



ROSEBUD

fandom's intimate fanzine

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Little of the find hand of the editor can be found in this issue beyond the choice of material, because the fine hand of the editor is extremely busy in other puddings. She was recently promoted to Seaman first-class and transferred to another job at another barracks in Washington, leaving far less time for such hobbies as this. Hence the lack of the usual cover. Friend Wiedenbeck long ago failed to produce the necessary new ones, as promised, and Mari had not the time to reproduce an old one, as has been done in the past.

Come midsummer and an expected discharge, mayhap things'll pick up in the horticultrual department. Until then, your letters of comment on this issue and fanzines received by exchange will be forwarded to her. Unless you want to send them direct: Mari Wheeler, Sl/c, Room 210, Spar Barracks (Tampa Hall), 9th and Independence Ave., SW., Washington, 4, D.C.

-Bob Tucker

THE PASSING OF THE FIRST SLAN SHACK

(complete with diagrams showing where the body was found)

by The Mumbler

They tossed a last stray copy of "The Outsider" into a packing box, jammed a beautiful Paul original down on top of it to serve as a lid, and Wiedenbeck jumped atop the lid to hold it down while Ashley unwound a ball of twine and proceeded to make the box snug and secure for its long journey to Los Angeles. When the twine-trick was finished Liebscher found a pair of scissors and cut loose Wiedenbeck's feet, which somehow had become tightly tied to the lid.

The truckmen threw the box into their truck and were away. The house was empty; the first Slan Shack was but a hollow memory and already the new owner was setting up his apparatus preparatory to fumigating the establishment. With a soft sigh the northwest corner of the house collapsed, exposing a horde of white termites carrying copies of Captain Future about with them as they worked. The ex-Slan Shackers, standing on the front sidewalk regarding the house with expressions of acute homesickness, broke into a run. Ashley was heard to exclaim over his shoulder that the new owner might express a desire for a refund, and that they, the runners, had better hurry or they'd miss the train.

They weren't traveling by rail of course, and consequently were halfway to Joliet, Illinois by the time the new owner had exhausted his patience and had given up searching all departing trains. Our happy, tired little band of tourists arrived in Joliet late Friday night, Sept. 7th, and fortified themselves for the Chicago ordeal to come on the morrow. When the bottle was empty everyone went to bed.

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Not stopping off to see them, altho my train passed thru Joliet, I went to Chicago Friday afternoon to spend the day sponging off "my old friend" Erle Korshak, repaying him as it were for the innumerable times he sponged me. In true fashion, my host immediately borrowed my luggage. Close and direct questioning revealed that he needed the said luggage to lend an aura of respectability to an undertaking of his.

Further questioning revealed that he had reserved a room for the evening at a swank lakeside hotel and the luggage would serve to avert the suspicious questions of the hotel staff. This puzzled me, for I had been told I was to stay at his apartment that evening; not only that, but I had my own reservations for another hotel the next day. He assured me that all was as had been previously arranged, but, with the usage of some quaint phrasing, suggested I keep my mouth shut and try not to be so dumb. He needed the luggage and that was that. I looked over his shoulder and said, "Oh."

As an added note of interest, let me remark that my raincoat was in the suitcase Erle borrowed, and subsequently I was rained on three times before it was returned. After that the sun shone brightly.

Friday evening Erle's parents wined and dined me on a dozen new, exotic dishes I had never before tasted, and later we journeyed downtown for our "dates". Erle had the date--I was merely an alibi. I left him near the lakeside hotel and wandered west, soon finding myself in a den of evil iniquity on south State St. I had of course wandered in for a refreshing bottle of soda pop but the bartender and a sly young woman soon changed my mind. The sly young woman was a "hostess" in the employ of the den of evil iniquity and it was her duty to cadge drinks from innocents such as myself. She slid up to me on my blind side, nestled her lactic endowments against my arm, and gave a creditable(!) imitation of a woman dancing a slow, swaying waltz all by herself. My blood pounding madly in my temples, I abandoned the idea of soda pop.

She asked me in a low, soothing voice to buy her a drink, honey. Until now I hadn't spoken a word, so for the sheer hell of it I pretended to be deaf and dumb to see what would happen. I pointed to my ears and mouth with a circling motion of my fingers, but she must have misinterpreted me. She asked me again, this time adding a delightful, provocative twist to the . . ah, waltz. I prepared to stay the night.

The bartender got wise in short order. He looked at me and at the girl, and said aloud: "The guy's a dummy." I almost forgot myself and said that's right. Whipping out a pencil and old envelope, I ordered a rum-and-coke. The bartender read it, nodded his head, and asked the cadger what she wanted. Her exact words were "The same old crap, Hal." The same old crap proved to be a shot of brown liquid out of a whiskey bottle; the liquid undoubtedly being colored water. Having forked over one dollar for the privilege of swallowing a thin rum-and-coke and giving a thirsty girl a drink of water, I decided to vacate. The girl had tossed down her drink and was looking at me in an expectant manner. I climbed off the stool, buttoned my coat, walked to the door, saw the exit was clear, and turned around. The girl was watching me. I said: "So long, babe," and beat it the hell out of there.

I spent the next several hours in the safe darkness of a theatre, figuring they would never find me there. I don't know to this day what kind of a theatre it was, but about every ten minutes a girl would walk across the stage and begin taking off her clothes. Soldiers and sailors in the audience would lewdly encourage her. In between these undressing routines a pair of "comics" would appear to convulse us with hilarious, original jokes and skits, the common denominator of which apparently being some female's natural accoutrements. Three complete shows and some hours later I left, having committed to memory the entire topographical display of a bronzed, undulatory blonde with the most unusual suntan I have ever examined.

My host's mother let me in, after my trying for five minutes to fit the key in the lock without success. It was a very thin rum. She asked me what had happened to Erle. I mumbled something satisfying and collapsed on the bed. About an hour before sunrise, just as I was getting to sleep, Erle tottered in and collapsed on the bed. I fixed an accusing eye on him and asked if he had been drinking. He said no.

He then launched into a long, detailed account of the evening and I must admit I found certain parts of it interesting indeed.

A half-hour before sunrise Erle stopped talking and went to sleep, and I got up. It was then Saturday morning and I was supposed to meet people. Mari Beth's train came in at 7:25 according to a time-table. I arrived at the station at 7:30 and the train did likewise at 8:05. I said hello, she said hello, and we ate breakfast. We found a cab, I sang out the name of a hotel, the cab drove us two blocks, deposited us, and the driver stuck out his hand for fifty cents. I had already exposed myself and couldn't play deaf and dumb.

The Slan Shackers were due in from Joliet just before noon, and consequently about two in the afternoon phoned to say they were in there rooms and waiting for us. As was another character, sitting on the bed staring at me. I returned the stare, politely of course.

"Who's that?" we both chorused. I was delighted to learn he was Art Saha of the Swedish state, enroute from L.A. to N.Y. He in turn was overwhelmed to learn I was Bob Tucker of the Unconscious state. We whipped out our autograph books, fighting for the privilege of being the first to get the other's signature on a blank check. Saha and Mari Beth swapped sea yarns, each having salt water in common. He has sailed merchant freighters to the South Pacific, she rowed longboats in bootcamp. Slapping the encrusted salt from our clothes, we dined.

Then, a book safari, of which little need be mentioned here except that Liebscher was always tricking Ashley by slipping away from us to reach the bargain counters first. During the afternoon we first lost Ashley altogether, somewhere in the Loop, and later lost Liebscher in a bookstore. Tired but happy, our depleted little band returned to the hotel to discover: Ashley had hired a guide to bring him back, Erle Korshak had returned my luggage, and that sometime during the afternoon our number had been increased by Chicago's own Frankie Robinson and Elsie Janda. So we ate again. If in doubt--eat!

After eating, what did we do? Aha---you'd never guess. We split into two groups, Korshak heading the one which wanted to see his vast, accumulated stock of books, magazines and fanzines; and with me heading the other, which wanted to go book-hunting. I led the way to a so. side bookstore which Ackerman and others may remember, it being the one we visited during the Chicon five years ago. Ashley found "The Gilded Man" which he said he would later sell to Liebscher at a profit.

Believing with some certainty that I went to bed sometime, somewhere that evening, but having no memory of such, let us pass over to a beautiful, sunshiny morning, September 9th.

- - -

Up at the crack of dawn! Collecting Mari Beth and Art Saha, to sally forth for breakfast-- only to learn that the meal wasn't served after 11 oclock. And then to the lake front where old salts Saha and Wheeler regaled me with many a gusty tale of the sea, the meanwhile pointing out the subtle differences between sailboats, cabin cruisers, and aircraft carriers anchored offshore. While the three of us were there alone we unburdened that which was nearest our hearts: gossip. Saha shredded Los Angeles and I did the honors for Battle Creek. Each will no doubt appreciate this publicity.

Upon our return to the hotel the telephone operator took it upon herself to scold me for being absent; she had grown tired of calling my room every few minutes. I said yes mam, humbly, and reported to the Battle Creekians, who were awaiting our return with mixed emotions. We set sail (that's the salt creeping in) for Robinson's place of abode, being the invited guests of his family for the day. By approximate count, 54 photographs were snapped in the back yard, of which at least 16 will be worthless because Korshak removed the back of the camera to examine the film and re-thread it. Sandwiched in between was a short jaunt to a drugstore for sodas. "Sandwiched," because 9 of us made the trip in a two-door sedan. A bystander was heard to remark it reminded him of the circus clown act in which 20 clowns emerge from a car. Walt Liebscher, uninhibited clown extraordinaire, immediately attempted to charge the man a dollar-ten for a bleacher seat, but was forcibly restrained. He contented himself with running into the drugstore first to examine the book counter before Ashley arrived.

Which reminds me: sometime during the week-end interval, Frankie found in our hotel lobby and swiped from under our combined noses, a copy of the Crawford/Los Angeles weird pocketbook. Search as we subsequently did, no other copy was located.

The return trip downtown Sunday night was a macabre experience. Frankie left us at an elevated junction, explaining that he must return to the Navy Pier by one route, while we were to take another guaranteed to deposit us at the hotel. We bid Frankie a fond goodbye early in the evening. He was at the Pier and sound asleep no doubt by the time we finally arrived at the hotel.

I must honestly report that I've lost count of the number of elevated trains we rode on that evening. Looking back in hazy retrospect it all seems a weird jumble of jumping on one car, jumping off at the next stop, crossing a bridge, jumping onto another to return to the exact place we had just left, crossing another bridge and going thru it all over again. Elsie Janda, our friend and guide, stoutly maintained we were merely making the required circuit of the Loop. Elsie Janda is my friend, I will not question her veracity. I will merely observe out loud that we passed a red-and-blue neon sign advertising "Halliday Wholesale Dealers---Novelties and Stamps" four times. On the last trip the growing monotony of the voyage was broken by Liebscher amusing passengers with finger tricks, and by sailor Saha disagreeing with the conductor over what should be done with a protruding handle which opened and closed the car door. The conductor, as he had done for years past in his appointed rounds, twisted the handle and opened the door as the car neared a station. Mr Saha at once fell against it and closed the door again. The conductor suggested Mr Saha get the hell off the rear platform where he had no business being. Mr Saha informed the conductor he must trod the rear platform if he wished to alight from the speeding vehicle, as indeed he wished to do. The conductor opened the door and gestured wordlessly. Mr Saha alighted, the rest of us trooping after. The door banged violently behind us.

As guaranteed, we had at last arrived at the hotel, only two hours after leaving the Robinson abode. (45 minutes by direct routing.)

(concluded on page 11)

NOSTALGIC FANTASY

by

James R. Gray

It was night; a frost-blanket covered the earth, and the cold, old stars looked down from above. I sat before a comfortable fire and looked thru a stack of second-hand magazines I'd just received. There were some old Argosies: I sighed with my memories when I saw William Grey Beyer's "Minions of the Moon". And I got a thrill once more when I re-read: "By public command-- the story that the critics hailed as one of the ten great classics of imaginative fiction", Merritt's immortal "The Ship of Ishtar".

There were eleven Unknowns in my stack of magazines. As I turned the pages the grand old stories marched before my eyes: DeCamp's "Soloman's Stone", Bok's "The Sorcerer's Ship", Bester's "Hell is Forever", Van Vogt's "The Book of Ptath", and that honey by Fritz Lieber, Jr. --- "Conjure Wife".

Suddenly I heard a noise; I looked up, and there stood a ghost. I supposed it was a ghost--I could see thru it. It didn't scare me, somehow it had a very familiar look.

"W-w-who are you?" I stammered.

The shade grinned, pleasantly, and sat down across from me. Very casually it picked up a magazine and thumbed the pages.

"Nothing like this where I come from," it remarked ruefully.

I stared at him blankly.

It...he...chuckled. "Have you guessing, haven't I?" He picked up another magazine. "You've got something here mister. We don't have fantasy stories in my world."

"And that is--where?" I questioned.

"Look at me closely. Don't tell me you fail to recognize me!"

I half understood, gulped, and stammered: "I don't believe you!"

He laughed. "Nevertheless it is true. I am you, but not as you are now. I'm what you would have been under other circumstances. I'm from a different time stream. In my world a religious fanatic seized control of the government in 1910, after a bloody civil war. He's been our tyrant ever since. No movies, no radios, no books or magazines with fiction."

I objected. "If what you say is true, how did you get here?"

"My real body isn't here. I've learned to project my mental self. It requires a tremendous amount on concentration, incidentally. I doubt if you could do it."

"I don't want to go to your world-- but are there any other time streams?"

"Lots of them. But to the point, my time is short. This is the one and only visit I shall be able to make to your world. It takes too much mental force. I can stay twelve hours and in that time, using the concentration I've developed, I can read about ten stories. You may do me a favor: choose the ten best fantasy stories ever written---and then go away. Let me read them."

I sat there with my mouth open and looked at him. I'd often thot, in a hazy sort of way, approximately what stories I'd include if ever I decided to compile a list of the ten best. I think every fan has done that at one time or another. But now---? What if I made a mistake? So much depended upon my decision. Of all the fine fantasies that had been written, how could I possible choose ten and say "these are the best" ?

"Well," I began hesitantly, "I can only give you my opinions...."

He grinned wryly. "Your opinions are my opinions." He snapped his shady fingers. "Come on, get busy."

I relaxed a bit. "Well-- I'd advise you to begin with "Slan". And then read that bitter, powerful story of Hubbard's--"Final Blackout". Here, I'll pile them up for you. Begin at the top. Here's one you wont want to miss: a complete, representitive picture of fantasy, Weinbaum's enthralling "The Black Flame". And don't forget "The Ship of Ishtar" .

He picked up the first installment of "Slan". "Why do you like to read fantasy," he asked. "You know that 90 percent of it is trash..."

"Perhaps, but consider the thrill I get from the other 10 percent. Here, include the "Darkness and Dawn" trilogy. You ordinarily begin by briefing the first few pages. It's just another story. And then you realize it sounds like something special. And when you finish you know U have found another classic. That makes it all worthwhile."

I placed "Sinister Barrier" and "Odd John" on the table. "It is one story in a thousand," I continued, "that makes you proud you're a fan."

He was already swiftly reading. "I know what you mean. I'll never forget this night. Go away and leave me alone."

"You should include something by Doc Smith---here's one of his top stories, "The Grey Lensman". I hesitated long over the next choice and finally selected "Universe" and "Common Sense". "We'll count these a s one story," I told him, "you'll see why when you read them."

I added "Dwellers in the Mirage". "There you are," I said, " enjoy yourself. I'm going to bed."

He was absorbed in "Final Blackout" and didn't answer. I left him there. I hope I chose the right stories for my visitor.

MR ZZYX, THE MAN FROM MARS
a book review by h.p. pong

("Shuddering Castle" by William Fawley; Green Circle Books, N.Y.

Mr Zzyx is the man from Mars, folks. He arrived one night during a terrific meteor shower in a smelly old rocket ship. It was smelly, too, for as the doddering scientist explains, Mr Zzyx more than somewhat smelled it up during his 14 day journey thru space. Sanitation implements were sadly lacking, as well as other comforts.

Mr Zzyx himself appears slightly dopey but this is due to the foul air of his two-week trip; a bottle of wine and huge snorts of good old Earth ozone soon pep him up. Mr Zzyx also appears a bit strange to the Earthmen, but then he isn't a true Martian, he is a man-ape from the dense, lush jungles of that planet. That's what the book said.

A manuscript found in the ship, when deciphered, tells a long tale of life and war on Mars, war between the ape-like brutes such as Zzyx who dwell in the thick jungles, and the intelligent white men who live deep in the natural canyons we thought were canals. It seems that the white men have learned to speak English by listening to our radio programs, and as a token of brotherly love they have sent us the rocket ship and its unwilling passenger, Mr Zzyx, a captured man-ape.

Author Fawley's scientific interpolations, done in the manner of stf authors of a decade ago, are scintillating jewels of knowledge and surprises. One learns, for instance, that a meteor shower occurred in which meteors the size of the moon's diameter fell in great numbers, unfortunately killing a few people. And that while many of our radio broadcasts bounce back from the moon, others have reached Mars and permitted the Martians to learn our languages, customs, habits, games and dances. Baseball is played on Mars. The Martians wisely chose English as the best language to communicate in. The temperatures on the planet sometimes rise so high one can freeze to death. Huge ants, insects, and prehistoric monsters and birds inhabit its jungles. And stuff.

The book is an unintended farce and anyone with even the smallest sense of humor will derive great joy from discovering the depth of ignorance of the author. To be sure, the ending explains-away the story in the expected manner, but it does not explain the scientific mistakes committed by the author. Despite the turn of plot, revealing what the reader has long suspected, the scientific "facts" stated by the author (thru the mouth of one character or another) stand apart from the yarn.

The book jacket informs us that the author has written another novel entitled "Virginity". The critical reader can't help but wonder if the author's knowledge of same parallels his grasp (?) of science.

VISITOR TO N'YAWK

by Ken Krueger

If you ever go to New York the chances are you will look for 205 east 42nd St. It was the first thing I did. It was quite a search; but if you want to find it, for Shuggoth's sake don't try walking from the vicinity of Times Square. I did, and my dogs barked all night. It is a small building, a mere 20 floors, and I strolled into the lobby with a satisfied smirk befitting a conquering hero. The directory said the top floor was the one I wanted, and after that I was on my own.

An awfully cute girl was piloting the elevator. "Nice day," said I, with an eye to opening the conversation.

"Yeah," she said.

"Might rain later on," I parried.

"Yeah," she said.

"Work hard on this job?" I inquired.

"Yeah," she said.

"I'm inna Army," I informed her. "I never work."

"Yeah?" she said.

"That's right. I saw an ad in the paper the other day. It said to join the Army---why work for a living? So I did. And I don't."

"Yeah," she said.

"What are you stopping for? Oh, this is my floor, huh?"

"Yeah," she said.

I exited, feeling an excited lift. I had successfully engaged a native N'Yawker in conversation and hadn't come off a second best. That proved that all New Yorkers weren't book dealers at heart. Just outside the elevator I met Bob Brisson, by previous arrangement. He draws nifty rocket ships by the score. Not because he likes to draw rocket ships but because I continue pester him to do so. He has an engaging mind and prefers to draw nudes. He lives in Queens but thinks like a Los Angelesite. Gallantly we bowed each other thru the door of Popular Publications.

I walked up to the information window and asked the two lovely ladies: "Mary Gnaedinger . . . or Damon Knight?"

Damon's name threw them into hysterics. One giggled nervously at me.

"Didja hear that Mabel? He asked for Damon!"

"Gee-- we had fun when Damon was here."

"We sure did -- but you didn't dare turn your back to him!"

"Now look---" I broke in. "Mary Gnaedinger---please."

"Wait a minnit," the phone girl said. She plugged in, and fell to discussing Damon with the other girl. I wandered away, dispiritedly.

A door opened and a rather attractive, small brunette entered. She walked up to Brisson, smiled, and asked: "Are you Mr. Krueger?"

Brisson shrieked. I felled him with a withering glance. "That's me, mam," I informed her. "Pvt. Kenneth James Krueger, U.S. Army, Company N, Section D, W.D.P.C., Fort Devens, Massachusetts, serial number 42172648, at your pleasure."

"My!" she smiled. "Quite a little soldier, aren't you?"

We sat down. Brisson was doodling on the wall. We ignored him. He ignored us. It was just as well. My conversation was enlightening.

I learned that Finlay was a corporal and saw action on Okinawa. He was soon scheduled to be discharged and would doubtless be illustrating fantasy again. Our talk veered to Stern Stevens, or 'Lawrence' as he is more popularly known. We discussed his work on "The Ancient Alan" and Miss Gnaedinger gave me one of his originals from that story. For that favor I wanted to kiss her feet but because she had shoes on I contented myself by licking her hand. She fed me some candy. She advised me that FFM was soon to be a monthly publication; a far cry from the days when it appeared three times a year.

We left, and rang for the elevator. A new girl was on duty.

"Nice day," I opened the conversation.

"Nah, its colder than hell."

"But it might get warmer . . ."

"You're nuts . . . it'll freeze before night."

I tried a new tact. "Work hard on this job?"

"Whaddya think this is, play?"

"I'm inna Army."

"I aint blind."

"My buddy here's inna Army, too."

"All right, all right, lemme see your T.S. card. I'll punch it."

On that snappy rejoinder we lapsed into silence. That is, she and I did. Buddy Brisson was not as discreet.

"Crabby bitch," he said distinctly.

She snatched to the elevator official in the lobby. He booted us out the door, but once outside he apologized.

"Sorry, fella's, but I hadda save face. She is crabby."

Recommended reading: "The Time Stream" by John Taine. Published in a handsome volume at three dollars by the Buffalo Book Company, at 271 Doyle Ave., Providence, 6, Rhode Island. It is to be hoped that the novels by Smith, Campbell and van Vogt, advertised as coming, will appear before all the Taine novels are brought out. (BT)

The Shackers discovered their train left in 25 minutes. I think they successfully made it; at least we found nothing in the station to indicate someone had been left behind. We retired to my room ---"we" being Saha, Wheeler, Janda and myself, to talk about them. No end of interesting dirt was dug up and rehashed.

- - -

Monday morning, bright and fair, and the same breakfast reception we had met the day before. Janda had long since departed for home and employment. The Slan Shackers would be well on their way to Omaha and the pre-arranged meeting with Ollie Saari, the combined forces then to set out on a grand tour of the west before heading for L.A. In a few hours Saha would be boarding the train for New York and that den of evil iniquity, the Futurian stronghold. Korshak had returned to Miami.

Gone indeed was the once-glorious mecca of midwest fandom. No more all - night poker games, no more hularious days and nights, no more blind dates and back - rubs, no more twenty-fans-at-a-meal-all talking-at-once, no more Michicons, no more sitting up all night to see who would come in on the five-oclock train, no more pawing thru Weidenbeck's nekkid pictures, no more Liebscher auctions, no more Ashley harangues on things scientific, no more plotting to run somebody out of fandom, no more a lot of things one comes to expect at Battle Creek.

Slan Shack had passed into history.

Monday morning we toured the Art Museum where we critically studied Picasso's blue period, and realized how little times have changed.

Dear Mari:

"Somehow you and Bob always manage to present a contents that is amazingly high in entertainment value. How you do it, I can't imagine. I suspect that the magic of your names ((polite snicker- BT)) gets you material that otherwise would remain unwritten.

Even so, there is one small thing that irks me a little. It is Bob's habit of presenting his humor in a form that is based upon personal incidents of which I have no previous knowledge.

I suspect the hand of Pong's father in the unsigned "All This And No Heaven." ((wrong guess, chum. -BT)) It reads so much like the "top fan burps and everybody faints" opus in a recent LeZ. And the word "doted" appears, a favorite of Roberts. ((You dote say! -BT))

*Art Schnert.

Sub-editor's note: the appearance of this letter here will no doubt surprise both writer Schnert and absentee editor Wheeler. It was written only fourteen months ago. I just found it in the hell-box. Come again, Art.

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