R E M E M B R A N C E

O F

T H I N G S P A S T

VII

A selection from the pages of Fantasia.

An occasional delving into the writings
surviving from the elder fandom

A Weltschmerz Publication

* * *

November 1958

FAPA

Fantasia was published and edited by Lou Goldstone, with George Cowie and Borrie Hyman as assistants, from San Francisco. Although it only lasted three issues, these three made a big impression at the time, combining neat format, illustrations by Goldstone in the form of striking linoleum blocks, good fan fiction and poetry, and above all, a fresh outlook. The first issue was twenty standard mimeo pages, the rest 24 pages.

Published by:

Bill Evans

Box 86
Mt. Rainier
Maryland
USA

PLURALITY

by Lou Goldstone

The Scientist walks into the setting sun, leaving the gray prison behind him forever. Stiffly, unfeelingly, he treads the same cold pavements that echoed to his footfalls seven years before when that livid, rain-drenched fortress seemed unspeakably terrible as he stolidly marched to an unknown fate.

Now it is forgotten, like a dream of dark horror that slides mercifully into limbo under the bright, burning radiance of the knowledge that he is alive and awake and free.

The wind tugs at his drab coat, pasting it against his gaunt, withered frame. He pulls his had down over unruly gray hair, hefts the suitcase that rattles because it is almost empty. Innumerable deep creases about his mouth and cheeks twitch as the narrow stone path comes to an end, and he steps out onto the broad motor highway that zooms in a clean white ribbon to the eastern and western horizons.

In his coat pocket he carries a release card bearing his fingerprints, physical data, name, and record of incarceration.

In his brain he carries an idea that is illogical, and a picture of a hexagonal wooden frame, criss-crossing cotton threads, a dry battery, a transformer, a rheostat, a tuning fork.

God in a business suit sits sipping his wine; the Saviour of North America listens with half-closed eyes to Tchaikovskii while rich colors play on the telescreen; John Barton, by grace of political corruption, secret police and a standing army, Lord and Master of a continent, wonders vaguely, sleepily, if he should adopt a rabble-rousing or dignified attitude in his speech tomorrow before the Eugenics Council. He hears the soft, shuffling footsteps of armed bodyguards in the corridor, and smiles wryly. Now he returns to the wine and Tchaikovskii

Darkness has settled and far ahead, the hard white pinpoint lights of the city blink and flare. The highway glows with a frosted, shadowless yellow radiance. The slim racer speeds along almost noiselessly, the robot drive taking curves and flat stretches smoothly, maintaining a constant velocity. The Scientist relaxes his grip on the Young Man's hand, presses tired eyes with fingers that are worn and skeletal, breathes again deeply of the air of freedom, scarcely believing....

"The organization, then...." The furrows on his face are etched indelibly, but a new light lives back of his faded eyes. "Follows me yet? ... I wouldn't have believed it.... These years....."

The Young Man touches a spring beneath the dashboard; a click, and he withdraws a sheaf of papers. "Destroy this copy when you've read it." He passes the sheets to the Scientist.

The racer hums on, the city lights draw nearer; the stars are out, and other blobs of light flash past on the northern lane of the highway. The papers rustle in the Scientist's hands as he reads. He finishes and grins wearily at the Young Man, then slides the lighter-sponge from the dashboard and touches its glowing tip to the papers. The sheets darken and crumble. Only a fine dust clouds the air.

"Those reports," says the Young Man, "indicate the current situation of the organization. The principal stumbling-stone is - "

"That you have reached the saturation point!" the Scientist finishes. "You have a wide-spread network of espionage; your own ranks are without traitors; you have a potentially powerful organization; you have gained some ground and consolidated your gains. But you cannot engage in violence because a slip would spell the end - and as far as your propagandizing is concerned, it will take too long in exerting any kind of decisive influence... You are stopped because you have neither the strength to revolt openly nor the endurance to keep up your present hazardous but ineffective course!"

Silently the Young Man nods affirmation. "The man on top," he declares with fervor, "The Saviour, the aesthetic beast, is the keystone. Remove him - and the entire mass collapses...."

"I note," says the Scientist, "that the military commandants of three Corps Areas are members of the organization.... And that none of them know of the membership of the others?"

"That's correct. And others, too. Highly placed councillors in this rotten tyrrany.... But inertia grips the lot. While Barton lives, none of them can move..."

Swiftly the highway rockets up, and from all sides other broad, glowing ribbons converge, streaming together into a single massive channel. The city is very near.

"I will remove Barton," the Scientist observes. "I knew the method when they seized me seven years ago, and I haven't forgotten it. I can remove him, and will, and. and a matter of fact, already have."

God in a bright blue uniform stands gesticulating before a battery of telemikes; The Saviour of North America perspires freely and shifts his volume and inflection, smoothly from roar to whisper and back to roar; John Barton delivers himself of another classic of impassioned extemporaneous oratory while the massed graybeards and baldheads of the Eugenics Council stand listening attentively, cheering and saluting in precise harmony.

"It is my destiny, and through me the destiny of United North America," he thunders with feeling, "to consolidate the entire world under one banner, one culture and one master! My brave armies in the South are even now shattering the resistance of the degenerate South American Federation, while the corrupt, bickering plutocracies of the Old World tremble with fear at the overwhelming might of my legions!"

John Barton pauses while the wild cheers die away. He measures his audience with a practiced stare. He lowers his voice to a sinister growl, extends his arm and gestures with curled fingers.

"They will be next!" he hisses, and steps back majestically as the galleries roar in frantic approval. "Destiny is on the march!" he cries. "I am started - and nothing can stop me!" Another burst of mad enthusiasm sweeps the hall.

"My men of science have served me well," the Saviour trumpets, "and must continue to devote themselves with increasing vigor to me and to the Cause of which I am the symbol! Our sacred mission of conquest and domination demands vitality and ruggedness and fertility in my people. My eugenics laboratories must work and work and work! We must be strong! We must be many! We must multiply ourselves tenfold!!!"

A hideous thumping sound rocks the hall. Air cracks explosively, rushing outward from a jumbled mass of flesh and bright blue uniforms that has materialized in the center of the close-packed mob. John Barton - multiplied not by ten, but by twenty! A score of John Bartons in bright blue uniforms sprawl limply on the floor and stagger dazedly away from the scene of carnage. John Bartons in bright blue uniforms crawl and stand dumbly with terror in their eyes. John Bartons with flesh and bone inextricably mingled and bright blue uniforms ripped and torn lie heaving and bleeding and dying. John Barton gapes open-mouthed on the rostrum.

The Scientist plods homeward. In the crimson dusk, the towering staks of the armament factory puff and roar, smudging the sky with black oily smoke. Long rows of dingy workers' tenements march off into the distance. The Scientist ascends the creaking wooden steps of his own hovel, enters and slams the rattling door, climbs the long, dismal staircase. In his own room, he washes quickly, cleansing himself of the stubborn grime accumulated in a day of toil on roaring, clanking assembly lines. The Scientist throws the filthy towel in a corner, glances at the battered, loudly ticking clock on his paint-chipped table. He sits on the bed and waits.

Men enter without knocking. Men in greasy overalls of the armament plant, and men in the dead black uniforms of the secret police. Army blue stalks in with colonel's stars on its shoulders. The dim, flickering lights of the room go on, and distorted shadows of huddled heads and shoulders lie heavily on the walls.

"And this... This latest occurrence," declares the Scientist in a low hot whisper, "serves, not as further proof, but merely as another demonstration that I will - or rather that I have - succeeded...Eight years ago, when the method was only a germ of an idea, the 'purge of impostors' took place... In the same hall.... You recall that several hundred replicas of John Barton appeared while the local secret police boss was lecturing his thugs on 'law and order'.... They resembled, I learned through some of our members who were in attendance, John Barton - aged about fifty. They were executed on the spot by the police. Some of them were intermixed and horribly mangled. That was eight years ago. Barton is forty-eight today...."

The army colonel speaks thoughtfully: "Then this is about the point at which you are to effect the reversal of time. Obviously, Barton is to be in the same hall when he is thrown back, and I happen to know that he speaks there again two weeks from now, at a convention of aerial technicians on leave from the Southern Front..."

"That would indicate," returns the Scientist, "that that occasion is the last on which Barton will ever speak to anyone. I am ready, myself; and though I am not quite certain just how to go about it, it seems that anything will accomplish the results - since, as we know, they have already been accomplished..."

The Young Man moves restlessly from a shadowy corner of the room. "We know that during the last eight years," he summarizes, "there have been four such occurrences, at increasingly lengthened intervals. But all have occurred at the same hall. The first, eight years ago, involved several hundred Bartons, who marerialized at the rear of the hall. The second, three years ago, involved between one and two hundred, and they appeared halfway down on the main floor. The third, a month ago, found some thing like seventy replicas materializing still further toward the rostrum, while the last one, two days ago, saw the twenty Bartons flash on in the front rows..."

The Scientist nodds with satisfaction. "Exactly," he says. "The time interval grows shorter as we near the point of reversal. Likewise, the number of Bartons which appear grows smaller. Thirdly, the materializations occur progressively closer to the rostrum on which John Barton will be standing when I end his life-track and send him racing back along time in duplicate...."

"But I can't understand," a black-clad secret police officer objects, "how Barton can appear in duplicate!"

The Scientist smiles. "I don't understand that either. Neither do I know why he appears more than once. Neither do I understand why the materializations occur at increasing distances from the rostrum... All I understand is that somehow, with that," he indicates the hexagonal wooden frame criss-crossed by cotton threads that rests in a corner, and the rheostat and tuning fork on the table, and the battered flashlight which holds a small dry battery, and a toylike transformer, "I am going to - and already have - sent John Barton skipping back along time like a flat rock skipping on water; that somehow, the rate of materialization in this world, as he bounces back through the ages, is not an orderly progression, but irregular and increasingly long; that somehow, there is a growing error - a growing shift in space away from the point at which the reversal takes place; that somehow, with each successive backward hop, Barton materializes on increasingly large numbers..."

God smilingly receives and accepts the adulation of the mob; The Saviour of North America clicks his heels and salutes,and hears the answering roar of clicked heels and sees the answering flash of extended arms; John Barton, the shiny buttons on his bright blue uniform rivalling the sun in intesity of brilliance, stands beneath the glare of white arc-lights and surveys the clamoring masses in the hall. Blue of the army, blue-green of the fliers, white of the navy.

John Barton steps, stiff as a ramrod, up to the rostrum.

"God is with me!" he shouts. The mob thunders.

The Scientist leans over the battered table. He steps back to observe the hexagonal wooden frame with its crazily criss-crossing cotton threads, and the dry battery, transformer, and rheostat connected in series, and the tuning fork mounted atop the wooden frame. The Scientist speaks softly into the tiny radio mike in his lapel, and the midget transmitter in his coat pocket flings ultra-short waves over the intervening space between the dingy room and the great hall. "I'm ready," the Scientist says. "It is trained on the rostrum. When you say the word, I'll turn on the current...."

Dimly, in his ear, a tinny voice replies: "He is on the rostrum now. Beginning the speech. Go ahead!"

"God is in me!" screams Barton. "I am the personification and the Saviour! I am destined to sweep the world before me!" The assembled multitude shouts wildly. "My people will be the Master Race! My people shall rule until the end of time! The battle we are fighting now against the degenerate sub-humans of South America is only the beginning! The whole world, the whole corrupt mass of scum and iniquity, is shaking like jelly with fear - and well it may! For it is my destiny and my sacred mission to civilize ...."

John Barton stops short, his tongue gagging his throat. His mouth is dry and sticky with saliva. His breath rasps and his eyes start from his head. He feels the hairs on his neck rise while shudders wrack his body....Not two feet in front of him is a monstrosity out of a dream. Himself! Himself in mangled duplicate. A terrible shape of madness with two heads partially joined together, a bloated travesty of a body with extra arms projecting bloodily from its chest, four twisted legs, Two bright blue uniforms with shiny buttons - conjoined, tattered. A red horror of two identical bodies smeared together in one mass....The thing spouts blood and ichor in frothy streams, and topples at his feet....

John Barton feels a buzzing, racing pain...His head whirls. Now the hall is a bedlam of sound. Black uniformed police are rushing to the rostrum. They stand over the limp, bleeding monster, hesitant.

With a tremendous effort, John Barton clears his tongue of the spittle that binds is, focuses his glazed eyes on the police. "Take.... take it away...." he chokes. An aide rushes to his side. Barton waves him away. "I'll go on.... All right, I tell you...."

The Scientist deftly connects the ends of his electrical circuit to the hexagonal wooden frame, and binds the remaining battery terminal. The tuning fork atop the frame shivers. It blurs, emitting a faint tone. Now the tone is stronger. The criss-crossed cotton threads in the frame hardly vibrate. They vanish. In their place is only a tension of unimaginable force, cyclonic, but harnessed. There is a force so tremendous that it could not exist save in an intangible form. The Scientist turns to the rheostat. With a sudden twist, he swings the lever around its arc. "Goodbye, God," he says, and disconnects the wires.

John barton stumbles distractedly over his own words. Frantically, he tries to take up the threads of his address where he dropped them. The police have removed the thing, and only a pool of deep red remains. The mob is still murmuring and nervous. Barton supports himself by leaning heavily on the rostrum. "The world... the plutocratic world must learn...the world must recognize our preeminence... We are the Chosen Race... We are destined to conquer and civilise all of the... Our invincible ---"

John Barton blurs. His outlines grow hazy. He bulges in places. A single choking, cry rings out. John Barton is sharing space with another John Barton. Head within head, body within body, arms within arms, legs within legs. The composite becomes redly wet. There is a ripping of bright blue cloth, a snap of shiny buttons. Sound, booming and disorganized, fills the insane hall.

"It would seem," the Scientist tells the Young Man, "that the first materialization - in order of removal from the actual reversal - occurred, literally, instantaneously. Barton and Barton occupied the identical position in time and space and after all, that seems to justify itself, because if Barton were thrown back into time, his life-track would have to terminate at the point of the reversal..."

John Barton awakes. It is dark, Around him is the dense bush of a forest. Wind whispers in the tall, thick trees, and small insect sounds distrub the night. He attempts to move, but his body screams. Something is broken. He tries to think... Yes, he was speaking. A uniform... He painfully moves a hand to feel his chest... Buttons... But now... What was it, a dream? What was this? Somewhere a twig cracks. Barton looks into a moonlight clearing. Something... a man, with a bright blue uniform and mad eyes... crawling....

"But how far back in time did you send him --- or them?" the Young Man asks.

"Infinity, if that means anything," says the Scientist. "An infinite number of points on the rheostat; an infinite force; and for Barton, an infinite journey in infinite numbers..."

John Barton splashes desparingly in a restless, lashing sea whose surface is dotted with thousands of bright blue uniforms and occupants....

"The whole idea, of course, is highly illogical," observes the Young Man

"I agree with you But you seem to overlook the fact that by reason of my success, logic is rendered fallacious ..."

John Barton lives for an instant before his body is consumed by raging torrents of lava that flow in mile-high tides. A million John Bartons die of heat and fuming gas while an incandescant moon glares at the steaming, quivering earth ...

"You see, the connotations of Barton's reversal invalidate all laws --- because if Barton is hurled back to infinity, in infinite number, he precedes in existence all else...."

John Bartons by the billion puff to extinction in the maw of a bloated, catastrophic sun that has yet to give birth to planets. ..

"Do you mean," the Young Man's face is suddenly white, "that you have --- that you have the answer to the question: 'What exploded the Primal Atom?'?"

John Bartons, infinite in number, occupy infinite space, in an infinitely empty infinity....

"I mean," replies the Scientist, "that I have the answer to the question: 'What was the Primal Atom?'!"

THE END

Fantasia, January 1941 (1,1)

"

WITCH WINE On The World

by Lou Goldstone

I think it may be ventured, without dogmatism, that one of the less happy conditions of fantasy-fandom in general arises from the all too widespread unacquaintance with the works of prose, poetry and drama contributed to the annals of imagination by those rare men of burning genius.

All of us must have read the literary products originating in some of those inspired minds. Perhaps the most familiar example to science-fiction and fantasy fans would be H. P. Lovecraft; a nomination for literary immortality which will, I believe, be unchallenged. To attempt to name a number at random would be futile, since, in the first place, there may be some misunderstanding concerning the term "genius" as I here employ it.

Not many of the men of whom I speak ever saw a science-fiction or fantasy magazine, much less wrote for one. Not many of these men, of whose works Joe Fan is so lamentably ignorant, are alive today. Most of them wrote fantasy only incidentally, but that which they did write possessed a charm and vitality that is enduring.

Some few, on the other hand, lived and dreamed in the world of the imagination, justifying their existence as few men can, by leaving, in black and white, treasures whose worth may not be assayed by any scale or guage or standard of material measurement, but only subjectively in the minds and senses of the inheritors of their bounty.

Of these literary giants, none was more tragic, more profound, more generously endowed with the fire of true genius than George Sterling. At the same time, it is doubtful if any received less recognition and acclaim than Sterling was accorded.

Only recently has Sterling's existence been publicized to the fan-world at large, and but by indirection and on a comparitively niggardly scale at that. I refer to the series of illustrations, by Virgil Finlay, which pictured random verses from "A Wine of Wizardry" not so long ago in Weird Tales. Finlay, of course, did masterful jobs on these, and succeeded in capturing, with his high artistic ability, about as much of Sterling's fabulous imaginative quality as anyone may capture on a drawing board. Too, there can be no doubt that his drawings, with the accompanying verses, were instrumental in catapulting a certain number of fans off to the library poetry shelves.

But in spite of one such boost in the popular print, I am sure that upwards of 90% of those who may rightfully be considered full-fledged fantasy fans would reply when asked if they had read any of Sterling's works: "Who?", or "Sterling?... Sterling?...."

This is a most lamentable situation, because Sterling was a true genius of the highest order, who lived and breathed in - and wrote of - a realm of unceasing and kaleidoscopic wonder.

I won't publicly hazard an opinion as to which of his manifold creations is the "best." Nothing that he wrote was poor. The great majority was supremely beautiful.

Ambrose Bierce, who porbably influenced Sterling more than any other man, referred to "A Wine of Wizardry" as one of the greatest poems ever produced in America, and worthy to be placed beside the best work of Coleridge, Keats and Poe.

One factor of importance in the obscurity of Sterling's writings was his inability to find a market for publication in any of the nationally circulated periodicals. /Wrong; he was published in Cosmopolitan, Literary Digest, American Mercury, Century, Sunset, Yale Review, Popular Magazine (a series of caveman stories),etc. And the publisher of his books, Robertson of San Francisco, was a regular publisher, who also liked his works.WHE/ Most, if not all, of his literature was privately published in San Francisco, where Sterling died, and in whose environs - in whose very suburbs - he spent the greater portion of his life.

He was born at Sag Harbor in Long Island, N. Y., in 1869, but moved west to Oakland, Calif., in 1890. There, after working for three years in the real-estate office of his uncle, he met Joaquin Miller, Jack London, and Bierce. In 1896 he married, separating from his wife in 1904 because of "temperamental difficulties." In 1918 his wife committed suicide by taking poison; this was an even which evidently exercised a ponderous influence on Sterling, and was strangely portentous.

Sterling's first volume of poetry was "The Testimony of the Suns," published in 1903,and consisted of 43 poems, and a poetical dedication to Bierce. The book derived its title from that of the twelfth poem.

He did not achieve any degree of prominence until the publication of "A Wine of Wizardry" in 1907. Bierce submitted the manuscript of this classic fantasy to Harpers, Scribners, Atlantic, Century, Metropolitan, and Booklovers Magazine. They all rejected it! Finally, Bierce published it himself in Cosmopolitan in Summer of 1907.

After this, Sterling began to turn out volumes of poetry with almost annual regularity. By far the greater part of his work was published by A. M. Robertson of San Francisco.

George Sterling died by his own hand on November 17, 1926, in his room at the Bohemian Club, where he had lived for some years. Attendants of the club who found his body said that he had not left the room for three days. Some of his papers he had burned, while others were found arranged in neat piles. An empty bottle of cyanide of potassium was found lying near his bed. His tragic suicide was attributed to various causes: depression, discouragement, dipsomania and poverty. A note written to a friend two weeks before his death seemed to confirm the latter explanation.

Said Frank Belknap Long, Jr. of Sterling: "He was too fine and brave a spirit to quail before mere poverty, and like most poets he did not live altogether for the things of this world. But he was not a young man, and the smallness of his income unquestionably caused him a great deal of anxiety...."

Between 1903 and 1926 Sterling produced twelve volumes of lyric poetry, one of which was published posthumously, five volumes of dramatic poetry, and a critical work - a study of Robinson Jeffers.

His life was not too different, in its tragedy, from that of Poe. But his own philosophy - as expressed in the epic dramatic poem "Lilith" - was, as Theodore Dreiser said: "...the eternal balance between good and evil, pleasure and pain."

His poems are incomparable in their sheer beauty and stunning magnitude of scope. No commentary of mine can even meagerly describe the dazzlingly lustrous webs of fantasy he spun from the coarse fibers of the English tongue.

"Black, inexorable reefs, whereon the freezing billows mount and mourn...There is no wind along the summer grass - day rains upon unshaken dews...Dragons clutch at you with bellies like Hell's roof, and eyes of ice...The moon, a silver bowl, pours witch-wine on the world..." These from "Lilith."

What unparalled magic weaves through all his writings. What subtle harmonics and riotous, uninhibited splendors seduce the senses upon the reading alone!

"Where wattled monsters redly gaze, that guard, a cowled magician peering on the damned...Where arctic eleves have hidden wintry gems, and treasures of frozen anadems, alight with timid sapphires of the snows...Orbs that graven monsters clasp...Unresting hydras wrought of bloody light...Black incense glow, and scarlet bellied snakes sway to the tawny flutes of sorcery...A crimson spider hidden in a skull...A vial squat whose scarlet venom crawls..."

A smattering only. And Sterling's magnificent "A Wine of Wizardry", from which the last few quotations are taken, occupies five letter-size pages, single spaced in elite type.

I know that Sterling's poetry means a great deal to me. And I speak not with prejudice - for prejudice does not enter in where genius is concerned.

I say unhesitatingly and unreservedly that admirers of Sterling are fantasy fans, and that Sterling's truly tremendous achievements belong in the collection of every fantasy fan.

THE END

Fantasia, January 1941 (1, 1)

DJINN FIZZ

by Mickey Finn

The ManInTheBlueTopper flew out of the whispering night astride a great snow-white bat that muttered to itself in the Carthaginian vernacular.

The nearer stars made obeisance as the ManInTheBlueTopper passed them by, and curious winged denizens native to the fifth outermost planet of Procyon observed the phenomenon with some wonderment, dutifully noting it in their journals.

The ManInTheBlueTopper had travelled far from his winter home on the crest of a mountain a thousand leagues in height, and the great white bat was lightly dappled with vermillion perspiration.

At last, after cutting forests and deserts and several singular polka-dot icebergs behind him, the ManInTheBlueTopper bade his mount descend. The bat complied, and spiralled downward in gigantic arcs while St. Elmo's fire flickered on the tips of his extended wings.

The ManInTheBlueTopper was slightly unbalanced by his long solitude.

"I don't like Amazing Stories," he mumbled to himself, following this inexplicable outburst with a rattle of mad, high-pitched laughter.

"I think," said the great white bat, "that we had better change our course for a remote sand-bar in the unexplored stretches of the Indian Ocean..."

And so it was that they descended, at length, on the white, pebble-strewn beach of the remote sand-bar. Herman the Pixie and Falstaff the Djinn sat waiting for them.

While the ManInTheBlueTopper dismounted, the great white bat occupied himself by scratching in the sand a geometric demonstration of the theorem that the square of the hypoteneuse of a right-angle triangle equals the squares of the other two sides combined.

"A universally understood theorem," declared the bat in Sanskrit. "Particularly useful in making Martians and such understand that God Is Love."

Hearty handshakes followed, and Falstaff the Djinn exhibited his pile of the mosta of the besta in science-fiction.

"Gosh, Wow, Boy-O-Boy!" he cried enthusiastically. "It's the greatest in the land and the best that's on the stand!"

"Yesiree, yesiree, yesiree, yesiree!" all three chorused amid paroxysms of sobbing from the great white bat.

"Where in Hell did you get those rags, Falstaff?" shrieks the ManInTheBlue-Topper when the gunpowder fumes have blown away.

"I didn't," whispers Falstaff the Djinn, while Pixie Herman lets fly a venemous chuckle. "It's the subs, you see. The Indigestible Triton had indigestion, and heaved them up right here on this beach!"

"And we never even knew," amends Herman, "that the poor sucker was a science-fiction fan!"

After the blood-punch had gone around three times, the atmosphere mellowed considerably, and the conversation drifted to more serious topice. The international situation was hastily solved and pigeon-holed, and various other evils of the assorted worlds were rectified in short order.

"And so I sez to the editor of Famous Fantastic Mysteries, I sez: 'Look out kid, or I'll knock your Bok off! Hahahahahahahahahahahah!!!!!!!!!!'"

"Besht li'l magazhine on th' market!" pipes up Herman the Pixie, emerging from a billowing cloud of high-octane alcoholic fumes. "And th' latesht isshu ish a hum-hum-hum-hum-"

"Dinger!" supplies Falstaff, who at the same time dashes off an insulting message on an old scrap of gold-leaf, stuffs it into a dead soldier and flings it out to sea.

"Thash right!" exults Herman the Pixie. "I'm gonna shtart reading it tomorrow - if I can shee shtraight by that time - "

The bottles go up and down again, and all are agreed that FFM is top-notch But the unamimity of opinion is broken when somebody brings up Fantastic Novels.

"I shay itsh better than FFM." insists Herman the Pixie.

"You're a liar!" comments Falstaff the Djinn.

"Whatsh that got to do with it?" appeals Herman the Pixie. "FN is still the besht I shay."

The ManInTheBlueTopper has a sly look on his face, which is now green to match the sunrise. "How about Thrilling Wonder and Startling and Captain Future?" he taunts.

"Blbwrbgblwr!" blbwrbglwrbles Falstaff the Djinn "TWS. Grrr! Startling. Wrrgg! Captain Future. Gkwkkk! And that stinko Sergeant Saturn! Why I knew the bum when he was a private, first class, polishing spitoons at the Pluto sub-station'"

"How about Science Fiction and Future Fiction then?"

"The Quarterly stinks," says Falstaff the Djinn. "But where in all fifteen thousand reeking blue hells on wheels are the other two?"

"Wouldn't you like to know?" rumbles the Face In The Sky, disappearing forthwith.

"Now, Astounding and Unknown...."

"Voila! Astounding! C'est magnificque!" exclaims Falstaff the Djinn.

"Poor Unk - known!" hics Herman the Pixie.

"And Astonishing and Super-Science?

"Hokay. Hokay," supplies Falstaff the Djinn. "Final issue of Super-Science has a good Morey cover."

"Hey!" Herman the Pixie interjects. "If it wash good, it couldn't be morey!"

"And that new Comet?"

"Better than I expected," Falstaff the Djinn admits. "But that stuff in the Spacean is a lot of bull! The guy's got it all wrong! Now I was there and I know!"

"What have we left?" asks Herman the Pixie.

"Three fifths," says Falstaff the Djinn, counting on his toes.

"And Planet?"

"Artwork stinks!" says Falstaff the Djinn. "It shouldn't happen to a dog!"

"Check!" stutters Herman the Pixie.

"And Marvel?"

"All they need," says Falstaff the Djinn, "is candy and Parásian Opera Glasses in the ten minute intermission!"

"Well," says the ManInTheBlueTopper, "I guess that about covers it. I have to be going, because I have an important conference at eight."

"Give her my regards," says Falstaff the Djinn. "But haven't you forgotten something?"

"Oh yes!" says the ManInTheBlueTopper. "Amazing and Fantastic Adventures!"

The sandbar sinks in convulsions, and the earth shakes and volcanos erupt as all three mount upon the great white bat and fly away into the yodeling dawn....

THE END

Fantasia, January 1941 (1, 1)

AD NAUSEUM by Hugh McDonald

The man sailed far on a golden bar
And a rusted gold dubloon;
The sea was smeared with hot steam beer
And covered with macaroons.

"Food! O Food!" loud cried the man,
"For you I'll sell my soul!
I'll give my life for a buttered knife
Or a cinnamon jelly-roll!"

The sea was still, preparing to kill
The man who would barter his Troth
For a herring kippered and ladles dippered
In simmering bowls of broth.

Loud cried the sea: "A tomato puree
Is yours with a bucket of grime;
And apples dabbed with poisoned crab
Will be your meal sublime!"

"I'll eat your grime," he said, "but Lime
And Coke must be my drink;
Fill my gut with your poisoned food,
And I will fill the sink!"

So the man ate well, and lies in Hell
Cradled in basting souffles;
And the sea waned well in a pickeled jell
Moulded of paper mache.

*****

Fantasia, January 1941 (1, 1)

REMEMBER?

Harold Elliott

The bartender's face seemed to be drifting gently away into undulating shadow, a nebulous white blur with indistinct features. I looked at Lorraine, cool and glowing and very beautiful, and at Bob, chalky and haggard and suffering. My own forehead was still burning with the recollection of how I had failed to recognize Bob for a moment, and had hesitated with every nerve in my body jangling, when Lorraine had first spotted him as we entered.

The atmosphere - the mellow darkness of the place was beginning to close in around me now like a soft slumber; the music was the faint tremble of elfin drums, the lights like distant fairy-lanterns dimly seen in an enchanted glade. Gradually, I felt all the sharp tenseness draining out of me; my mind and body were relaxing, and a delicious dreamy lassitude was stealing over my senses. It was a mood for reverie, the kind of a mood that claims one completely on such occasions.

When the drinks were before us on the table, I tinkled the ice absently against my glass and tried to think of something to say. Perhaps it was the semi-darkness, but Bob seemed to have changed since we had sat down together. His features were still white and drawn, as if he had been through some frightful ordeal, but his eyes, at first merely dead shadowy pits in his head, looked at me now with an intensity that was almost frightening. His eyes were burning, actually burning like two hot coals. I glanced at Lorraine, by my side. She, too, must have noticed the way Bob looked; she sat stiffly, almost trance-like, and the healthy color had vanished from her face, giving way to a stealthy pallor.

I must have laughed rather feebly, and I know my innocuous remark sounded forced and grotesque. "Well, Bob," I faltered, "it's good to see you again. You're looking well..." I failed miserably to put unfelt conviction into those words. I knew something was wrong - damned wrong.

Lorraine mumbled something unintelligible in the same general vein as my comment. Bob seemed to ignore her completely. A wry, sarcastic smile twisted his pallid lips, and he looked at me as a broken-down prospector might look at an incredibly rich deposit of gold stumbled on by accident.

"You're exaggerating, Len. I look rotten, and I know it; but the - the shock of finding out exactly how things stand was pretty severe. It laid me low..."

I turned it over in my mind for a moment. Bob looked washed-out, but he wasn't plastered; that I knew. But he was talking in riddles.

I asked him if anything was wrong. I hadn't seen him in a week, and a lot can happen in that much time. "If there's anything I can doo - if there's anything either of us can do," I told him, indicating Lorraine, "we'll do it..."

He replied dryly, but the light in back of his eyes was eager, and I could feel his whole body tensing; it was in the air, like a silent electrical discharge.

"It's enough that I've found you," he said. There was a pause, and he went on, his voice higher this time. "I've been going crazy, Len. It was only two nights ago that I remembered. Suddenly; in the middle of a dream. When it his me, my whole false, beautiful world came crashing down around my ears... I'm not the same any more, Len, and I wasn't sure until just now that there was another like me..."

For some reason, a cold blade tore up my spine, and I could feel my knuckles tingling. Bob was different, all right. I didn't know what the nature of the change was, but something deep inside my brain was howling and screaming for me to get out of that place and away. It required a physical effort to remain in my seat, but I managed it, and regarded Bob inquisitively.

"I'm afraid I don't know what you mean," I said.

Bob smiled even more broadly, and his eyes were - yes, sinister. Alarms were going off inside me. I don't think I'll ever experience that feeling again. Something about this man was arousing portions of my mind whose existence I had never even suspected, impelling them to erect defenses which are not needed in the course of an ordinary lifetime.

"Yes you do," Bob was saying. "I wouldn't talk about it to strangers, myself; I know there must be some like us - some who did talk - raving in padded cells right now. I've no such ambitions..."

I started to cut in. "Listen, Bob..."

"Wait a moment. I've been lonely, Len. All alone in a world of madmen and fools, ever since I remembered. But when you and Lorraine came in here this evening, I sensed your presence. Didn't you sense it too, Len! didn't you feel it? Don't you understand that I've remembered, just as you have? I'm not one of the others, Len; I'm like you!"

Bob was talking loud; too loud. I put my hand across the table and grasped his arm. "Listen," I whispered, "I don't know what this is all about, but keep your voice down - if only out of consideration for Lorraine!"

Then I remembered that Lorraine hadn't said a word. She was white as a sheet, and I could feel her hand trembling where it touched mine. Resentment against Bob boiled up within me.

"I think we'd better leave," I told LOrraine. She put out a restraining hand.

"No... Let's stay. I'm all right," she said. As she looked at me and then back at Bob, I thought I detected tears welling up in her eyes.

There was nothing to do but assent, and I did it grumblingly, ungracefully. I didn't want to act like a dolt, but Bob was making a fool of himself and of us, too.

He muttered an apology. "You may have remembered some time ago, Len. If you did, you've controlled yourself damned well. But - this thing nearly killed me. You know that I took life rather seriously; I was smug and satisfied and confident. A man can take a lot of punishment, Len, but when he has the earth knocked right out from under him - when he suddenly finds that there is nothing he can have faith in, no basis for his confidence in himself and in his kind - it's enough to send him off the deep end..."

"I don't know anything about your personal affairs," I interrupted, "but I've already told you that we'll help you in any way we can." I was getting more than a bit fed up with Bob's drivel. "But, good Lord, man, talk sense!"

"You still don't believe me?" Bob's expression was one of cynical amusement.

"Believe you, hell! I don't understand you!"

"Don't you trust Lorraine?" he asked. "Don't you want her to know?"

That was almost too much. Lorraine and I were going to be married in a month. I had known Bob for six years, and Lorraine had known him for five. I felt that he was taking advantage of our friendship, making remarks that he knew no other man could get away with. I held myself in, and reminded him cuttingly that he was overstepping the bounds of decorum, and that I didn't like it.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I'm not entirely responsible tonight. Forgive me, Lorraine."

Lorraine just looked at him. Her lips moved, but she didn't utter a sound.

"It might be a good idea if you explained yourself," I suggested.

Bob nodded, and smiled again. "I will," he said. "This is all very new to me, and although I can't imagine what you're so reticent about, I suppose you have good reasons."

"I repeat, Len, that I'm like you. I was lost and foundering - going slightly mad I think - until you and Lorraine came in this evening. Even before Lorraine called to me, I felt your presence. I knew that someone else who had remembered was near. Do you understand?"

I grinned and shook my head. "No," I said truthfully.

A shadow of anger momentarily crossed Bob's features. Whatever was troubling him, he was taking it very seriously.

"Yes you do," he said wearily. The old burning light came back into his eyes. "I remembered as I slept, Len. I woke up soaking with cold sweat. Oh, God! The whole world - false! A colossal lie!"

"I think it must be an ancestral memory, like instinct. The memory of insects. I think it must be in all of us, lying dormant. Not many remember at all, Len. And that's a good thing, too. If a million people awoke sweating, tonight, with the realization of what and why man is, and what and why and how the world and the universe is, there would be no more world as we know it..."

"This is not our world any more, Len. When I saw you tonight, and realized that you had the memory, it was like finding another man on a desolate planet that you had thought totally dead!"

"Oh, hell!" I muttered. It was Greek, Sanskrit.

Bob was oblivious. He went on in a mechanical daze. "We know, now, that things are not what they seem. It's a race-memory, Len, something we never knew we had. And it's too heavy a load for one man to bear alone. To know - to know what it means!' The stupid world, the senseless whirl of life, the lights of the city; the damnable, arrogant conceit of mankind! The blind, unreasoning pride of the little beasts, ignorant of what they are and why, and how they came here. The rotten, lying theories and explanations. Theories to account for everything - and all of them lies!"

Perspiration was streaming down Bob's face, and down my own. It was torture, just listening to him. There was something within me trying - trying to remember. I knew that I couldn't quite grasp it....

"All this pomp and pageantry, Len. God! If only they knew! What woudd they do it they all should remember; if they all should see the truth about the universe - about themselves! What of their pride! If they should remember, as you and I have remembered!"

Something burst in my brain. "Damn you!" I shouted, "I don't know what you're talking about! You're crazy!"

Bob was stunned. But Lorraine was on her feet beside me. "Len," she said, "Bob is right... Only," she turned and smiled at him, tears wetting her cheeks, "he made a slight mistake... It wasn't you, Len, who he sensed when we came in... It was me. I've known for a long time; I remembered nearly a year ago..."

It was Bob's gain and my loss. He was right; a man can take a lot of punishment without folding up. Had Lorraine left me under different circumstances, I would have thought the world had come to an end... But now there is something infinitely more horrible. It is worse than the loss of a woman you love. It is the loss of my faith in the things I had always taken for granted; the loss of confidence in myself and in my egotistical world. It is the killing certainty that there is a great,terrible knowledge buried in my mind, and the constant tortured groping for something that I cannot quite remember.

-*-

Fantasia, April, 1941 (2, 1)

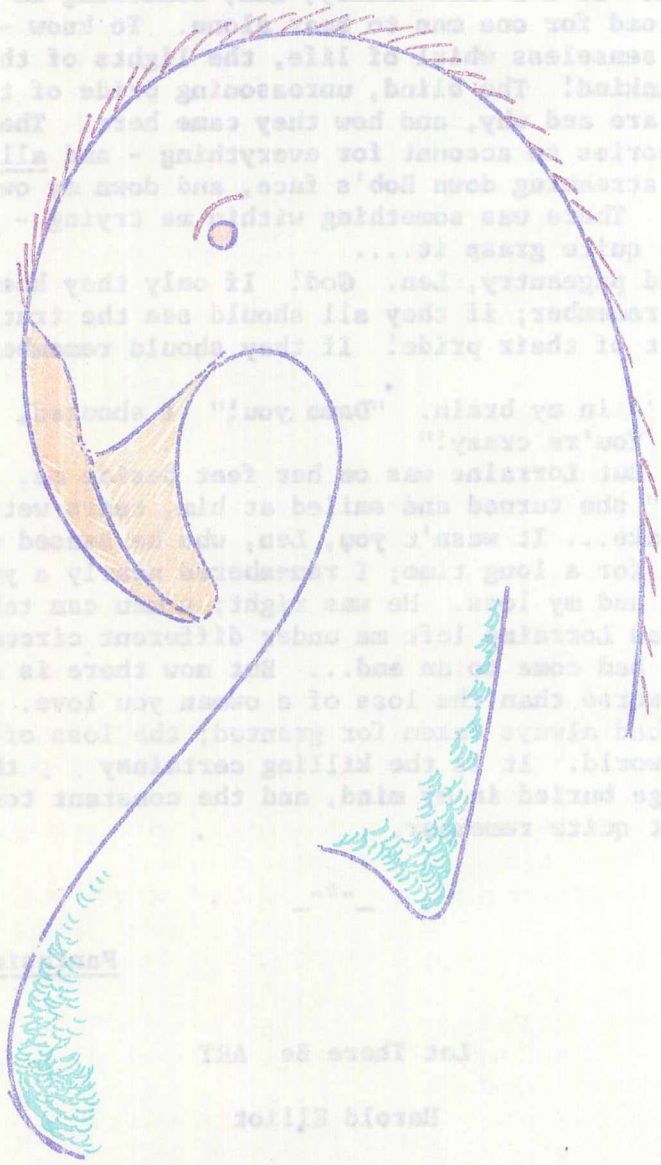
Let There Be ART

Harold Elliot

Being a man of no mean aesthetic attainments myself, and circulating as I do in and about the cultural upper-crust of thse regions, I quite naturally number among my acquaintances more than a few dilettantes of art.

I speak of the long-haired brethern who dab at canvas and devour Verve in rattletrap garrets, who seek inspiration at Fisherman's Wharf, subsist on Cuba-Libres and Phillip Morris and romp through their beatific lives in sublime indifference to hell and high water.

In foraging parties of from one to a dozen fixed palates, thes descend upon my penthouse eyrie on occasion, full of empyrean fervor and ready for anything. After they have looted my larder, dehydrated my liquor cabinet and rolled back the rugs to the supersonic accompaniment of Ravel's Bolero on the player, these eccentric wheels of progress figuratively pitch their tents in odd corners and launch into a midnight to dawn open forum on the why and wherefore and downwith of all things in heaven and earth.



Inevitably, though, wherever the conversation may begin, it drifts around to art. With the unconcerned bravado and easy confidence of seasoned practitioner-critics, my unshave, frazzle-headed guests survey the science of representation down the ages in one nimble bound, and mark time on our own era, eyeing askance the more noble Romans of the contemporary scene while salivating over the rag-tail rump-school exemplified by Dali and his whole cubistic, impressionistic miscegenated mob.

When the darkest hours have passed, they arise and, not forgetting to gather up any stray cigarettes that may have survived the orgy, take their riotous departure - for greener fields, no doubt, I retire weary and disheartened, and Dali's sagging timepieces and unstrung intestines haunt my fitful dreams.

I have reached a point at which I can no longer even derive a contemptuous amusement from their crackpot antics and tastes. I can guffaw rudely and expectorate with fine disdain when they present their ridiculous nominations for artistic immortality, but when it comes to a rebuttal, I'm stonkered.

There was a time when I would haul a dozen magazines from my files and present for their inspection, say, a Finlay pictorial from a not too old Weird Tales, and an atmospheric Bok, and one of Cartier's superb caricatures, and perhaps something of Schneeman's better work. Ah yes, they'd murmur, very pretty, but how about this slop here? And out they'd grab, coming up with a Bug-Eyed Brown cover of TWS, or a Planet cover abounding with buxom-bosomed wenches whose principal occupation seemed to be fleeing from horrendous monsters while at the same time losing their brassieres. And I'm sorry to say that, in my opinion, from fifty to eighty percent of the pen and ink atrocities of the pro field - while perhaps not so productive of abrupt regurgitation as the above horrid examples - are absolutely indefejsible, on artistic grounds, even against the barbs of such mouse-bitten critics as these.

Mind you, I hold no brief for the sometimes expressed theory that fantasy illustrations should be enduring masterpieces of the artist's craftsmanship. As a matter or fact, it is not a whit more reasonable to expect great art in this field than it is to expect great literature. Nevertheless, I do believe that we have had some remarkably fine illustrations presented to us recently. Whether the works of thier creators will ever be hung in the Pantheon, and their names graven in the Hall of Fame, is another matter that time will decide. At that, I'm firmly convinced that more and better artists have died unrecognized than have ever been acclaimed favorites by the inane multitude and the mentally waterlogged critics.

But the important consideration, as far as I am concerned, is the fact that in our chosen field of pulp-fiction, we have artists whose work need not be tucked away furtively among the mothballs. On the contrary, it can be shown anywhere without the company of shame-faced apologies.

I seriously doubt the existence of comparable art-work in any other branch of the pulp-publishing field. Fantasy magazines seem to be unique in that they display any amount of artistic talent whatever.

And there's the rub! Granted, we have pro artists who are very good, whose work is a source of pride. Now, why in hell must we tolerate in the same field - yea, in the same magazines - the incoherent scribblings of bristol-board assassins whose only artistic future lies in painting goatees and buck-teeth on female portraits.

I mean the Krupas and Lynchs and the Hammonds and the Thorps and the Binders. I mean all the rest of the bums who might pass in Terror Tales, but who don't live on the same side of the tracks as Finlay and Bok and Cartier.

The publishers are cutting their good stock with two parts of bilge-water, and I don't like it.

It certainly isn't because more good artists - artists who can at least hold some sort of a candle to the top-flighters - aren't to be had. Yet for some obscure reason the powers that be insist on rummaging through old graveyards on stormy nights and presenting their finds in black and white to a long-suffering public. A real effort, were it made, would uncover more than enough real artists for the needs of the pro field. But no, It is either cheaper, or easier, or both, to keep fooling around with old hacks who have dug their own ruts through the years and so-called newcomers in whose hands the drawing pen becomes a lethal instrument.

I don't believe the requisites for a science-fiction artist are very tough. About the only qualification necessary is the ability to draw well and treat abtruse subjects in a normal manner. A man should look like a man; not like Krupa's window-dummies, not like Morey's tight-trousered, quince-faced scarecrows, not like the assorted mummies and Tarzans and petulant effeminates and corny slickers and the heterogeneous hordes of mongrels that stalk through the pro pages in disgusting legion.

The science-fiction artist should rationalize the material he deals with into a semblance of sanity in his picture. If the story can't be portrayed in a normal manner, then it should be given to a fantasy artist, who can depict the atmosphere rather that the substance of the yarn.

Schneeman comes close to my definition of a real science-fiction artist. His work is usually simple, dignified and restrained. And it is reasonable. Remember his pic on an Astounding cover fo Saturn as viewed from one of her satellites? Well, by God, he painted a mountain that looked like a mountain - not a neon anthill.

Finlay, Bok, and Cartier (the latter a caricaturist), are fantasy artists. It is their job to convey atmosphere to the reader, and it's not an easy job. The only qualification here is that the artist must be an artist. There can be no applicationof of techniques before the artist is a master of representative drawing. I believe native ability and a well-oiled imagination weigh more heavily in this field. These men are top-notchers, but they are being run into the ground and overworked. If the publishers will look around, they will find more of the same caliber.

But decent artists are needed very badly, right now, in the science-fiction field more than in the fantasy realm. From the evidence so far presented, I should say the publishers - most of them at any rate - are myopic if not totally blind. If, as must be the case, they have no eye for art, let them remember this; an art college certificate isn't enough; art colleges are business institutions. Find out first if the guy can draw.

To advise the publishers to look for new talent in the fan-field would be easy enough, but the percentage of genuine talent to be found there is no greater than that to be found among the population at large. But whether it come from within the fan-field or without, let there be art - at any cost.

I think that after fifteen years of professional science-fiction and eighteen years of pulp fantasy, it is about time good artwork became the rule rather than the exception.

°ΔΔ°

Fantasia, April, 1941 (2, 1)

R E N D E Z V O U S

by Lou Goldstone

I was standing watch on the fo'csle bridge, watching the white spume curve out from under the bows, when the thing broke surface half a kilometer off the starboard beam. It aly there in the center of a wide circle of bubbling foam, heaving gently with the slight swell, wallowing from side to side. It was big; bigger than any submarine I had ever seen, and it has a smooth, lustrous outer plating that shimmered in the soft glow of a new crescent moon and a numberless host of diamond-bright stars. The call to battle-stations sounded while I still stared at the thing, and not more than half a minute later our starboard secondaries opened up with a roar. Two quick, spurting tongues of red, and two six-inch shells swent whistling out. Two dull watery booms sounded simultaneously, and a pair of creamy spouts stood glistening and fell back. I heard somebody shout. Another salvo, closer this time. I looked for torpedo-tracks, because they had caught us dead, but there were none. The third burst of fire scored a direct hit, Two blazing blasts directly on the thing's side; bits of casing spanked the water for a hundred yards around, kicking up little gouts of spray.

Then I clutched the rail tightly to support myself, and my mouth must have fallen open. The thing rose and dipped calmly, trailing a small feathery wake. I had seen two six-inch shells strike it at once - enough to blow a light surface-craft out of the sea. And the thing was unharmed. The captain swore vividly at my elbow. The six-inchers didn't open fire again. We just looked at the thing sailing serenely along beside us - until, a few moments later, the first flare went up.

And it was a flare. It mounted like a rocket, red and glowing. Up, up, higher and higher, until I had lost it. A minute passed, while we craned our necks between feverish glances at the thing. Then, somewhere up in the stratosphere, a star burst. It was that flare. From horizon to horizon, the sea showed green and sparkling in a light like that of noon. It blazed up there with a light too intense to look at; a light like the sun. "Oh God!" groaned the captain. "Oh God Almighty!"

Remember that this was only two days after your light cruisers had caught us off Coronel. remember that we were travelling with radio silent, without lights - knowing that your forces were combing the seas for us. Remember that we had escaped at all only by a miracle. Remember that we were holed from stem to stern, smashed and battered into virtual helplessness, our main armament gone, half our crew dead. Remember that we were taking the only chance we had; burning our last ton of fuel-oil in an all-orAnothing dash for a rendezvous with that tanker. What good is a pocket-battleship without guns or fuel? Well, we were taking the risk. If we could meet the tanker and refuel, there was a chance of escaping, even in our crippled condition. And now this - light! And we were two hours away from the rendezvous, with fuel in our tanks for tow hours and a half at ten knots - our most economical speed.

For ten minues it blazed, while we went mad. Hundreds of square miles of ocean must be flaring with daylight. We knew that if one of your destroyers or scouting planes saw the light, heavy forces would be concentratd on the area, and we would be lost.

I stood there dumbly and heard orders barked. Again the six-inchers opened up. An almost continuous sheet of flame stood out from the gun-muzzles, as shell after shell was poured onto the thing. It was an unremitting hail of death. The noise was thunderous, deafening. A forest of white splashes was leaping up and falling back out there in grotesque motion. Then, in the midst of the firing, another flare went up - as the first one still hung dying in the sky. I turned and saw the sweating, tortured face of the captain as he gave the cease fire order. It was no use, as we could all plainly see. We knew that this thing was not one of your vessels. But whatever it was, the thing was - ignoring us.

Someone must have had an idea, for almost immediately I saw the silvery wake of a torpedo slicing toward the thing. It struck with a colossa, road, at the same moment the second flare burst high above us. Our own ship rocked with the concussion, but the other was unscathed. We watched, then, while the intense blue radiance of the flare burned down all about us. We watched and hoped.

Whatever it was, the thing was persistent; or it might have been coincidence. It wallowed along precisely parallel to our course, at the same speed we were making. We could not change course - and get away from it - because we had just enough fuel to take us to the rendezvous with the tanker, and that by the straight route we were following.

For two solid hours the thing plunged along beside us, while we perspired and hoped it would return to the depths it had left. Every ten minutes another flare boiled up, exploding at an unknown height and lighting up our whole watery world. White flares, and blue flares and green flares and yellow and crimson and all the intermediate hues. They hung in the air, one after another, without a break - for when one was burning out, another was just bursting.

I heard shouts and looked ahead. Plainly visible in the blazing light, the tanker hove into view over the dip of the horizon. I felt the plates under my feet vibrate more noticably as the diesels throbbed like an agonized heart. We plowed ahead.

That damned thing was still with us as they cast out floats from the tanker. In another half hour the line would be spouting fresh oil into our empty tanks. The operation was almost complete - if we had not already been detected. The thing hovered uncertainly and sent up a new flare, larger and brighter than any of the preceding ones. We squinted at the tanker, only a thousand meters away, and waited.

Now other flares were going up from the thing like roman-candles. They spluttered and popped and crackled and danced in the sky. We were in what seemed a mad dream

The last big flare had just burned out when something else appeared overhead. It was a knife-edge of searing brilliance, racing among the stars and growing larger and more blinding. It raced down the southern horizon and turned. We caught the subtle vibration that turned into a world-shaking roar, and the light from the sky was a whitehot jet of fire that sprayed down into the sea. It was coming toward us thundering and blazing. Closer, and I caught a glimpse of a huge dark shape racing directly at us over the water, throwing out that scorching blade of flame in front of it, leaving behind it a seething curtain of steam where the blast had touched.

Screams and shouts. I dodged behind the rail as the thing flashed by, monstrous and fiery, blinding our eyes and shattering our ear-drums. A hazy jumble of sound and light as it passed directly above the tanker, it flaring jet of fire engulfing the vessel as it passed. All the oil in the tanker must have gone up at the touch of that blast. The ship simply ceased to exist. In its place was a billowing pillar of hell-fire that stood up a mile in the sky, roiling with dense clouds of black smoke. Stunned, we watched as the conflagration spread out over the water, and hissing jets of burning oil rained down all around us.

The thing from the sky had settled to the sea in a cloud of boiling steam, and the thing that had followed us was lying close alongside it, sending out strings of flares like fireworks. Slowly, with one accord, they both submerged and vanished.

We stood there, the flaming sea and that great fuming beacon-light casting flickering red shadows across our blank faces. We did not think; we just stood and waited for the end, and presently we knew the end had come. First thre was a flicker of red on the horizon, then the dull rumble, then the booming whistle of the heavies, and then the towering spouts as you straddled us with your first salvo.

ΔΔΔ

Fantasia, April 1941 (1, 2)

'THEIR MOTHERS NEVER TOLD THEM

by Harold Elliot

I can find some sympathy in my heart for that old guard of letter-section loiterers whose defiant battle-crest is a blue pencil rampant on a field of blinders, and whose apparently indefatigable crusade against the female of the species is forever audible in the distance amid the angry clash of snipping scissors and cries of Make The World Safe For Bachelors and We Don't Want Any.

Please notice that I say sympathy, which is not at all synonymous with intellectual agreement. I sympathize to a certain extent because I am, myself, an evil old bachelor of long standing, and because, regardless of the merit of their cause, these misogynists are inhumanly persistent and therefore deserving of whatever laurels are customarily awarded those possessors of preeminently good intentions who insist upon jamming themselves wrenchlike into the wheels of progress.

For the good of all, I beg to report to these undoubtedly conscientious objectors that sex is here to stay, together with by-products love and women, and that accordingly, another long and arduous campaign against the Devil and His Works has arrived at the usual unsuccessful conclusion.

It It was a losing fight all along. Our recalcitrants are at liberty to conduct their personal affairs however they like, but they must admit that the trends they have so valiantly combatted are inexorable, and - to be a bit nasty about it - incontrovertibly responsible for the survival to date of that same human race which science-fiction heroes are incessantly preserving from destruction at the respective hands, talons, tentacles and pseudopods of all sorts of hell-bent invaders.

If any further proof were needed that resistance on this futile field is utterly forlorn, I should point out that even Amazing finds it advisable to cater to the budding instincts of its 14-year-olds with appropriately crude servings of wenches well-done, medium and plenty rare.

The gallant dissenters must realize that opposition to sex, love and women per se is a pastime without a future. But all is not lost. While allowing the 30th, 40th and 50th centuries to have sex, love and - necessarily - women, we can still exercise our God-given right to howl about something and anything be seeing to it that the science-fictional treatment of these three onerous quantities is such as will suit our patrician tastes.

I'm already sharpening my tomahawk for a vigorous and determined assault on the all too common mis-handling and slush-puddling of, and general dilly-dallying with, (a) our biological function or (b) our most sacred emotion. You may select whatever definition pleases you.

We can skip over the matter of illustrations - particularly cover pictures. It is traditional for covers to portray action shots of damsels-in-distress, minus a good percent of clothing in strategic spots, being carted of by gobs of protoplasm and animated engine-rooms for what dire purposes we'll never know. Although a few bits of uninhibited cheesecake still pop up - you know the type: formidable females, generally imprisoned in large test-tubes, with spouts of steam or mechanical doo-jiggers intercepting the melange in just the right spots for satisfaction of the U.S. Postal Laws and Regulations - on the whole, this sort of unsportsmanlike exploitation of sex seems about played out.

But we reformists have one very promising sphere of evangelical activity left. It lies in the ruthless debunking of the big, black, unsavory absurdities invariably connected with the sex-element as presented in our magazines Here are plenty of windmills for us to buck, so let's have at them briefly.

Science-fiction villains are a source of never-ending wonder to my admittedly unenterprising mind. They are terribly brilliant and largely insane. They either covet absolute rule of the Earth, or are quite seriously determined to blow the whole damn planet to hell and gone. I submit that the latter obsession, while perhaps not entirely laudable, can at least be viewed with a certain degree of sympathetic understanding if one is objective about it.

Now while huge masses of brilliant villains lay their catastrophic plans with diabolic cunning, and totter to the very brink of success, they generally discard that magnificent gray-matter of theirs at the critical moment - and go chasing aroundaround after the heroine! Unsatisfactory, highly unsatisfactory. A villain bent on destruction of Earth would undoubtedly intend to obliterate womankind in the bargain, hence would be singularly uninterested in the physical assets of the heroine - who, after all, is just another wench playing hooky from washing dishes and darning the hero's socks. On the other hand, the villain who merely wants to dominate this world would not, if he is as smart as he's cracked up to be, jeopardize his colossal project by pursuing the heroine lustfully. Once the Earth is under his heel, he could have fifteen harems, if his inclinations ran along those lines.

But the villain always harasses the heroine, thus goading the perspiring hero on to prodigious feats for the salvation of his beloved (he's a dope, too). result; the villain and his fiendish plottings come crashing down in ruins. Let's have logical villains in the future.

We have not yet reached the nadir of nausea. The science-fiction heroine - a cast-iron creature endowed with a limitless capacity for getting into trouble from which she must be extricated, a chilled-steel neural system and a grim resolve to suffer death before dishonor - is not pursued by human dastards alone. She is also in imminent peril of outrage by the inhabitants of nine planets and twenty nearby star-clusters. The poor

girl is fleeing like mad, and hot on her heels - but incandescantly - come bounding, crawling, slithering, barking e-t monsters. I sometimes suspect that despite the apparent erudition of authors, their mothers never told them. In short, it won't work; you can't argue with chromosomes. And aside from the distinctly mechanical aspects, why would the e-t appreciate the human female? His standards of physical beauty are not hers. Reverse the situation. Can you imagine yourself kidnapping a Venusian maiden - claws and all - with amorous intent? Ugh!

I won't even mention the half-breeds. Mr. Burroughs, for one, has laid a lot of eggs, but the biggest was undoubtedly that out of which hatched - yes, hatched - the lad Carthoris, son of Dejah Thoris (Mars) and John Carter (Earth), both of whom must be thoroughly ashamed of themselves by now.

Another avenue of attack is open. A few progressive authors burst forth with the uncommonly sane postulate that the e-t need not necessarily operate on a bi-sexual basis. One, or any number of sexes might well contribute to the final gruesome product. It is intriguing to speculate that a live-wire love affair on Saturn, say, may resemble nothing so much as a Detroit assembly-line banging away full blast.

One parting admonition, fellow-crusaders. Though the trends are gradually turning with us, let us have our fun like gentlemen. Moderation is vital. Were our future women too realistic, they'd probably never appear in space-ships at all.

And wouldn't that be awful.

. ‡ Δ ‡ .

Fantasia, July 1941 (1, 3)

BLACKOUTS AND BRASS MONKEYS

Lou Goldstone

Like many other good things, L. Ron Hubbard's Final Blackout will probably be better remembered for the sensations it provoked than for its intrinsic merit as a story.

The sensations were various. They included praise that was nothing short of ecstatic and the angry cries of disgruntled bolsheviks.

But the best of all was the sensation which sprang full-blown out of the mouths of fans suckled on blazing ray-guns and invading Martians. This sensation was a simple and uncomplicated one. Final Blackout, the fans protested, was a good story -- but -- it was not scientifiction!

It was a good sensation, and it had great possibilities. In fact, it was a natural. Final Blackout, they said, was not scientifiction. Ah...but what is scientifiction?

Somehow or other, this most promising controversy failed to develop. Having expressed their displeasure with the march of events, the indignant ones retired in good order, without ever having come to grips with the major issue involved. In so doing, these orthodox fans displayed either an inability or an indisposition to get down to fundamentals.

In this case, the core of the apple they nibbled was a matter of definition. Definition is a weary and distasteful routine, and the parties concerned evidently decided it had better be left to Plato and the village idiot. They were probably glad to drop the potato before it got too hot.

But the problem they shamefully abandoned is so vital that it needs some sort of examination. Just what is scientifiction? The boys have rendered judgement on Final Blackout as being un-scientifictional, but they haven't defined their terms. They haven't pointed out just what essential ingredient it was that Hubbard's tale lacked.

Chances are most of the dissenters would disqualify Final Blackout on the grounds it contained no science. I feel reasonably certain that a careful re-exploration of the story would disclose a few stray grains of what might be construed as science in a literal sense, although the presence of such matter would certainly not satisfy the fans to whom science means not the sum total of human knowledge, but chemical equations and ephemeris tables.

I don't think that anyone will insist that a scientifiction story must contain a scientific lesson or moral. This seems to have been the original idea promoted by Papa Gernsback in the infancy of pulp-scientifiction. While it is true that scientifiction at first stood squarely on a basis of known - if exaggerated and distorted - scientific fact, just as weird fiction stood on the traditional ghosties and mediaeval superstitions, evolution has produced great changes in both types of fiction.

Scientifiction was evidently first popularized with the idea that it existed for the sole purpose of serving science. This, in spite of the fact that the classical pre-pulp stories - those of Bellamy and H. G. Wells, for ins tance - presented no real scientific fact, and, indeed, used their pseudo-scientific atmospheres only as vehicles to parade the authors' political and social theories before the reader in the most easily digested form.

Discarding that thoroughly discredited premise, there still remains the fact that the early "traditional" types of scientifiction were, with very rare exceptions, concerned entirely with building stories around the physical sciences. Chiefly chemistry, astronomy, and physics; this trio is undoubtedly still deeplyassociated by many fans with not only the original, but the only basis for scientifiction.

This early trend produced the "heavy-science" yarns. For the most part, these were wildly pretentious in the extreme, but they did contain science in the well-known tamale ratio: one-chicken-to-one-horse. Point is, that some sort of scientific explanation was at the bottom of it all. I think the very best examples of this type are Campbell's stories, such as Solarite, and Taine's, such as Seeds of Life. Down through the years the "heavy-science" story has evolved, and the latest refinement appears to be the type of Rocklynne's "problem-yarns". In Men and the Mirror and And Then There Was One, the story is fashioned around a framework of unadorned physical law, and very nicely, too, as I see it.

But the militant attackers of Final Blackout can't establish this type as a criterion. Not one out of a hundred modern scientifiction stories could qualify by these rigid standards. If they complain about a lack of science in Final Blackout, they obviously don't mean real science, as found in the "problem-yarns".

You can probably recall that the early stories went on and on and on and on explaining in meticulous detail how the rocket-ship was built, fueled, provisioned, launched, piloted and landed at its destination. Nowadays the rocket-ship is taken for granted. The presence of a rocket-ship in a story cannot by any stretch of the most jaded imagination be considered as supplying the science element in a story. As it is, no rocket-ship, explained or unexplained, will be scientific until rocket-ships are accomplished facts.

Yet this is undoubtedly the very reasoning on which the fans who object about Final Blackout proceed. They have come to accept, unconsciously I trust, rocket-ships and ray-guns and time-machines as scientific achievements! And therefore they will readily classify any stories in which those problematical devices appear as true scientifiction, but a yarn unencumbered woth the conventional fallacious doodads is approached with grave suspicions.

So while "heavy-science" yarns, which do contain elements of fact, cannot comprise more than one percent of that which passes for scientifiction, the other ninety-nine per cent appears to be without any appreciable practical foundation in scientific fact.

In my judgement, this leaves the objectors to Final Blackout high and dry on the bitter reefs of their own unthinking prejudice. To face the facts bluntly, the prefix science- in science-fiction has always been a terrible and outrageous overstatement. Perhaps rocket-ships or time-machines would have satisfied the fans, had they appeared in Final Blackout, but there would still have been no science in the story.

There have been tremendous inroads made in the field by stories of psychological and social significance (Don't get me wrong on that last one; I'm not a Party member or even a parlor-pinkie.) Take Asimov's Trends, or Van Vogt's Slan or almost any of Heinlein"s stories. The wind was bound to blow that way, once scientifiction got over its infantile stage; and I'm fully convinced that the strictly-pseudo-science stage was not alone infantile, but downright pre-natal.

These are straws in the wind, and Final Blackout is one of them.

It's quite all right to keep that science- prefix tacked on; but plenty of fans must soon come to the bitter realization that rocket-ships and Martians as essential fistures are passe. Scientifiction has been wagged by its title for a long time, but it has actually been nothing more than imaginative projection. It's becoming more sophisticated, branching out. We mustn't be afraid to call it simply imaginative fiction; a name much bigger and much better than stilted, blue-nose scientifiction. It's outgrown its after-jets, and its future is greater than you think.

ω π σ π ω

μ

Fantasia, July 1941 (1, 3)

THE CORPSE by Lou Goldstone

It lay uptilted on the canyon bed,
Rutted in ancient mire and more than drowned
In flowing sunset shadow. It was dead
And skeletal, the monster that we found.
Its flanks were sundered, and its iron breast
Gaped with a mortal wound. One slitted eye
Stared from the battered skull that dumbly pressed
Its funnelled snout against the purple sky.

The beast's own blood had soaked the carcass through;
Red crust on twisted spine and broken hood.
And then the sun went down! And down we fell,
And crawling, called on all the Gods we knew
Against the F Craft of Air and Witch and Wood -
And fled from that enchanted gorge of Hell!

ω

Fantasia, July 1941 (1, 3)

C O N Q U E S T

Lou Goldstone

The room was hot; the one small window closed and locked, a cracked and discolored shade pulled down over the unwashed pane, the blast of the mid-summer night slowly pulsing through from outside. The air was almost unbreathable, rancid with human sweat, choked with unsettled dust and blue cigarette smoke.

I dropped my bundles on the springless bed and threw my hat on one of the two chairs.

"Look," I said, "why don't you get out of here?"

Finnegan was frying something over a can of Sterno in the far corner of the room. He didn't answer me, and he didn't look up. Finally he said: "Thanks for the stuff."

That's what he'd been saying every week for ten weeks, when I came up with a carton of smokes and a couple of bags full of canned food and coffee. That's the kind of junk he'd been living on. He looked - well, he looked like you'd expect a guy to look who's been hiding out in a lousy tenement furnished-room for ten weeks without once going out the door.

"Look," I told him, "the heat's off - if it's ever been on at all. You're killing yourself here."

He grinned a tight, hard grin, and caught a pack of weeds I tossed at him. He lit up and blew smoke in my face. "You think I'm nuts, huh?"

"The hell I do, but --"

"Forget it," he growled. "I'm staying put. They're after me, and I'm all right as long as they can't find me."

"Listen," I said, "I believe you. And I know you're right, even if nobody else in the whole damn world does. But --"

Finnegan got up and paced around his dirty little room. "You mind your own business," he told me, "And for God's sake, don't go shooting off about what I told you, or you'll get what I'm getting."

Finnegan wasn't batty. He wasn't any saner than a billion and a half other people either. It was just that he happened to know something that they never though of. And he had good and sufficient reason to shut himself up as he did; the preservation of your life is good and sufficient reason for anything.

I knew him when it started. He started it, and I was on the other side of the city desk when he blew in with the biggest scoop that ever hit this old planet. Naturally, it was never printed. It was too big to be believed.

Ocean Enterprises, Inc. had gone under. It seems they were piping oil out of submarine strata, when all of a sudden American Oil drilled through to untouched deposits all the way from Florida along the Gulf, through Texas and down into Lower California. It was advanced mechanical equipment that did it. Oil prices started skyrocketing - in reverse. Ocean Enterprises saw the handwriting on the wall, but before they collapsed, American Oil stepped in and bought them out. Finnegan had been assigned to cover the story. He slipped through cordons of flunkies and cornered Hutchison, American's new appointee to handle the subsidiary.

And here's how the interview copy Finnegan handed me across the desk read; "Question by Finnegan: When was American's new drilling equipment developed? Answer by Hutchison: Almost thirty five hundred years ago." I smelled Finnegan's breath then, but it was all right. And listen to this: "Question: You mean to say that this drill was invented in another world? Answer: Not another world; another parallel plane of existence. Q: Another dimension? A: You might say that; yes. Q: How did you obtain access tp this other dimension? A: I am a native of that other plane, as are most of

the engineers and officials of American Oil. Q: You came from another dimension to the Earth, and brought along the developments of an advanced science? A: Yes. Q: Why haven't you made your presence known before this? A: It did not suit our plans. Q: What are your plans? A: The subjugation and exploitation of this planet. Q: What? A: The conquest of your Earth. Q: For what purpose? A: To supply our own world with needed natural resources. Q: How do you intend to carry out this conquest? A: By economic means. Q: Why are you telling me all this? A: Because you asked me."

I think this last question signed Finnegan's death-warrant. The invaders did not fear his story, because they knew it would be laughed at. It was, and I laughed with the rest. But Finnegan had found the Achilles' Heel; they were psychologically unable to reply untruthfully to a direct question. They couldn't tell a lie! That was the only major difference between the invaders and humanity, but it was a dangerous one. That night, when I snorted and threw Finnegan's stroy back in his face, he pulled up his left sleeve and showed me his arm. It had a bullet hole in it. "He told me the truth," Finnegan said grimly, "but that didn't stop him from sending a hatchet man after me to knock me off before I could get the story in."

What could I do? I gave Finnegan the can. But his story, locked away in my desk, stuck in my memory. I saw Finnegan now and then. It was touch and go for him. He was never on any one job more than a week. And he had a lot of narrow squeaks. Hit by a taxi-cab, stabbed in a saloon brawl, seriously burned when a stick of dynamite exploded in the delivery truck he was driving. Once he fell - or was pushed - off a ferry, but he was hauled up and sent to a hospital and treated for submersion. In the middle of the night, he got up and sneaked out of the ward where he was lying. Before morning everyone in that ward was dead from the effects of poisonous fumes wheich were never traced or satisfactorily explained.

So I kept his story in mind. I saw American Oil growing. Atomic power burst on the world. The Atomic Trust bought out the oil companies and everything else. In five years it was a new Earth. I saw Atomic Trust absorb, little by little, every last vestige of private enterprise. There were to be government investigations, and for a while the newspapers whooped it up against monopoly. Then the newspapers cut it out, and the investigations were never heard of again. New legislation went through, and Atomic Trust was given virtually the status of a super-government, dominating the economic life of the world.

Why was this possible? Because money will buy anything - and anybody. There were exceptions, of course. But the few who could not be bought were quietly removed in any one of a number of ways. The invaders - the conquerors - had created new and inexhaustible sources of wealth by employment of their advanced technologies. They used this wealth to purchase a planet - without the erstwhile inhabitants knowing what was going on.

I saw the whole scheme develop. Once, early in the game, just about the time that American Oil was tightening its grip around all the mineral resources of the world, and when the government had suddenly squelched a pending invertigation of methods used by the monopoly to drive smaller competitors out of business, I remembered Finnegan's interview. I took it out of my desk and started upstairs to the publisher's offices. He was a new publisher. We were just another independent paper bought out for what must have been a fabulous price by a nation-wide syndicate. The syndicate supplied the big bosses, though the editorial staffs remained unchanged.

Well, the managing editor was there ahead of me, and he was talking it over with our new boss. It was some kind of new scheme for advertising the paper.

As I came through the door, the managing editor said to the publisher: "How'd you like to see circulation jump thirty percent?"

The publisher, a little squatty fellow behind a big desk, looked enthusiastic, but his reply was: "It wouldn't make the slightest bit of difference to me."

The managing editor looked dumbfounded. "Don't you care whether we make money or not?" he stammered.

"No," said the publisher.

The managing editor retreated hesitantly toward the door. "Then you don't want me to go ahead on this deal?"

"By all means go ahead." The publisher nodded vehemently.

"But you said you didn't care - "

"I don't! But go ahead with your idea." The publisher nodded to me, and indicated that the managing editor was dismissed.

I had to think quick. I mumbled something about makeup changes, and got out of that office in record time. Outside, I mopped my face and wrung out the handkerchief in the corridor spitoon. Thank God I found out in time. The new publisher was one of them! Of course he didn't care whether the paper made money or not! His job was just to keep it in line; he was a cog in the gigantic plan of conquest. He was an invader and the syndicate, like practically everything else, was controlled by the invaders.

He couldn't tell a lie when asked a direct question! I almost laughed. If I had shown him Finnegan's story - if he had found that I, too, knew of the invaders and of their weakness - then I would have been like Finnegan, a fugitive rat, hunted by night and by day, untill death ended my flight. So it was true; all of it.

All this time Finnegan had been whispering in restaurants and pool-rooms. All his money went into the printing of handbills proclaiming the facts. But he was hunted continuously and relentlessly. I think that toward the last he gave up the fight and concentrated on saving his miserable little life.

The plan advanced, grinding the Earth underfoot so gently, so subtly, that no one suspected - unless there were a few more hunted animals like Finnegan. The cultural life of the planet was taken over completely. The final state of the conquest began with the Eugenics Program, sponsored by the new World State. It is a success; in the first year of its operation, the normal birthrate for such a period fell off by twenty two percent. The final result is obvious.

All in all, it is a good world we have here. Peace and plenty and time for living. We are more cultured, more civilized than ever. We can enjoy our allotted span of life. It's a good world, but it's not our world any more.

I lit up a cigarette of my own. "No chance of my getting what you're getting," I said to Finnegan. "And, believe me, if you'd come out of hiding and try to live like a human being again, you'd be perfectly safe."

"Hah," barked Finnegan.

"Use your brains," I told him. "I know what you know, and I'm in no danger."

"God's sake, use your own brains," he snarled back, "If they suspected that you knew all about them, they'd have you rubbed out - like that."

I was about out of talk. I got up and put on my hat. "Come on out with me," I said. "You can get protection from the authorities. And you can trust me."

Finnegan turned his back on me and went to the window where he stood toying with the shade. "I can't trust anybody," he said.

I'm glad he turned his back. The pistols they give us are noisless, and leave no mark. After that I went down the dingy stairs and out into the dark street.

Fantasia, July 1941 [1, 3]

Lyle Monroe

"How dare you make such a suggestion!"

"How dare you make such a suggestion!"

The state physician doggedly stuck to his position. "I would not make it, sire, if your life were not at stake. There is no other surgeon in the Fatherland who can transplant a pituitary gland but Doctor Lans."

"You will operate!"

The medico shook his head. "You would die, Leader. My skill is not adequate. And unless the operation takes place at once, you will certainly die."

The Leader stormed about the apartment. He seemed about to give way to one of the girlish bursts of anger that even the inner state clique feared so much. Surprisingly he capitulated.

"Bring him here!" he ordered.

DOCTOR LANS FACED THE LEADER with inherent dignity, a dignity and presence that three years of "protective custody" had been unable to shake. The pallor and gauntness of the concentration camp lay upon him, but his race was used to oppression. "I see," he said. "Yes, I see...I can perform that operation. What are your terms?"

"Terms?" The Leader was aghast. "Terms, you filthy swine? You are being given a chance to redeem in part the sins of your race!"

The surgeon raised his brows. "Do you not think I know that you would not have sent for me had there been any other course available to you? Obviously, my services have become valuable."

"You'll do as you are told! You and your kind are lucky to be alive."

"Nevertheless I shall not operate without my fee."

"I said you were lucky to be alive--" The tone was an open threat.

Lans spread his hands. "Well--I am an old man..."

The Leader smiled. "True. But I am informed that you have a---a family...."

The surgeon moistened his lips. His Emma--they would hurt his Emma...and his little Rose. But he must be brave, as Emma would have him be. He was playing for high stakes--for all of them. "They cannot be worse off dead," he answered firmly, "than they are now."

It was many hours before the Leader was convinced that Lans could not be budged. He should have known--the surgeon had learned fortitude at his mother's breast.

"What is your fee?"

"A passport for myself and my family."

"Good riddance."

"My personal fortune restored to me--"

"Very well."

"--to be paid in gold before I operate!"

The Leader started to object automatically, then checked himself quickly. Let the presumptuous fool think so! It could be corrected after the operation.

"And the operation to take place in a hospital on foreign soil."

"Preposterous."

"I must insist."

"You do not trust me?"

Lans stared straight back into his eyes, without replying. The Leader struck him, hard, across the mouth. The surgeon made no effort to avoid the blow, but took it, with no change of expression."

"YOU ARE WILLING TO GO THROUGH WITH IT, SAMUEL?" The younger man looked at Doctor Lans without fear as he answered,

"Certainly, Doctor."

"I cannot guarantee that you will recover. The Leader's pituitary gland is diseased; when I exchange it for your healthy one your younger one may not be able to stand up under it--that is the chance you take. Besides--a complete transplanting has never been done before."

"I know it--but I'm out of the condentration camp!"

"Yes. Yes, that is true. And if you do recover, you are free. And I will attend you myself, until you are well enough to travel."

Samuel smiled. "It will be a positive joy to be sick in a country where there are no concentration camps!"

"Very well, then. Let us commence."

They returned to the silent, nervous group at the other end of the room. Grimly the money was counted out, every penny that the famous surgeon had laid claim to before the Leader had decided that men of his religion had no need for money. Lans placed half the gold in a money belt and strapped it about his waist. His wife concealed the other half somewhere about her ample person.

IT WAS AN hour and twenty minutes later that Lans put down the last instrument, nodded to the surgeons assisting him, and commenced to strip off operating gloves. He took one last look at his two patients before he left the room. They were anonymous under the sterile gowns and dressings. Had he not known, he could not have guessed dictator from oppressed. Come to think of it, with the exchange of those two tiny glands there was something of the dictator in his victim and something of the victim in the dictator.

DOCTOR LANS RETURNED TO THE hospital later in the day, after seeing his wife and daughter safely settled in a first class hotel. It was an extravagence, in view of his uncertain prospects as a refugee, but they had enjoyed no luxuries for years back there--he didn't consider it his home country--and it was justified this once.

He inquired at the office of the hospital for his second patient. The clerk looked puzzled. "But he is not here...."

"Not here?"

"Why, no. He was moved at the same time as His Excellency--back to your country."

Lans did not argue. The trick was obvious; it was too late to do anything for poor Samuel. He thanked his God that he had had the foresight to place himself and his family beyond the reach of such brutal injustice before operating. He thanked the clerk and left.

THE LEADER RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS AT LAST. His brain was confused--then he recalled the events before he had gone to sleep. The operation--it was over! And he was alive! He had never admitted to anyone how terribly frightened he had been at the prospect. But he had lived--he had lived! He groped around for the bellcord, and failing to find it, gradually forced his eyes to focus on the room. What outrageous nonsense was this? This was no sort of room for the Leader to convalesce in. He took in the dirty white-washed ceiling, and the bare wooden floor with distaste. And the bed! It was no more than a cot!

He shouted. Someone came in, a man wearing a uniform of a trooper in his favorite corps. He started to give him the tongue-lashing of his life, before having him arrested, But he was cut short.

"Cut out the racket, you unholy pig!"

At first he was too astounded to answer, then he shrieked, "Stand at attention when you address the Leader! Salute!"

The trooper looked dumbfounded at the sick man -- so totally different in appearance from the Leader, then guffawed. He stepped to the cot, struck a pose with his right arm raised in salute. He carried a rubber truncheon in it. "Hail to out Leader!" he shouted, and brought the arm down smartly. The truncheon crashed into the sick man's cheek bone.

Another trooper came in to see what the noise was, while the first was still laughing at his witicism. "What's up, Jon? Say, you'd better not handle that monkey too rough--he's still carried on the hospital list." He glanced casually at the bloody face.

"Him? Didn't you know?" Jon pulled him to one side and whispered.

The second man's eyes widened; he grinned. "So? They don't want him to get well, eh? Well, I could use a little exercise this morning--"

"Let's get Fats," the other suggested. "He's always so very amusing with his ideas."

"Good idea." He stepped to the door and bellowed, "Hey, Fats!"

They didn't really start in on him until Fats was there to help.

THE END

Futuria Fantasia (1, 4)

NINEVAH

They say the bittern and the cormorant
Have nested in the upper lintels there.
The wind builds flowers of dust upon the air,
Lifting and falling, slow and hesitant.
Within the crumbling temples beasts have laired;
Eyeless the windows, broken the terraces;
No laughter breaks the silence. The palaces
Are weathered and the cedar work is bared.

If this be glory's wage, then let me trust
The fragile things that are not built of might,
The lovely things that leave no trace when gone:
The rose that swiftly turns into the dust,
Beauty that blazed a moment---Or a night
Of golden stars forgotten with the dawn.

J. E. Kelleam

Futuria Fantasia (1, 4)