

No 6 NS

An amateur magazine devoted to fantasy fiction.

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F U T U R I A N .

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# **T h e F U T U R I A N**

**VOL 2**

**A U T U M N 1939**

**NO 6**

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## EDITORIAL



Here is another issue of our little magazine, but this time enormously changed. Should we be able to continue, as we hope to do of course, even more far reaching changes will be necessary. As many of you kind people who keep in touch with us in Leeds, are already aware; my two collaborators are now with His Majesty's Forces, so that this and future issues will be "all my own work". Moreover this is practically my first attempt at duplicating! Therefore many adjustments will be vitally necessary, so suggestions & criticisms will be most welcome. For example, how does a handwritten Editorial suit you?

I gratefully acknowledge the help given

by Miss Jane Rosenberg, who is quite new to amateur publications, in steering this issue.

Whether we can continue, is, of course unpredictable, but we hope for your support, in an attempt to do so. Those canny souls who do not care to risk a long subscription - and we don't blame you - if they prefer, may just send 3d. in stamps on receiving an issue, or 7s.6d. either here or to Harry Warner Jr.

For the convenience of those affected, subscriptions expiring with this issue have a large [F] thus on their wrappers.

Dare we borrow FANTAST's criticism plan and ask you all to mark all items out of 10, when you send in your valued suggestions & criticisms.

And don't forget that to continue we need plenty of contributions; a very much wider type in any aspect of fantasy, is now welcome - and this includes all you amateur artists. And can we have some ideas of what you want as well?

Finally, for our American friends, I would like to point out that I am not in the army, as helpfully suggested, but am far more likely to spend the war 'in distance vote'.

J. M. Rosenthal

# THE FOUNDATION OF

## INSPIRATION

By

Richard G. Hedhurst

There can be no doubt about it. To the old-timer such feats of the imagination as "The Prisoner of Mars", in No. 3 of "Startling", are, to borrow a phrase from Frank Arnold, dead from the hair down. They transgress all the rules of honest stf., with their breathable Martian air and their bearable temperatures and their human inhabitants -- with terrestrial institutions. Even if those confounded human Martians were descended from "common stock" one would hardly expect the princess to react with anything but astonishment and disgust to the purely western and grossly unhygienic custom of the kiss.

So I brooded while I wallowed thru the "Prisoner", determined to get my 4d. remainder worth or die.

But suddenly a thought hit me. There are more ways of getting entertainment out of a stf., story than enjoying it. SRA's Key Critiques is one. Another, only possible for old-timers, is to Spot the Inspiration. Most stories carry a certain number of striking (somewhat) ideas, apart, I mean, from the usual author's stock-in-trade, such as space flight by some sort of disintegration and reintegration, and mechanical brains. The simple rules of

this game are to find the original inspiration for each idea, and to count one point for each such "fount". I do not think we need bother to frame a rule to cover original ideas. The possibility is too remote, nowadays. As an example of what I mean, I will claim 4 points for the "Prisoner" and demonstrate how I arrive at them.

First, the whole of the main plot derives, of course, from the novel by Anthony Hope, "The Prisoner of Zenda", even to the title. In Hope's tale we have the same King kidnapped by a dastardly usurper, the same double, a visitor to the country, stepping in to keep the throne in the family, even the same complication of the King's betrothed, the Princess Flavia, in this case, who finds His Majesty's attractiveness suddenly increase 100%. The scene has simply been shifted, without acknowledgments, from Ruritania to Mars.

Easy enough so far. The second point of interest is, however, a little more obscure. We have to find a source for the idea of a man in the unhappy situation of being attached by ties of birth to the one, and of personal sympathy to the other of two warring worlds. The best I can do here is to suggest one of Hamilton's own earlier stories, "The Conquest of Two Worlds", I believe it was called, in the old large size Wonder stories, which features this theme brilliantly.

My third count is the Princess Iara. The unusual point about this lady is that the hero finds her charms more overpowering, eventually, than those of his terrestrial girl-iriend. It is a custom in stf., that no wicked wiles of these foreign beauties should prevail over the home-grown product. The source for this break with conventions is - don't all shout at once - Margaret of Urbs. Is the coincidence of names intended as a hint? Actually, even Weinbaum was not the first in the field. If I dare suggest a "fount" for the inspiration of the master, I would point to Rider Haggard's "Ayesha", commonly known by the pet-name of "She".

The fourth point on which I claim to score is the idea of a section of a community being changed into drifting, disembodied intelligences, one of which the hero finds himself, by the malice of his enemies. I believe this has cropped up several times, in various forms, but the one that is the most outstanding to me is "Warriors of Space", by Carl Buchanan and Dr. Arch Carr, in the August 1934 Astounding. Here, among other-points of resemblance, we have the same annoyance of the hero at his embarrassing predicament.

In all, I detected five points in the "Prisoner" that bore the stamp of originality, and it is the fifth point that marrs my score. It is the transporting of the Earth's polar ice to arid Mars. Now, I must confess that this has

me floored, at least temporarily. The usual method, of course, is to use a planetoid of ice. And yet, there seems to be a strong familiarity in the polar ice method. Perhaps some reader can identify it. We mustn't let Hamilton beat us.

L U N A T i

Bv

Ron. Holmes.

Revolving in eternal space  
You're a Goddess and a Queen  
Although the starlit heavens you  
grace

One side is never seen  
Planet of silent mystery  
What secrets you withhold  
Your long forgotten history  
That never will be told.

Yet earthmen would conquer you  
The conceited little fools,  
With spaceships and rockets  
And puny little tools.  
They faced the wrath of Lunar  
With tiny ships of space  
To colonise you Lunar  
For their overcrowded race.

They land upon you, Lunar  
Your face has been defiled  
By the parasites that spawn upon



The planet once thy child.  
To pry into your secrets  
To learn your bitter past  
The secrets of your craters  
And Tycho's rays that cast.

They Plunder your dead cities  
In their mighty lust for power  
You struck them down, O lunar  
In sight of Tycho's tower  
They killed the mighty Cathon,  
The Mantols and the Ptheks  
The Altrons and the Drethen  
With their long and scaly necks.

But forgotten was the plantlife  
In your craters vast and deep  
It grew about the space ship  
While the earthlings were asleep.  
This was not discovered  
Till mornings early light  
The space ship had been covered  
In the passing of the night.

The earthlings in the metal ship  
Where sealed as in a tomb  
For earthly metal could not withstand  
The slowly crushing doom.  
The Weight upon the little ship  
Was more than it could bear  
Its sides were crushed, its spine  
was smashed  
Out rushed the precious air.

The earthlings in their little ship

Are corpses stiff and cold  
You killed them, O Lunar  
For they would be too bold.  
And at the foot of Tycho  
Beneath that mighty tower  
There stand a silent warning  
Of LUNAR'S silent power.

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THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN...

By

BOB TUCKER

The title is prompted by thinking of some letters I have read. Letters that appeared, for the most part, in the discussion columns of the pro magazines. Letters that seem to stand out head and shoulders above the discussion column itself . . . . letters that were so entertaining that they should have been paid for, instead of some of the putrid stories the magazine printed. Letters that contain some thought, of phrase, that-lives for years in the memory of the readers. . . . .

Remember the one that appeared in "Under Stories" about 1934. It was from a disgruntled reader who felt that he wasn't quite getting his 15 cents worth, and he put it something like this. (I am quoting from memory). "Dear Editor, yer mag is punk lousy! I have never red worse and I want my monies back!" I have the word of Mr. Hornig that that missile was no joke conjured

up to enlighten" columns, on the contrary, it was the actual thing, sent in no doubt by some nine-year-old lad who felt that he was being cheated. Hornig printed it just as he received it, without editing of any kind. While I cannot remember the exact text, I think I shall always remember that letter.

Another letter, of more recent date appeared in "Astounding". It came from Los Angeles, from Bradbury I believe, about the time the floods were flooding Bradbury under. He said, in part: ".as I write this by the flame of my wee tallow dip in old flood-bound Los Angeles". I doubt if Bradbury will ever intentionally write a piece of professional humour that struck the chord that line did. It was masterly!

Robert Lowndes, in many magazines of many dates, used to rattle off some sweet ones! Especially when he thought less of the magazine than we do of a tax token, some of his missiles to Thrilling Wonder are the aces of entertainment.... I would certainly rather pay fifteen cents to read his letters than to read some of the stories they print. Robert has a snack of being delightfully sweet whilst he pins down the ears of the editor! Even the editors like it. . . . they print his letters.

And the Van Kampen debate in Tremaine's "Astounding". While some of the technical details were miles over my head, I enjoyed it nevertheless, and I

think it will be some time before another such spectacle is presented in a discussion column.

Meanwhile, I suggest that everyone grab a pencil or a typewriter and compose an epic that will be poetry in prose, lyrics set to old type, and, fling it on its merry way to your favourite pet, or hate the magazine of your choice. You won't get paid for it, but you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your letter represents far more effort than did some of the story material in the same issue!

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## "THE THING"

By

Leslie A. Croutch.

All evening now it's been snuffling about the house. My God! why doesn't it go away. Why must it circle about and make those horrible noises? I saw it first when I went to take the milk in and when it saw me - I just had time to close the door or it would have had me. And it hasn't left, for I can still hear it.

There it is! On the porch. Lord how big and shaggy it looks in the deepening gloom. It's looking at me - and snarling. How hellow its huge eyes glow. What a horrible mouth, black, pulled back in a ferocious sneer from its bare fangs.

Ah, it just got up and moved from my sight. I know it has gone for another circuit of the house. Why doesn't it go away? What does it want? It must be looking for an entrance - an entrance! Oh Lord! can it get in? May be the door? No, they're locked; I know they are, I locked them. But perhaps - I'll take another look.

Yes, they're fastened securely. It can't get in there. How many times now have I examined those two doors? I forget but it seems like thousands in an eternity of time.

If only a police car would pass - why did I have the 'phone taken out? - that noise! what - oh, just a stick in the stove changing position - how jittery I am: stomach feels all tight - hands **shake** - body perspires.

The windows! Can It get in there? Not the upper ones. It can't climb, or can It? Oh, no, surely not - but perhaps the lower ones - no - too high up - couldn't possibly ~~leap~~ leap that high. So I'm safe - I hope - but am I? What about the basement ones? It could break in there if It were so minded. They're only covered by light wire nettings and - Merciful God! I forgot! One is open-wide open - the largest one of all! I must. Oh, God, let me get there in time for if It got in It could come right up the stairs - there's no door on them; I took it off because one of the panels was broken.

How dark it is down there. Why didn't I replace the globe in the socket when I broke it with the axe splitting kindling? But I'll have to go down anyway - how thick the blackness is - I can just make out the light greyness that is the window.

Ouch! What the devil is this? The axe - why must I stub my toe on the damned thing? Lying right here in the way, it is.

But the window - Mustn't forget the window. Ahhhh! An immense hairy head shows in it against the sky. It's coming in - coming in here. What can It want? What a huge body - it's in! I can hear It breathing and growling. It's eyes glow like twin amber devil-fires. Why did It have to come in my cellar? Why - why? Maybe It could smell the water - it's all over the floor in one corner where the pipes -

Stay away from me - stay away, I say! Ahhh - it jumped at me - for a moment I could feel Its rough, hairy body - stay away, get away! Oh God -

The axe! Where's the axe? If I only had it, maybe - ah, here it is. Put my foot on it. How comforting it is in my hand! Now come on, you Devil! You God-forsaken Spawn of Hell - I'll kill you - I'll split your rotten skull - ah hah! hear it scream! I hit it that time - yes, and badly, too - I can smell the sickening, sweetish odour of hot blood.

Swing - smash - hack! Sometimes I strike it, sometimes I don't. Ugh! it's claws just struck my leg - tore my trousers - not hurt though. I can see it! Against the kitchen light - halfway up the stairs: trying to escape me, are you you Hound From Hell? Oh, no you don't! Take that - ahhhh, the blade cut through its back, knocked it off the stairs.

Merciful God on High, listen to its scream and thrash about. Its death cries sound almost human, but that couldn't be. There - it's still now. It's dead, Thank God. I'm safe from that terrible thing: it's dead, it can't harm me now.

How thirsty I am. A drink and then I'll call the police - the neighbour has a 'phone -

"Hello - police station? Come out to 316 Grand Avenue. Yes - 316 Grand. I just killed a mad dog in my cellar."

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Amongst the latest additions to the Leeds S.F.L. collection are the following books:-

"Sunset"	F. Morison
The Death Box	Alexei Tolstoi
Cay Hunter	J. Leslie Mitchell
Urania	Camille Flammarion
Lumen	" "
Fields of Sleep	E. Charles Vivian
Lapidus the Centurion	E. L. Arnold
Lost on Venus	E. R. Burroughs
Rebels Triumph	J. W. F. Hannay
A Drop in Infinity	Gerald Grogan

V.B. Further details about these books.. will gladly be sent on request.

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A R G U M E N T A T I V E ?

For the first time we are able to devote a reasonable amount of space to the (this) feature. Editorial comments (if any) will be carefully underlined so that you can tell who is saying which.

Here is a letter from Ralph Milne Farley which we are privileged to print.

Thanks for your letter of August 20 and for the copy of The "FOTONIAN", containing my story.

I certainly should like to continue to receive the mag.

Sorry you don't have the reverence for Stan Weinbaum's memory that we do, over here. I collaborated with him on three stories:

"Swollen Seas." One of the "Jim Grant" gangster series.

"Revolution of 1950."

And I still consider him an incipient genius.

(Many of us over here also hold this opinion but ideas vary of course.)

The FOTONIAN commands attention, and I am pleased to say that it is possible to say again that it gets better with each issue, even if we do miss the readers' column. (Well, it's here this



time).

Editorials always seem like fillers written on the spur of the moment, so I generally ignore them. Harold's poem I like, and my own contribution, while an inauspicious beginning for your new policy, is nevertheless the length I think all articles should be. The puns are ghastly, but will appeal to your younger readers, who are doubtless numerous (Duck, Johnny!). Farley's piece is absurd and doesn't even rouse a smile - please don't go for big names just because they are names - insist on quality first. (Most people liked it - so did we.)

Bert Lewis' review is quite good, and gives an air of dignity to the erstwhile hurried reviews. Unfortunately that dignity is lost with the scurry on Page 18. As this is a library list, I suppose one can't expect much, but it would be better to omit comments than to put such inconclusive stuff as this.

With such a nice feeling of being able to bestow praise here there and everywhere, I must protest - can't you spell Reminiscences, or does it take up too much room that way? The ToW interview doesn't say much new. Fan Parade interesting as usual, Rathbone hopelessly idealistic and rather Michelistic in tone. The gossip is old news. (Whew!)

While these comments don't seem exactly exuberant, I really like this is-

sue, and the mag really means a lot to British fandom now. (Thanks for those-kind words Johnny.)

*Needless to say, this letter is from Johnny Burke of Liverpool.*

(Spacehound R. G. Medhurst, now of Cambridge says:-

Scarcely left myself space to comment on the latest FUTONIAN. Quite a meaty issue that amused, interested and aggravated as a live mag. should. Editorial discreet but inspiring, although I am not quite sure just what it is inspiring us to. John F. Burke determined to shake us out of our lethargy at all costs, though I have a suspicion that it has all been said before, and I hope it does not bring down on your noble head the inglorious martyrdom you so obviously crave, Mr. Burke.

"Some Queer Books" - well, we might have swallowed that if it were not for the "little more sedate than usual" boost, and I haven't forgotten the saving clause of the "essential enthusiasm".

On Page 14 we are assailed by the lurid career of Mr. Cohen. Can anyone explain the deep philosophic connection in the mind of the Fan between stf. and beer? The breweries seem to find a flourishing market throughout fandom.

Sorry, Mr. Rathbone. Your article would probably send me off to the crusades, if only I could bring myself to be-

lieve in "Man" and "pirative thought".

"Tales of Wonder and Reprints" looked as though it were really going to blow the gaff, to use a regrettable colloquialism. "Other magazines seem to get them - why can't you?; but the danger passed.

Miss Sybil Cowan wants to correspond about films, dancing, sport and other terrifyingly active things. In my young days, fans used to pant about looking for correspondents who would discuss, above all things unlikely, Science and Weird Fiction. But times change. In any case, I don't suppose after all that beer swilling any fans can be found in condition to allow of sporting activities.

I enclose an article that probably won't be of any use to you, designed to illustrate the ancient proverb that there are more ways of calling an author plagiarist than calling him a plagiarist

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Another fellow editor, Sam Youd of Eastleigh, Hampshire, comments:-

I am writing this at the Office (owing to lack of time at home) which explains the strange typewriter and also the thin paper. Nevertheless, I have the Summer Futurian before me, and will proceed to furnish doubtlessly boring comments on it.

While I am thinking of it, I might mention that I think the cover might be done better. The "Summer, 1939" might

be arranged better, and surely the "Member F.A.P.A." would be more fittingly placed at the extreme top or bottom? Similarly, I do not like the cut for the title page - Taurasi is an example of American fan art at its weakest. For goodness' sake, get Harry or even Osmond to do you a cut. For the rest of the make-up, the printing is in places inferior to previous issues.

Best in the issue, I think, was "Love for a Robot", though this is only so placed by exclusion of your very excellent editorial. I do not place Harold's poem, because it is unplaceable. By this I do not mean that it is either superlatively good or bad, but merely different to the rest of the issue. I liked it, but I think a little care would have made it better still. The third stanza, for instance, is poor, both in rhythm and imagery, and the first line of it is senseless, though I blame the printer for this.

Johnny is still on the old tack, but I quite enjoyed the reading of "Pathetic Fallacies". "Some Queer Books" - bah! many bahs! PLEASE get some new books in Book News, or cut it out altogether. I have finished trying to count the reviews of the "Demigods" I've seen, and the news of the Lovecraft Omnibus Volume is months old. For the type of book review I like, see Rowland's in the next Fantast but one.

Reminiscences will probably go on forever, for Unger will have another thirteen years to do by the time he reaches 1939. It seems, too, that he knows

The Sage of Nuneaton, D. R. Smith, adds:

The reception of the Summer issue of the Futurian brought to my mind the uneasy, suspicion that perhaps I have been very slack in acknowledging the receipt of the former issue. I trust you will accept my apologies.

The editorial seemed to me to be rather high and mighty about the qualities of fantasy fans. I know we're good, but are we as good as all that? I fear not.

I like the ballade form, but only as a vehicle for humour. Nevertheless Gottliffe succeeds in putting over his idea rather well, and it is a superior effort to most fan poems.

Burke has a good idea to express, but the examples he chooses do not speak well for his critical powers. It seems to be the fashion lately to run down the old classics of magazine science-fiction. It amounts to sheer ingratitude. His argument against the "Skylark" is particularly puerile, he forgets that the audience that received this story with acclamation had been nourished on Wells and Merritt, Verne and Keller, and therefore had some experience of what real story writing is. I did not read the "Skylark of Space" until several years after my introduction to science-fiction magazines, and even more years after my introduction to Wells, but nevertheless I think it is well-up among the more notable epics of fantasy. While the sto-

nothing about the really important phase in fandom - the Fantasy Magazine period.

Tales of Wonder & Reprints??? Harold told me a different story. Fan Parade is always as interesting as Museum Corner is dull. I have enjoyed all the Potted Autobiographies up to now, the 3rd less than others. Jimmy's article seems very Michelist in tone, but as I become more and more Michelist myself, perhaps I'd better not say anything. The Notice Board is a sure-fire laughter-maker. I hope Miss Sybil Cowan gets many pen-pals on films (!), dancing (!! ) and sport (!!!). Why doesn't she apply to Mrs. Goodsort on the Daily Splash? And I wouldn't use fiction if I were you nor science articles. Of course, if, as your note might indicate, the size is going up, I do not greatly object. Still, fiction by fans is generally lousy, and should be rigidly confined to mimeo matter. Fan Gossip is not very new this time, but I agree about the Wollheim-ban at the W&FC. Definitely bad form.

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"SPACEWAYS" is now acknowledged as the leading American fan magazine. Poems, stories, plays and articles all of fine quality, in a well-produced format are well worth the price of 10 cents an issue, 3 for 25 cents.

Harry Warner, 303 Bryan Pl., HAGERSTOWN Md., U.S.A.

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ries by the common or garden writers of to-day, such as Binder Kummer Schachner et Cie, are likely to kill any interest the most enthusiastic reader has in scientific fantasy, the Skylark is one of the few stories I would try to convert a new reader with.

As for Weinbaum, I prefer to judge him by what he did, rather than what he might have done.

I agree with him to a large extent about Paul. What beats me is why he worships Finday, whose August Astounding cover is a particularly good example of his limitations as an artist, being incoherent and without resemblance to any possible scheme.

I question whether the point in Farley's story was worth the number of words shrouded in.

The book news is interesting, but I am not sure that I can say as much for the Reminiscences. Not knowing any of the people concerned even by reputation is a handicap to true interest in their doings.

I have nothing against Gillings re-print policy, but arguments he brings up in support of it are rather weak in view of the excellent showing Fantasy is making without recourse to reprints.

Rathbone is very inspiring on the possibilities of science-fiction, but his points have been thrashed out before I doubt myself that fantasy will ever be more than an entertainment.

The news rounded off the issue very nicely as usual. Quite a worthy effort as a whole.

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## BOOK REVIEW

By Bert Lewis

I've been informed that my space is to be somewhat limited in this issue, so I'll have to make the best of this space.

Three titles only are worth calling Science Fiction :-

Firstly, another brilliant piece of phantas from the flowing pen of Dennis Sheple, in his "Sixty days to live" (Hutchinson 8/6d). We get the now familiar sight of a heavenly body hurtling towards the earth, with one time prediction by the scientists, the story gives us the reactions of the people to this penultimate catastrophe, and their various ideas of how to spend the remaining time, sixty days in which to crowd so much.

Secondly, something of a different nature in "The Deach Guard" by F.G. Chadwick (Hutchinson 8/6d). The author's theme is the creation of artificial human life. His amazing phantas cannot fail to impress by its brilliance as a remarkable piece of imaginative fiction.

Thirdly, again a new kind of time travel "Lady of Yesterday" by G. J. H. is an imaginary autobiography, sounding deep and dark, with emotional tragedy, deriving its scientific possibilities from a use of Einstein's theory of serial time (Golden Cockerel Press 8/6d).

For the real collector there is a limited edition at 30/-.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~  
DON'T FORGET -

We need all the support we can get, in times like these! And will you American friends try to keep in touch with us despite all the obstacles now cropping up.



## Directory of Current British Fan Magazines

FANTAST; now bi-monthly, 24 or more pages,  
good general contents. 1s. 9d. for six issues.

C. S. Youd, 244 Desborough Road, Eastleigh, Hants.

this is to be continued as long as possible, but Youds  
Fantasy War Bulletin has ceased after its third issue.

MACAERE: devoted to weird fiction and fantasy  
probably bimonthly, first issue just out. News sheet  
Dawn Shadows to appear at end of November James F.  
Rathbone, 24 Heriot Place, Edinburgh 3., Scotland.

New Worlds: now suspended, partially replaced  
by Postal Preview - news items on printed postcard, 8  
issues - 6d.. Ted Carnell, 17 Burwash Rd., Plumstead,  
London.

The Satellite; to continue if sufficient support is  
given, policy of lighthearted reading, monthly, 1s. 6d.  
for six months. J.F.Burke, 57 Beaclair Dr, Liverpool 15

Science Fantasy Review; to continue if at all  
possible, probably monthly, mainly news, four issues -  
sixpence. L.V.Heald, 14 Henley Avenue, Liverpool 21

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And then, of course, The Futurian will continue as  
long as possible, i. e. whilst I remain at liberty. Future  
issues will have altered format & be quarto size.

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