

Center

LIGHT

EDITOR, L.A. CROUTCH.



JANUARY

1942

NO. 112

Handwritten scribble or signature in the top left corner.





nyx

THE



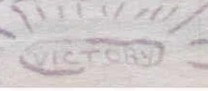
"Message From An Immortal"
by Shirley Peck

Another Peck semi-nude!

Pictures by Peck; Nyx, Fred
Hurter; Nils H. Frome; Ted White; George M. Aylesworth;
and others.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!



EUNUCHS IN THE PULPS

BY
HENRY "HANK" KUTTNER

THIS IS REPRINTED FROM "SWEETNESS AND LIGHT" FOR WINTER, 1940

It has been contended that readers of science fiction are pretty damn intelligent. Much more so than the average run of pulp audience. But the general reaction to sex in fantasy fiction does not bear this out.

Most readers will immediately misunderstand my meaning. Sex to the average boobus Americanus (vid. Mencken), evokes self-conscious smirks or compressed lips. It is erroneously identified with lewdness and pornography. To narrow such a vast and important impulse to a single restricted field is both ridiculous and egregiously stupid.

Sex magazines are wrongly named. Pornographic fiction is the correct term. My dictionary defines sex as "the physical difference between male and female". Pornography is "the expression of suggestion of the obscene in speaking, writing, etc. licentious art or literature". In other words--lewd, lustful, garbal, licentious. Now, sex, as a basis for the relationships between man and woman need not necessarily fall into the classification of lewdness. Sex, per se, does not imply either strip-tease or cohabitation, any more than literature implies science fiction alone.

As I say, we confuse sex with pornography. There is a world of difference between Freud and Fanny Hill, the Kamasutra and Black Lust, D.H. Lawrence and Spicy Stories. Pornographic material is designed with the single purpose of arousing passion. And pornography has a larger sale in the United States than anywhere else in the world, due to inhibitions and hypocrisy which have created an unhealthy, juvenile state of mind in the average American. Pornography is identified with sex; sex is something at which to sneer. Because of this ridiculous attitude of mental weapons, science fiction more than any other type, perhaps, is kept juvenile in trend and outlook.

Despite various adult ideas, science fiction stories are seldom about human beings. I have on my desk a letter from a well-known fantasy writer which covers the point very well. He says, in part:

"Science fiction is more human interest, there is no doubt about it. Most people are more or less foul minded. They are dropping in a tea or cocktail party. This is not a party for pornography but rather for scientists who, and space men of both sexes who have not substituted ray guns for glands. The characters of the Wizard of Oz can't be the wild cat scratch of the imagination be called pornographic, but they are human and talk like humans and act like humans; whereas the characters in 99% of the science fiction on the stands present dummies, apparently cut out of cookie dough who can't possibly be called humans. While it is true that the sex fantasy-mystery yarns do have an absurd over-emphasis on raw meat and strip-tease, it is just as true that the 'clean' fantasy science yarns present bloodless dummies. We need not present satyrs and nymphomaniacs, nor dames who are staging a strip-tease every thousand words, but our 'romance angle' man and woman should be in our people human enough to make the reader feel that this romance, and not a haste across exchanged by a valve tappet and a camshaft. Something that neither had any urge to do, but the blueprints and the laws of story

...man's just required it. Maybe I malign "fantastic" fiction thr-
...arising from not reading all the output. In that case
...? A good article isn't maligned by any statement aimed
...the busy ones."

Well, I suppose does not suffer as distressingly from the malady my
correspondent mentions. For one thing, it has not the rigid set of la-
bored "fantastic" fiction possesses. Weird stories are often published in
the "house" magazines, aimed at the more adult type of reader. They
need not be about heroes, villains, and heroines. A good story reflects
life artistically. And only a fool will deny that the sex impulse plays
a vital part in life. If the hero of a story turns away and attention to
a woman he withholds treats her as though she were a man, or vice versa
like an uninhibited satyr. This is of considerable significance. The
typical "fantastic" novel is outwardly extremely moral. Any form of sex
is anathema to him. Normal emotional life is warped and suppressed rig-
idly. Eventually the dam bursts and the newspapers have another sensat-
ional headline. Sanity, common sense, and health make their own rules,
which may not be broken. The characters in sfn are, as a rule, lacking
these vital factors. They are potential rapists.

Such literature as science fiction has produced is about genuine
human characters. Wells is the classic example. S. Fowler Wright is
another. A Wellisian character is not cut out of "cookie dough". He
does not rumble about frantically stripping damsels. But he is human.
He may fight with his wife, indulge in adultery, fall in love, become
infatuated (which is another thing entirely), and may, in short, be-
have like a man. He sees the world, not in fictional blacks and whites
but normally. And normality does not by any means imply continual sex
and intercourse. I hold no brief for stories in which a man and a woman
jump into bed at the first opportunity. Such treatment is sensational &
unnecessary. But I do insist that sfn will remain juvenile until the
characters are human. Ben Hacht's ant story, in his "Book of Miracles",
could not have been published in any science fiction magazine. It is
yet is a good and convincing story, logical in its fantasy. It is
neither pornographic nor sensational, though sex and natural emotion
play a large part in its development. The average adolescent sfn reader
would probably object to that take because the characters are not car-
rados.

"But there's plenty of depressing stuff in the world anyway," the
reader might say. "Why drag it up in fiction?" Very well, forget it.
Head for sheer wish-fulfillment. Read Hans Anderson and Grimm.

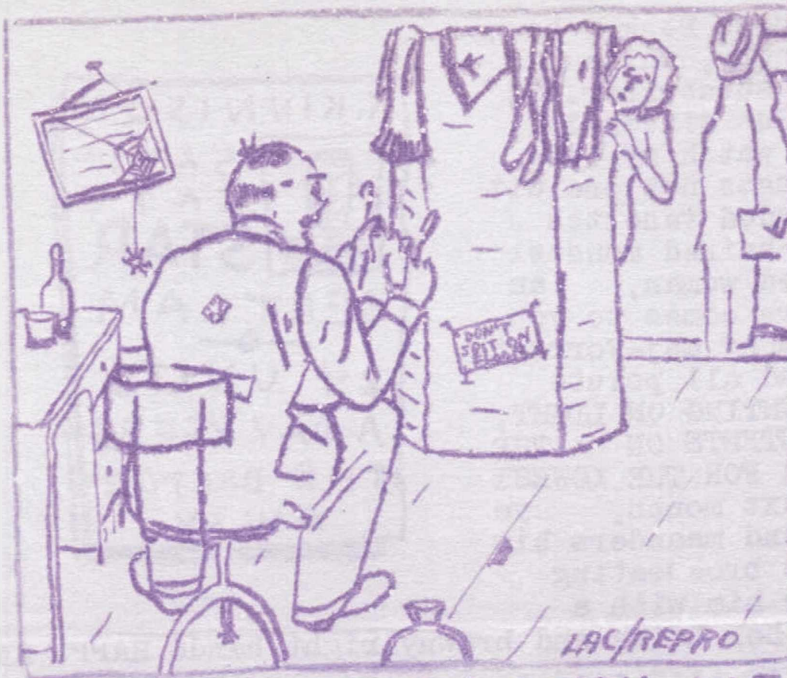
"But that's fairy-tale stuff. I've outgrown that!"

The del. You've outgrown it! You're reading mechanized fairytales
about as unconvincing, idealized projections for yourself. The scientist
is more sop to Cerberus. You're trying to escape from life. For
one reason or another, and, in the person of the hero, you're saving
universes and killing Venereans instead of saving princesses and slay-
ing dragons. What's the difference?

"Realism. Plenty of sfn have tragic endings."

Sure. So what? You can cut a skeleton out of cookie dough, but it's
still cookie dough. A puppet hero may meet a sticky end, but he's still
a puppet. In a genuinely great story the protagonist is so real that
if he meets a tragic end, the reader's emotions will respond symmet-
rically. It does not speak well for sfn readers if they feel anything
more than a momentary thrill at the death of a sympathetic stock ch-
aracter, in a formula fantasy yarn.

Pornography is unnecessary. Human beings are vital. But we shall
have no human beings in science fiction till readers outgrow their
opinionated adolescence and become more adult and sophisticated in out-
look.



"AN EDITOR BUYS A STORY—NOT
THE WAY TUCKER SAYS!"

ECTRON" which many didn't like and which, it turned out, wasn't as original as had been hoped. June 15 the name changed back to CROUCH NEWS. For two issues there was but two pages per issue. July 15 it went to 6 pages. August it went monthly and with a cover and 8 pages. September was the gala month. The rag grew up! The name became stylized and from then on was LIGHT. Now suppose we look into the future. Again I say: "We'd rather grin at achievement than have to back down. But—watch our smoke!" This is going to be a big year, unless, and get that unless, the international situation interferes, or finally we say "NO!" But there are mighty plans for LIGHT. Plans which, if they mature, will make LIGHT Canada's first and oldest fanzine. Plans which will put Canadian fandom right in there pitching in the international picture, and that means American, English, Scottish, Australian fandom. Plans which, if they mature and you and you and you all stick with me will make LIGHT one of these in the very topmost brackets and will show the world that Canadian fandom really has something on the ball. But, realization of these plans will also mean that all dead-heads, non-contributing readers will henceforth be ironed out, for a time at least. Well, all of us, I trust, are gentlemen. Then shall we hold out the glad hand to our first feminine reader? Then, gentlemen, meet Miss Mary G. Byers. A charming American miss who writes the most delicious poetry. But what of Miss Shirley Peck, you ask. But she isn't the first female reader.

In looking back over the 1941 files, I chanced on the following from the January 7 editorial: "... we have plans, big plans for 1941. We won't say what they are, for plans change so easily these troublesome times, and we'd rather grin at achievement than boast and then have to 'eat crow'. But we cannot keep from saying: 'Just watch our smoke!'" Then the magazine was called CROUCH NEWS and its circulation was but 8! Then April 15, the 100 issue, hailed in hektoing, and maturing pains began. The name was changed to "EL-

SPECIAL



FANTASY'S GREATEST CLASSIC IN A CLOTH BOUND EDITION.

"DWELLERS IN THE MIRAGE"
A. MERRITT

\$1.00

to LIGHT. By that, I mean, Miss K. he
 been reading her brother's copy, while MGB
 is on our mailing list as a subscriber. So
 watch your language, huh. But seriously,
 or rather seriously-gotta catch my laugh
 with there-our policy changes not one wit
 for both ladies are brandminded fanettes.
 About our green-eyed blue haired monster
 on page two. Myx is a married woman,
 American at that. This picture comes to you
 through the kind cooperation of 4sf-Forrest
 J. Ackerman, of Hollywood and all points
 West. HENCEFORTH, WHEN COMMENTING ON LIGHT,
 WILL YOU PLEASE RATE ALL CONTENTS ON THE
 MERIT SYSTEM OF 1 to 10? 1 FOR THE LOWEST
 AND ON UP TO 10. So until next month.
 Olde editor closes up shop and meanders his
 weary way homeward where his bron beating
 wife is probably waiting for him with a
 much scarred rolling pin in her hairy and brawny right hand. HAPPY NEW
 1942.



JOTTINGS

by

John H. Mason

Due to the industry of that go-getter, John Hollis Mason, Toronto fan-
 dom is beginning to assume the form of something more than an isolated
 wilderness of lone fans each looking futilely for fellow enthusiasts. Our
 Norm Lamb was my beginning. Thru him, indirectly anyway, I met Ron Con-
 num. That made four. Howes, Ron, Norm and myself. That is to say, among
 the real fantasy friends. Naturally there are more than a few guys who
 turn out to be washouts. They think they are real fans but aren't. I
 know a particular example of that, and Les and Howes do too. Ted White-
 also knew of these personages, as he bitterly asserted frequently. How-
 ever, as things stood then, there were four of us. Then Norm joined up
 and our number shrunk to three. However, the Olde Go getter wasn't to
 be stalemated. It wasn't long before I met another real fantasy friend,
 one Alex Saunders. Alex, who is 21, looks no more than 17 or 18. He is
 quiet, soft-spoken, and a vintage '38 fan, was a genuine discovery. He
 likes Amazing best because it isn't as involved as ASF. He is now pre-
 cocious for so young a fan, having a predilection for writing stories
 of 19,12,000 words and the longest has been estimated to be over 25,000
 words! It wasn't long after I met Alex that I put him in touch with
 Connum and when he saw the latter's beautiful collection, he nearly
 went nuts. Ron has some 500-odd fantasy mags which COLLECTORS PLEASE
 NOTE - he is selling! Ron is a real fan, has been for 17 or 18 years.
 He is only 34 and is quite a family man with two children, a boy, Ben
 Jr., who already likes Merritt, Cummings, and sundry other old timers,
 and Sandra, quite a captivating young lady of some 2 years. Recently,
 while prowling thru the intricacies of my favorite second-hand bookstore
 I encountered another fan, Stanton Sutton, a Londoner (Ont) who is a
 stranger in Toronto. Stan is 18 or 19, tall, lean, and studious. He is
 one of those effusive guys just out of school who you would never think
 as a fan or even interested in sf. Basil Wells, has sold another
 yarn entitled REBEL SLUG, 2,500 worder, to Doc Lowndes for 77. Bas il
 has an 8,000 worder called WHITE SKIN travelling around, another titled
 MYTHA OF THE BLUE WORLD which Planet has under consideration. The
 last I heard. There is also a 6,000 word one called CHASM WORLD which
 Lowndes considers much superior to Wells' usual output.

(6)

THE
MAIL BAG



TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK

GEORGE M. AYLESWORTH, Lakewood, OHIO. On
the 1st & Nov. issues of LIGHT, for which
much thanks. The old mag is all dressed
up in new mont ke, and quite a flood
of new authors seem to be developing in
the Crouth banner. The cover for the
October issue was the best so far, and
Lawrence "Notes on Devil Worship" was
not terrible. I've seen several pro mag
that couldn't hold a candle to LIGHT. Why
the hell don't you put it on a subscrip-
tion basis, Les? Hope the Christmas issue
of LIGHT turns out the best yet.

DONALD I. DOWNEY, Downham Market, England. The latest LIGHT 102 arrived. The
cover is surprisingly good, the kind of space one I go for. Remarkable
resemblance to Reg's "Log" in "Empire" painting in ASY. I like your letter
er quotations, they're nice and witty (Trix) and sensible, without being
ing so complicating and juvenile as many of the letters to other fanzines
seem to be. You edit well, my friend. Your "Child Is Born" was intriguing
and original, but I don't think such a plot would sell. (It would, but
that is the value of fandom we can write plots that are valueless due to
the density of the average pulp or slick reader.) The Doc, as ever, seek-
ing after still, but a good try. It shows just how utterly worthless
such features as they may be, Light.
CPL. TED WHITE, Somerville in England. Thanks for letter and Sept and Oct
issues of LIGHT. WOW! In that expression I embody all my remarks of the
mag. I am sentimentally attached to it for reasons that you are well aware
of but it has made me feel, although it isn't mine, proud of it. (In a
future issue there will be the story back of the name LIGHT explaining Ted's
remark.) It embodies all that I had ever hoped to see in my own mag. The
letters are great. Once my congrats to Peck on his good work. (This thing
is good.) Taking the issues in order of their printing, here
are my views in detail. First the Sept. issue. The "Mail Bag" is a source
of joy for me, for in it I can follow, vaguely to be sure, but satisfact-
orily the changing views of the fan, and who they are. From what I have
seen they are the same crowd with the same likes and dislikes with the
exception of one or two new trends of thought. Mason's "JOTTINGS" wasn't
bad, but addament how in hell can I appreciate it when I haven't read the
tale he has written about? (Same here, Ted.) There ain't no justice, there
ain't. Doughty and Peck both good. British Fandom and Fan Notes a way a
good and I consider important. The old argument of the fans going to the
top again, a fanzine, or mag. Thanks for mentioning me. I hope it brings
me some more DEDICATIONS TO LAC. hmmm this Godfrey know you well
you big fat self ordained tin God; (Sir! Watch your language. There's a
Jeddy in the hall now. Besides you wrong me I'm two T'n Gods.) I can im-
agine you sitting in your dirty little den with a smirk on your plump puss
reading all the nice goody goody remarks from the readers of LIGHT. You
e're mind filled with a feeling of importance. (Right! How did you ever
guess it? After all, the mag is good and so why shouldn't I feel good? A
fan an old mind well, after all, Ted you and your English girls
shuckie!) Yeah, I'll bet you sit up there thinking "The gullible saps!" (No
just gullible saps- that's you.) Burp to you bub! (Ever try alkali seltzer?)
The cover has given me an inspiration. It looks as though I will be writ-
ing something entitled THE RIVER OF THINGS, or THE CRAWLING ROAD or some
such thing. Now for the Oct. issue. The cover is a pip (What'll he say when
he sees the lady on No. cover?) Getting more like the pros all the time
Your sig as editor adds a personal touch that really looks good. Gads. Even
Clare is writing to the fanzine eh? Must be good even though he had very
little to say that would be termed as a boost. Of course it wouldn't be
Clare if he didn't find multiple faults and that is what the fans like to
read, including me. Right now I'm boosting the rag but wait, just wait,
it don't like the sound of that. What's cooking?) "A CHILD IS BORN"

who only a letter... (N. room, GP. How this iss...
suit you? Long enough?)



SWAPS

AMAZING STORIES

November 1938...15c
December 1938...15c
January 1939...15c
February 1939...15c
March 1939...1 5c
April 1939...15c
May 1939...15c
June 1939...15c
July 1939...15c
August 1939...15c
September 1939...15c
October 1939...15c
November 1939...15c
December 1939...15c
January 1940...15c
February 1940...15c
March 1940...15c
April 1940...15c
November 1940...15c
December 1940...15c
January 1941...15c
February 1941...15c
AIR WONDER
September 1929...35c
ARGOSY
Complete May 3 1941
August 9th., 1941
price per copy...5c
ARMCHAIR SCIENCE
Last listing.
April 1941...5c
May 1941...5c
ASTONISHING
April 1940...8c
June 1940...8c
August 1940...8c
October 1940...8c
December 1940...8c
February 1940...8c

ASTOUNDING

October 1938...15c
July 1939...10c
July 1940...15c
FAMOUS FANTASTIC
September 1939...15c
November 1939...15c
December 1939...15c
January 1940...15c
March 1940...15c
February 1940...15c
April 1940...15c
August 1940...15c
FANTASTIC ADVENTURES
January 1939...15c
GHOST STORIES
Sept. 1930...50c
GOLDEN FLEECE
November 1938...20c
December 1938...20c
February 1939...20c
March 1939...20c
April 1939...20c
May 1939...20c
June 1939...20c

MASTER STORIES

September 1939...55c
PLAQUE
Winter 1939...15c
Spring 1940...15c
Winter 1940...15c
POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY
20 and 15 cts copy
enquire.

QUARTLY

January 1939...15c
STRANGE
August 1939...15c
October 1939...15c

TALES OF WONDER

Autumn 1939...40c
#14 Spring 1941...25c
U.S. CAMPA
15c a copy, enquire.
WEIRD TALES
April 1934...40c
WONDER (TWS)
July 1930...55c
August 1939...10c
November 1940...10c
December 1940...10c
January 1941...10c
February 1941...10c
WONDER QUARTERLY
Winter 1930...1.00
BOUND SERIALS
Final listing
Sun S-1 at 5...10
Crook & Caribbean
Cross...10c
POCKET BOOKS
Invisible Man...25

FANZINES

ALPHAS
February 1941...10c
CENSORED
October 1941...10c
PAN ATIC
July 1941...10c
FUTURIAN
December 1940...5c
March 1941...5c
April 1941...5c
May 1941...5c
June 1941...5c
July 1941...5c
August 1941...5c

DIGEST
 Feb Mar 1941..... 5c
 April 1941..... 5c
 SNIDE
 #2: 1941.....10c
 SPACEMAYS
 December 1941...10c
 STAR PARADE
 April 1941..... 3c
 May 1941..... 3c
 July 1941..... 3c
 August 1941..... 3c
 SWEETNESS AND LIGHT
 Winter 1940.....10c
 #####
 DON'T FORGET- \$1.00
 BRINGS YOU ABRAHAM
 MERRITT'S CLASSIC--
 "THE

Through the saintlikest and rise the
 wet throated screams,
 Of tortured minds in - - - - - divine,
 The moon a speck of - - - - - light, shriek-
 loud, and darkly gleams,
 The dark sky laughs, - - - - - lagling down my
 - - - - - spine.
 The woe and fear of some wild being in the
 - - - - - of the night,
 That weeps with silent, - - - - - delight,
 In the stark agony of its flight,
 I rose up through a sea of golden flam-
 And to the world - - - - - and sham.

DWELLERS
 IN
 MIRAGE
 #####

LIGHT is hektograph-
 ed monthly by Leslie
 A. Crutch, at Box
 121, Parry Sound,
 Ontario, Canada. Un-
 accepted contributi-
 ons always returned.
 Circulated among in-
 terested correspond-
 ents gratis. Circula-
 tion this issue is
 normal and temperat-
 ure 98.2 a very he-
 althy patient.

W A N T E D

All issues of EERIE
 TALES possible. For
 prices write me at
 Box 121, Parry Sound
 Ontario. Highest swap
 values allowed. Any
 quantity taken. With
 or without covers.

////////////////////

Grade contents on the
 merit system. If I
 get enough doing this
 I'll run my own anal-
 ytical laboratory.



"I FINALLY SOLD IT, PEG, BUT GOSH
 SOME EDITORS ARE STUBBORN!"