob Olsen on whose stories I practically cut my eye teeth back in the Amazing of the '30's." I am afraid I shall have to plead guilty to that charge. However, you don't know what a risk you took when you invited me to reminisce for fw. Once Bob Olsen starts reminiscing it is mighty hard to shut him up.

To begin with I must make it clear that with me writing has not been a vocation but a hobby, and an expensive one at that, since I spent so much time writing science fiction that I neglected my profitable advertising business. Once I kept tabs on the amount of time I spent on a yarn, including brushing up on my math, checking carefully to make sure all scientific details were accurate, revising innumerable times and rewriting twice. I sold the script to Amazing Stories for 1c per word. When I divided the total loot by the number of hours I had spent on the story, it figured out at the munificent rate of 17½c per hour. That ain't hay, brother! For that matter it could hardly be called peanuts--at least at the present price of peanuts. See what I mean when I say it was an expensive hobby?

Unfortunately I never learned how to wield a prolific tripe-writer, and I never acquired the successful pulp-writer's knack of grinding out acceptable prose at a supersonic rate of speed. Many years ago Arthur Burks told me that he frequently turned out three 5,000-word stories in a single day and sold all three

of them. When Ray Palmer asked him to contribute a chapter to the composite novel entitled Cosmos, he said, "Sit down, Ray, and I'll write it for you right now." Then he knocked out "Callisto's Children" in about two hours, while Ray waited for the sheets as they came out of the machine. I too was asked to contribute to Cosmos, but it took me three weeks to turn out "The Murderer from Mars." My good friend Ed Earl Repp was also a fast worker--so fast, in fact, that he published under several pen-names at the same time. Guess I was too fussy about the stuff that was printed under my name--or maybe I am jest a li'l ole slowpoke.

ONE OF MY EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS as an author was when a starry-eyed youngster of eight or ten rang the bell of my home in Beverly Hills and wanted to know if a famous author named Bob Olsen lived there. I told him my name was Bob Olsen but that, so far as I knew, there was no famous author living at that address, although I admitted having written a couple of yarns which had been published in Amazing Stories.

"I'd like to have your autograph," the lad said. "My name is Forrest Ackerman."

That was the first time anyone had ever asked me for my autograph. (For that matter, it came close to being the last time also.) Naturally I welcomed him as enthusiastically as if he had been a millionaire uncle with one foot in the grave and the other on skid row. I introduced him to Mrs. Olsen, who presently retired to the kitchen and reappeared subsequently with a pitcher of lemonade and a dish of homemade cookies. Meanwhile Forrest had produced a stack of blank filing cards as thick as a pinochle deck and began handing them to me one by one, saying, "Please sign this. Please sign this." Et cetera. After I had scribbled my name about fifteen times and was beginning to develop symptoms of writers' cramp, I asked, "Why do you want so many autographs?"

"I use them for trading purposes," he explained. "I just made a deal with a guy who is willing to swap one H. G. Wells for twenty Bob Olsens."

That was the beginning of a wonderful friendship, which has flourished through war and peace and through sickness and health for a quarter of a century. In all my experiences with science fiction I have never read, seen, or known anything that was so amazing as he himself. My favorite designation for him was "God's gift to science fiction writers."

IN THE EARLY DAYS, as you probably know, Hugo Gernsback found it impossible to buy enough original material to fill his magazines and he had to resort to reprints. I shall never forget the wonderful thrill I got when I saw on the newsstands a copy of Amazing Stories on the cover of which appeared in large type this amazing inscription:

STORIES BY H. G. WELLS, BOB OLSEN, AND EDGAR ALLAN POE

I couldn't wait to show the cover to a friend of mine who claimed to be a writer (though none of his masterpieces had been published), and who belittled my feeble literary efforts as "pulp potboilers." He took a squint at the three names,

sniffed, and said, "Hm, they sure sized you up right."

"You mean you really think I belong in that distinguished company?" I asked.

"Not exactly," he replied. "When I said they sized you up right, I meant that they put you half way between a live one and a dead one!"

IN YOUR POST CARD you mentioned some of the early writers and added that Olsen was about the only one who didn't have a trail of Ph. D.'s after his name. To set the record straight--since you brought the matter up--I too could have tacked a string of letters after my name, including Ph. B., M. A., and Phi Beta Kappa, but I refrained from doing so because I think a work of fiction should stand on its own merits and it should not need any special bolstering. Any intelligent fan can tell from the story itself whether or not the author knows his stuff. On the other hand, all the kudos in the world will not cover up the scientific blunders that so often are perpetrated by writers of so-called "science" fiction.

As you may possibly recall, most of my early contributions to Amazing Stories were on the same theme, namely the fourth dimension. I chose this subject because I had been taught that a writer should stick to material which is thoroughly familiar to him.

You may not know it, but my alma mater, Brown University, has always been famous for its outstanding Department of Mathematics. Brown is reputed to have the most complete mathematics library in the world. That is one reason why the American Mathematics Society moved its headquarters from New York to Providence, R. I. The leading American Journal of Mathematics is also published in Providence. When I was a student at Brown, one of the math professors was Henry Parker Manning, who is internationally famous as one of the world's greatest authorities on Non-Euclidean Geometry. So far as I know, Manning's textbook on four-dimensional geometry is the only work of its kind that has ever been published. It describes all the regular four-dimensional polyhedrigons and gives instructions for constructing them.

After graduating from Brown, I taught science and mathematics for ten years and I continued to read everything about the fourth dimension that came to my attention. You may therefore judge my surprise when I read the "blurb" for a yarn entitled "The Book of Worlds," by Miles J. Breuer, M. D. It seems that the good doctor didn't think Bob Olsen knew how to write a four-dimensional story, and so he (Breuer) wrote "The Book of Worlds" to show Olsen how it should be done.

But the real payoff was this: It transpired that Bob Olsen had decided to try his hand at a surgery yarn. After doing a lot of research work and having two doctors check his script, Bob sold the story to AS. The title was "The Superperfect Bride." Believe it or not, it was published in the same issue as "The Book of Worlds."

When I wrote "The Superperfect Bride" I of course had no idea of trying to show up the M. D.'s or Ph. D.'s. Even if I had entertained such an intention I certainly would not have bragged about it. Nevertheless, those fans who happened to know my background had the strange experience of reading, in the same issue of AS, one yarn by an M. D. who was trying to show a mathematician how to write a story about the fourth dimension

and another one by a mathematician who, without intending to do so, was showing the M. D. how to write a story about surgery!

But the aftermath of the episode was the most incredible part of it. Some time ago Donald Wollheim asked my agent (who happens to be named Ackerman) for permission to reprint "The Superperfect Bride" in an anthology. It appeared in Avon Science Fiction Reader No. 2. In the same issue was a yarn by the late Miles J. Breuer, M. D. The title? You guessed it: "The Book of Worlds." What a coincidence!

DURING THE QUARTER OF A CENTURY that has passed into eternity since my first science fiction story was published, I have had a lot of unusual experiences--some of which were funny and others tragic. One of the most notable of these started when I received a letter from a man named Hershey, asking me to submit contributions to him for a new science fiction magazine he planned to publish. I had just finished a 40,000 word script entitled "The Ant with a Human Soul," and so I mailed it to Hershey in the hope of opening up a new market for my literary wares.

About two weeks later, the Beverly Hills telegrapher phoned and read me the following message: "Offer two hundred dollars for 'Ant with Human Soul' Wire reply." The operator added, "That sixth word is spelled a-n-t, not a-u-n-t. I checked with the New York operator to make sure."

I thanked him and told him I would call at the telegraph office and pick up the written wire.

When he handed me the blank, the telegrapher said, "Excuse me, Mister. I know I am not supposed to stick my nose into customers' affairs, but that wire of yours got me so intrigued that I haven't been able to think of anything else. Of course, I've heard of flea circuses, and I suppose that a trained flea is worth a lot of dough. But, for the life of me, I can't figure out why in hell a guy would want to pay two hundred bucks for a dadblamed ant!"

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for summer issue, july 1,
copy must be in may 15

love song for the year 2053

by garth bentley

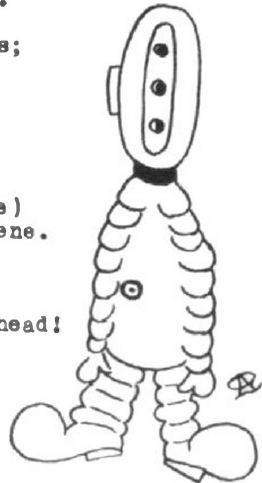
My dear V5-Z6-K20:

I've complied with the laws of the land,
And the forms I've filled in have been plenty
So I could lay siege to your hand.
I've submitted to checking and testing
In the clinics set up by the state,
And I have all the papers attesting
My fitness to serve as your mate.

The Bureau in charge of Eugenics
Has searched through my family tree;
No cretins and no neurasthenics
Are closely related to me.
The analysts give full assurance
I have no inherited taints.
I am not under par in endurance,
Nor subject to fits or to faints.

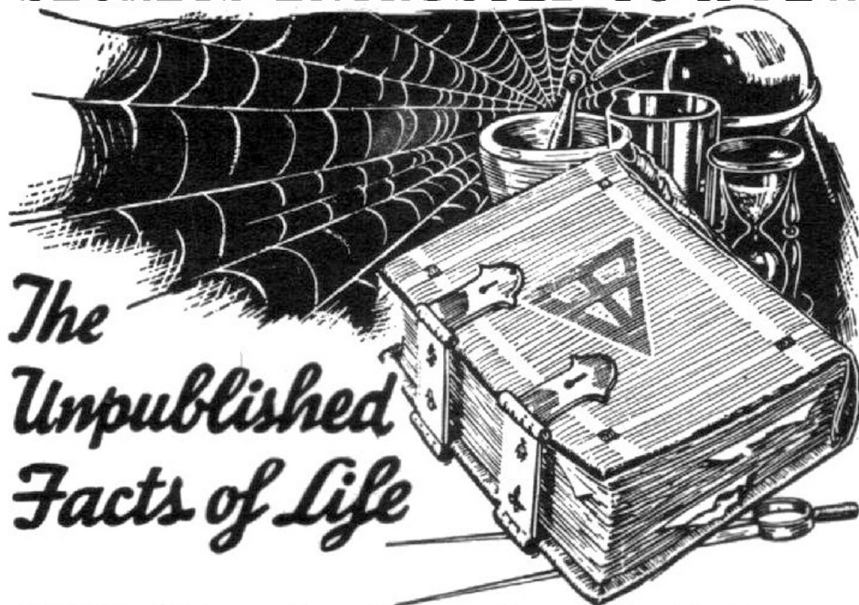
I have a low allergy index.
The medics out long ago
My tonsils, my spleen and appendix.
I haven't a trace of B. O.
My blood has the best of corpuscles;
Its pressure is normally neat.
My quota of tendons and muscles
Is certified fully complete.

My aptitudes (social) are ample.
My I. Q. is better than keen.
They have even approved (via sample)
Each chromosome, hormone, and gene.
So favor my fervid petitions
And let us be instantly wed--
For another of these inquisitions
Would drive me clear out of my head!



Thing by POWLESLAND

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