

S O N O F T H E W S F A J O U R N A L

WSFA JOURNAL Supplement: Prozine Review Issue #5 - 3rd June 1972 Issue (#57)
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MAGAZINARAMA (cont. from page 10; sorry for over-run; we sort of miscalculated!):
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Film Reviews, by Baird Searles (Z.P.G., late-TV films; also, couple of quick
book notices); Book Reviews, by James Blish (Pstalomate, by Lester del Rey; The
Third Ear, by Curt Siodmak; Hell House, by Richard Matheson; The Lathe of Heaven,
by Ursula K. LeGuin; Peregrine: Primus, by Avram Davidson; Group Feast, by Josco-
phone Saxton). Cover by Ron Walotsky; no interior illos. 144 pp., 4 covers.

In Brief --

The publishing emergency mentioned in last two SOTWJ's is still with us; we
have received the TWJ-80 stencils back from Gary Labowitz, who may be able to
publish the entire 'zine if we can get the missing artwork from Jack Chalkor in
time to get the stencils back to Gary NLT 2nd week of July. Otherwise...#81 is
almost certain to make it out before #80.... The mimeo is still holding up (at
least, it is if you receive this by July 4), but any day now.... ~~###~~ If mimeo
holds up, hope to catch up with SOTWJ by end of July, and then cover all 'zines,
books, fanzines, etc. received during one month in 1st SOTWJ to come out during
following month. Sort of a record of monthly publishing activity....

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THE WSFA JOURNAL (Supplement)

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TO:

FIRST CLASS MAIL

FIRST CLASS MAIL

(dissecting)
THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Operational Procedures

Supervised by

Richard Delap

Nearly all of the magazines this period present an impressive appearance on the news-stands because of bright and eye-catching covers, and I can't think of a better way to pry impulse money from those tight-clenched fists of potential buyers. But with the contents riding very low in nearly every magazine, can the publishers depend on good sales in the months to follow?

Sometimes I get comments from readers that I judge the stories in the magazines too harshly, that I demand too much from plots and characters that are designed merely to entertain for a few minutes or hours, that I am prejudiced against certain types (i.e., hard science) of stories, and that I shouldn't take my criticism too seriously.

But I'll answer these comments here: (1) one can never demand too much from plots or characters if one wants a story that doesn't, as Damon Knight phrases it, "pass through him like beets through a baby"; (2) I admit that I am partial to sociological/psychological sf, but I have nothing against "hard" science as long as I am not forced to wade through monotonous lectures and half-assed double talk, as is too often the case; (3) I am never serious about my criticism after I've written it, and the reader should never be serious about it after he's read it; (4) and, if I were any less harsh towards the magazines I review I'd be wasting everybody's time (I mean, even more than I already am).

So if you don't agree with what I have to say, stop sitting there in the corner grumbling and penning me curt and slightly discourteous postcards. Stand up and speak your mind! But don't tell me I'm wrong. Tell me why I'm wrong! The foregoing is not addressed to authors who should shut up and just keep writing, especially the ones who write awful, horrendous, unreadable stories. With time and practice you too can work up to mediocre stuff, and, who knows, would I put a limit on what an individual can achieve in time? Why, I think I once even read a story by Van Vogt that made some sense....

Magazines for SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1971AMAZING STORIES and FANTASTIC:

White continues to get some of the top writers' latest novels, which fill out a good half of each magazine and seem to be proving quite popular, but the short fiction still remains at an abominably low level and shows little sign of becoming any better. I find most of my interest in recent issues centering around the nonfiction articles by de Camp, Panshin, and occasionally Bonford, but I have yet to see the day when I can become as enthusiastic about these magazines as many have been. White offers a level-headed assessment of the recent SST flap in his AMAZING editorial, and though I'm not sure I agree with him it marks a nice change from his usual run of "silly-goose nonsense" (phraseology courtesy Mr. White). Better short fiction and I promise I'll stop complaining.

AMAZING STORIES -- September:

Serial:

The Second Trip (conclusion) -- Robert Silverberg.

Short Stories:

What Time Do You Call This? -- Bob Shaw.

It's a habit-forming, I suppose, writing these crumbs of nonsense that are sometimes funny enough for a laugh or two but noticeably unmemorable. This one is good for a very small chuckle at the beginning when a crook grabs his chance to commit a robbery in an alternate world, but the climax loses all punch by being so illogical that it simply doesn't make sense. Blah!

Junk Patrol -- Tod White.

There is no way for White to excuse the pointless vulgarity in this story in which it has no purpose. The characters are stereotypes from which four-letter expletives come out as incongruously as they would in a Superman comic strip, and it detracts from rather than adds to the drama of maintaining life on and above the moon. Such incredible foolishness destroys whatever response might be elicited from the concluding (but arbitrary) emergency in space. Mindless.

Myrra -- David Anthony Kraft.

The "poignant vignette" turns out to be a clumsily-written, sloppy and mawkish item about a young girl who is drawn to the beauty of a park's flowers, in a world implied to have little natural beauty left. She's tempted to pick one, does so, and pays the price. Silly girl just didn't have no smarts at all....

Reprint:

The Living Mist (1940) -- Ralph Milne Farley.

Science:

Planet-Building for Fun and Prophet -- Greg Benford.

FANTASTIC -- October:

Serial:

The Dramaturges of Yan (part one) -- John Brunner.

Short Stories:

Shadow-Led -- Wilmar H. Shiras.

The second in a series of tales from Mrs. Tokkin is a disappointingly vague item about a young boy who walks in his sleep and is, as Tokkin reports, "led" by his shadow. I suppose the boy's mildly wild destruction on his nocturnal journeys is supposed to be symbolical or something, but there's not much effort put forth to clarify the matter and the story suffers accordingly. Doll for the End of the Day -- David R. Bunch.

There's a good and eerie mood to this fantasy about an old man with a blood-soaked doll, which he claims has the power to make people "ready for the graveyard", but the mood goes to waste when Bunch settles for the well-worn and suggests that it doesn't pay to be curious about strange doings. You muffed this one, Bunch.

How Eliot and Jeanie Became Parents -- Laurence Littenberg.

Littenberg continues his satire on present morality, sexuality, violence, apathy (and anything else you care to throw into the pot), and the damned thing does have some funny moments which almost dispel the numbing sense of overkill. Vat-born babies, delivered from zippered plasti-wombs, are both funny and tragic, but I really do wish the author could learn to distinguish that hair's-breadth excess that turns something good into something less than.

Reprint:

The Meteor Menace (1938) -- Arthur R. Tofte.

Articles:

Literary Swordsman and Sorcerers: Eldritch Yankoo Gentleman (conclusion) -- L. Sprague de Camp.

Science Fiction in Dimension: A New Paradigm (conclusion) -- Alexei Panshin.

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ANALOG:

The publication of two more Campbell editorials concerning pollution and ecology come posthumously. Mr. Campbell died this last July, after over thirty years as editor of this magazine, years that saw it change from ASTOUNDING to ANALOG, that saw stories ranging from the best to the worst in the field, and that saw a career grow to the point where Alva Rogers, in his retrospective on the magazine, could only state that Campbell was "one of the greatest (if not

the greatest) and, at times, most controversial editors in the history of science fiction." (A Requiem for Astounding, Advent, 1964) It is a point I cannot argue, in spite of my dissatisfaction with the magazine in recent years, for I am quite aware that Campbell is responsible for bringing to light enough classic stories to fill a good-sized number of volumes. My only regret is that I never had the chance to communicate with Campbell personally, to decide for myself whether his policies were purposefully geared to drive people like me up the wall in frustration and bafflement, or were unequivocally personal opinions, or were solely a sales angle (if the latter, it surely worked, for ANALOG remains the top-seller in the field). Whatever, it is most certainly farewell to an era.

SEPTEMBER:

Serial:

The Lion Game (conclusion) -- James H. Schmitz.

Novellettes:

Wheels Within Wheels -- F. Paul Wilson.

Wilson wisely avoids commonplace handling of his generally commonplace sf mystery. It involves a fifteen-year-old murder, a quick-witted young woman with a head for both business and truth, and the Vaneks, a group of aliens whose life-style and confusing motivations provide some necessary clues in clearing up the increasing political/economic mess to which all incidents are tied. The story's success relies almost completely with Wilson's technique, and a competent job it is, too, especially an early flashback sequence that is expertly introduced and sets the stage well for what follows. The only strong complaints I have are toward the general laxness in the suspense, a few unexplained loose ends, and a melodramatic epilogue. But the story still works reasonably well and obviously is to be part of a loosely-interconnected series. Good.

The Fine Print -- John T. Phillifent.

Another murder story, 'thos one with a question: is the murder really murder? The victim is a beautiful blonde woman shot by Rear Admiral Braid as she broke the restraints of the aliens bringing her into spaceport and ran toward the nearby humans. The title refers not only to the fine letter of the law but also to the fine and sometimes misunderstood letter of reality. It's really a silly story, and none too believable for all its detail; yet it's sort of a fun silly story, with more verve than one expects and more readability than this type usually displays. Ok of type.

Short Stories:

To Make a New Neanderthal -- W. Macfarlane.

De rigueur hardhat philosophy, Love It or Leave It, finds Macfarlane applying it as a base for a heartless, vulgar farce hinging on a supposition that the increase in pollution is the doing of a mysterious group known only as "the People". This might have been quite funny, with adroit and barbed satirical jabs aimed at both sides of an overexploited subject, but the author settles for the swine and ignores the pearls. Yech.

Knight Arrant -- Jack Wodhams.

When the peaceful human settlers of New Eden, dedicated to harmony and near-Utopian standards, are suddenly disrupted by a hateful and sadistic "renegade" searching for a mythical object he believes the settlers are hiding, New Eden becomes a living hell of torment and agony. The build-up is so pretentiously gross that the best one can hope for is a concluding orgy of obscene blood-lust. No such luck. Even our baser instincts are thwarted with simplistic and doubly-annoying moralizing. Awful.

Science:

Strong Poison 1 -- Carl A. Larson.

OCTOBER:

Serial:

Hierarchies (part one) -- John T. Phillifent.

Novelette:

The Golden Halls of Hell -- John Paul Henry.

On the brink of suicide, considering her life as a wife and mother as much a failure as her neglected talents in laboratory science, Felicity North suddenly finds herself the focus of a group of time-travellers, an abducted 17th-century Quaker, and an unknown future in which she is told she plays an important role. The story moves quickly, which helps to draw attention away from its more improbable moments--that is, if one can judge any of it very probable, which I don't--but there is too much dependence on the unknown values of the characters, none very well implied by the action presented here. Some good moments here and there, but not at all convincing.

Short Stories:

Moon Spore -- G.I. Morrison.

I sped through this one so fast that I was finished before I realized I wasn't at all sure I understood it. A second reading and I knew I wasn't sure. The spore of the title causes severe irrationality in those exposed to it, and as the symptoms spread from person to person, the author jumps around to hit them all while the story gets confusingly fragmented. If you can sort it out, you might like it, though I doubt it.

The Crier of Crystal -- Joseph Green.

Allan Odogaard, a "Conscience" in the Practical Philosopher Corps, returns once more to seek out possible intelligent life--this time on a world where life has a silicon rather than carbon base. The probable intelligence of Crystal's native plantlife is not enough drama, so Green seems to think (and rightly), but making the episode pivotal to the future of the P.P.C. simply isn't enough to heighten interest in these very thin proceedings.

Mr. Winthrop Projects -- Tak Hallus.

Poor Winthrop--he invents a way to sell products by creating a machine to implant suggestions of desire and resulting satisfaction in potential customers, then is immediately kidnapped by a crooked politician who wants to adjust the machine for election purposes. Of course it wouldn't be much of a story if Winthrop didn't wriggle his way out, but he wriggles out and it still isn't much of a story. Such is the fate of the uninspiringly inspired....

Motion Day at the Courthouse -- Ted Thomas.

Here we have a court case which hangs on the testimony of an Esper and the legality of that witness' observations. But Thomas stops short of any real or thoughtful speculation when he allows the court decision to be made without even the slightest mention of the moral ramifications and legal confusion which would result from current and often illogical laws. There is the tacit assumption that laws as they stand are perfect, and I dismiss the story because these ideas are too far-reaching to be tied up so easily in an already confused system.

Science:

Supernova -- Edward C. Walterscheid.

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FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION:

Not too much to say about the present issues of F&SF, since the magazine seems to be in a rather chaotic state of flux what with new layouts, typeface, and a mix of stories ranging very widely in quality. So I'm just biding time and wondering what the final result is going to be. These are the final issues at 60¢, with the editor promising the price jump will bring extra pages for more fiction, beginning with the one-month-delayed Anniversary issue. For the present, however, I'll readily admit I'm making excuses and hoping for something better soon, finding consistent satisfaction with Asimov's science columns and the fine book reviews at least. (You must understand, I'm not really hard to please--but what's so difficult about maintaining a standard of unvarying excellence month after month, year after year? Huh, what's so hard?)

SEPTEMBER:Novelettes:A Collector of Ambroses -- Arthur Jean Cox.

An uneven but often very funny tour de force, Cox's tale of modern-day collectors is in sympathy with the poor but desperate fan with overpowering urges to possess first-éditions, and is also a famishly gratifying hate-letter to the "dull...heartless...terrible people" who maneuver the collector's urge into huge profits for themselves. The best thing here is the witty and surprisingly realistic effect Cox delivers as his hero wanders through a bookstore crammed with priceless books, including "the complete Ambrose Bierce", while his imagination concocts a dozen or more fantastic theories about both Bierce and the store itself. And if the climax seems a bit gratuitous and less impressive than the pleasantry which proceeds it, it is not entirely destructive and will likely please the non-collectors bemused by the "in" humor.

A Walk on Toy -- Neal Barrett, Jr.

Mara, an "Earthie" woman, becomes a member of the Outworlder crew on an exploration ship, finding both her Earthbound background and the crew's hostility working against her. The Outworlders, molded into creatures with an ability to face the challenge of unknown worlds, sense the dangers Mara's naivete brings to their mission, and in return Mara suffers emotional dis-orientation at their rejection of her. This instability breaks loose on the planet Toy, a world of impeccable order which hides a chaotic secret, but this comes far too late to offset the clumsy lead-in tension Barrett tries to enforce with the phoney emotional reactions of Mara and the crew. Mara is by turns so weepy and fuzzy-headed then sharp-tongued and acid that she never develops into a reasonable personality and furstrates all attempts at drama. Fair.

Short Stories:Fit for a Dog -- Howard L. Myers.

A moral fable on (once more!) the dangers of apathy toward pollution. Myers makes the mistake of standing his conclusions on very boggy ground, as well as offering what has got to be one of the most ridiculous scenes in the history of sf, in which mutated, smog-breathing and intelligent dogs drag off a homosexual for food because they can "smell" that he lacks a female mate and is not of breeding stock. Jeez....

Underground -- Kit Reed.

The head negotiator flees the upcoming peace talks and takes refuge first in a subway of crushed and crushing humanity, then exits the coach when the train stops in mid-tunnel. His interior monologues are a moody reflection of his position and his humanity, and his final choice of where to stand is as motivationally vague as Reed can make it. It's hard to make personal decisions entirely self-impelled, I know, but it seems to be that fretting over the matter at length is not much good either.

Spacemen and Gypsies -- Michael Bishop.

Bishop, one of the most consistently interesting and imaginative of recent sf writers, never quite captures the correct plot thread to hold together his on-again/off-again bit of symbolism. There are some fine and balanced moments as he contrasts the lifestyle of the nomadic gypsies and modern astronauts, both managing very different types of survival on the moon, but finally the symbolic cross between fantasy and hard science proves too heavy for the pallid climax of double revenge.

Out of Sight -- B.L. Keller.

One is tempted to take this story as a statement of some sort--on divine guidance, man's inner purpose, whatever--and though it may be accepted within this framework, I would venture that Keller had no such purpose in mind. The prose is too direct and simple, too concerned with the straightforward facts about a small child who one day fades into complete, literal invisibility. The effects of this phenomenon on the child's parents, doctors, etc., have their

place in the effects on the child himself, who moves from dependence to independence to an unexpected and extremely satisfying combination of both. Don't miss this one.

Science:

Holes In the Head -- Isaac Asimov.

OCTOBER:

Novelettes:

The Autumn Land -- Clifford D. Simak.

The master of the pastoral mood once more puts this special talent to work--but with a surprising and effective difference. This time there is an effort to negate the sense of ease and comfort in "autumn land", a place where an out-of-work engineer finds himself after glimpsing a war-ravaged future and seeking escape in a hidden valley of childhood remembrance. But this near-empty world of autumn, with nights of continual full moon and days of endless, invariant tranquility, is revealed to be filled with shadows as frightening as those of a real but mad world. Simak only hints at explanations, but many readers like to supply their own details, anyway, for a moody piece such as this. good.

Living Wild -- Josephine Saxton.

Saxton has always displayed a talent for brain-twisting sf--not puzzle stories or mysteries exactly (though there is some of that in her work) but instead an ability to present something straightforwardly and with passion, then to turn it unexpectedly and with passion into something else, and something else again. Readers looking for action and adventure may find her work annoying, but even they may respond to this adventuresome tale of a woman who awakens one night to find her home a shambles, all the metal in the world taken by thieving invaders, humanity on the verge of becoming a mindless, destructive mob, and lions roaming the nearby land. The title explains the woman's ensuing actions (in more ways than one!) as Saxton craftily examines the "wildness" that lurks in us all. It's a thoughtful and exciting story that explores all sorts of tangential human pathways in its course and makes very fine reading.

Short Stories:

Thank God You're Alive -- Sandy Fisher.

Two men, trapped in a runaway repair pod from an orbiting observatory, find the effects of their close confinement playing havoc with their nerves and personalities--at least, with one of them recovering from a near-fatal accident while his companion assumes a Mother Hen role. A shame, then, that Fisher relies on shock so totally in the end...even black humor must have a consistent logic, which this story doesn't.

Ask and It May Be Given -- Wesley Ford Davis.

A wife progressively worries herself into headaches and a heavy dependence on liquor; her middle-aged husband moves into an over-deepening fascination with the underlying meaning of God and His Universe; and the author makes a confusing play at varied interpretation after several pages of mediocre dialogue and actions. Ho-hum.

The Smell of Death -- Dennis Etchison.

There are some subtle and effective psychological insights in this story of a desert-stranded reporter and his encounter with the owner of a roadside diner, most notably in a scene where the two fence with words to get at the base of a tragedy which lingers on in a haze of mystery and uncertainty. The climax, however, succumbs to Etchison's seeming inability to adhere to his opening sanity and expires in a trite stream of silly contrivances.

The True Believers -- Leo P. Kelley.

Kelley continues to improve his writing style but is still hung-up on fragile plots which fall apart under any close scrutiny. This one about a witch whose special potions are given much reliance by the local townspeople brings in a time machine at the halfway point to build to an obvious and slushily

sentimental ending about the reality which comes from a belief in fantasy. For GOOD HOUSEKEEPING maybe....

A Desert Place -- M.P. Brown.

A woman's marriage undergoes many hardships, most of them stemming from the fact that she cannot bear the lack of greenness on her husband's brown and barren ranch. Her desire to coax some greenery from the dry earth becomes a manic and disastrous obsession, all of which gets a trifle overblown in the buildup but still manages to eke out some effective moments.

Passage to Murdstone -- Ron Goulart.

The newest Jose Silvera story has that freewheeling freelance writer once more collecting a past-due fee (for ghosting, would you believe, a cookbook) while getting embroiled in a murder which involves a culinary expert, a porno moviemaker and his luscious star (who manages to be sexy even in polyethylene black lace), and the usual broad Goulartian humor. Sometimes funny, sometimes not, I don't think it's one of Goulart's better efforts.

Science:

Odds and Evens -- Isaac Asimov.

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GALAXY and IF:

I have never considered the late Willy Ley's columns as funny or readily readable as those of Asimov, but it's only recently that I've discovered how much I miss them and really enjoyed the few minutes of consistently entertaining reading they provided in each issue of GALAXY. They were especially welcome when the fiction was decidedly below par, as is the case in the current issue, and nary a moment of nonfiction to break the monotony. IF offers an occasional article, with the current de Camp piece bringing up a lot of puzzling questions, but the letter column has never been anything but dull and should have been dropped long ago as wasted space. Those magazines are again getting much too stuffy and conventional--I wish Jakobsson would get busy and Do Something!

GALAXY -- September-October:

Serial:

The Moon Children (part two) -- Jack Williamson.

Novelettes:

The Edge and the Mist -- Gordon Eklund.

A rather old-fashioned space adventure here, in which the various and expectedly varied crew members of a spaceship go beyond the edge of the galaxy and attempt to fight their way through the surrounding "Mist", a flaming shield which induces madness and usually death to those who dare to enter its unknown depths. The nicest thing about the tale is Eklund's ability to keep his characters dancing to a fast tune, fighting each other as well as their own inclinations to cowardice and foolhardiness, while hovering near imminent destruction. It's all a little too facile for much conviction but, as I said, it does move along at a rapid pace and should satisfy the action crowd.

Dazed -- Theodore Sturgeon.

I'm still trying to figure out what happened here--did the editor mistake subtlety for error and do some scrambling on his own? Did Sturgeon purposely leave his story looped around such errors? Or is this just prefabricated pap for pap-lovers? Whatever, I'm none too pleased with this juvenile concoction of time-travel, yinyang, and a welter of confused philosophies that is distressing because it displays the author's power to grab and hold the reader, even with the subject matter obviously sugar-coated for an audience already surfeited with such easily-swallowed snacks. From a new writer I'd dismiss it as unimportant trivia; from Sturgeon, I am both angered and baffled by what seems to be a tragic and inexplicable decline.

Sister Ships -- A. Bertram Chandler.

Commodore Grimes takes time out from his Space Navy duties to try his hand at a different kind of ship--i.e., an ocean vessel on the aptly-named waterworld,

Aquarius. He and his wife, Sonya, buzz through the usual plot of facing a problem and finding a fast answer (here involving an unusually high number of ship collisions), a pat excuse for Chandler to display his knowledge of ships and their history. Much too long-winded to be very exciting, but I guess it beats a dreary textbook if you're interested in this sort of thing. Routine.

Galilean Problem -- Duncan Lunan.

The editor and apparently some readers must find pleasure in Lunan's Interface series, simplifying space travel with a sky-disc through which ships can cross the universe instantly; but I can't maintain much interest in the repetitious nature of these space-operas, with Lunan sounding to me like a lackadaisical Larry Niven. This time the Interface crew gets trapped in the thick of the Jovian atmosphere, on the ice fields of Io, and in the diabolical (but, as always, ineffectual) plot of aliens. Yet Lunan spends so much time packing in info about Jupiter and extensive scientific folderol that his story is always forced to take a back seat. Too bad.

Short Story:

Why Johnny Can't Speed -- Alan Dean Foster.

Automobile insanity has engendered more than a few stories, ranging from Leiber's classic "X Marks the Pedwalk" to Ellison's raunchy "Dogfight on 101". Foster sadly finds the Ellison-mode more suited to his ideas...but then potato chip plots are easy, I suppose. This one starts with bitter sentiment as a family reacts to their son's death on the highway, but this is only an excuse to get down to the nitty-gritty, violence and revenge, all of it very puerile and wasteful. Poor.

IF -- September-October:

Short Novel:

The All-Together Planet -- Keith Laumer.

Retief's adventures on the planet Lumbaga are along the tried-and-true lines of all the previous Retief stories--preposterous shenanigans involving the ignorant natives (Lumbagans are individual organs which group together to form crazy-quilt creatures), the CDT vs. the pseudo-evil Groaci (both always battling for control of new areas), and a very heavy dose of farcical dialogue satirizing the duplicity and balls of Earthly diplomacy. Since the plots never vary much the entertainment value of these things is related to how strongly and for how long one can react with laughter to Laumer's hammerblow humor. Short doses I can stand, but nearly 70 pages of it is more than I imagine any but the most diehard fans can sit still for at one session, and is certainly more than I can take comfortably. Amusing in spots, but much, much too long and resultingly tiresome.

Novelette:

The Stainless Steel Rat Saves the World -- Harry Harrison.

With such a title as this one, who can be surprised at the conclusion of this hop-and-jump sf story. And with the indubitable Slippery Jim diGriz, master thief and the less-than-heroic hero of several Harrison stories, no one need fear any climactic bumble. But like the recent film adventures of James Bond, something is lost amidst the merry dialogue and constant action when the gimmicks of technology are used to assure last-second rescues and the plot--in which diGriz time-travels back to 1975 Earth to prevent the destruction of the future he inhabits--cribs its way through everything from Bond to Frankenstein. Very minor.

Short Stories:

To Kill a Venusian -- Irwin Ross.

With a few minor changes, this is an almost word-for-word plagiarism of Anthony Boucher's 1951 story, "Nine-Finger Jack". And since I don't review reprints, I'll only mention my surprise at the ease with which Ross pulled off this illegality, since the story is quite well-known (as well as a bit outdated). One Moment on the Sand -- Barry Weissman.

The post-holocaust tale still offers writers opportunity to concoct horrors of strange mutations and adjustment; but this version only offers a brief glimpse

of the world's inheritors, a sickly lot who carry on the tradition of prejudice, torment and hatred, and through ignorance destroy themselves along with the innocent. The message may be a good one but repetition has dulled its punch. Fair.

After the End and Before the Beginning -- William Rotsler.

Rotsler constructs an improbable future in which the survivors of an unknown catastrophe roam the hills and compartments of a world without open land or water, living as small tribes and raiding each other for women and food. These cavemen of the future have their days numbered, however, if one can believe the author's concluding suggestions that desire for knowledge and the love of a good woman will put things on the right path again. Anyone gullible enough to fall for such baseless optimism deserves to be misled....

Abyss of Tartarus -- Robert F. Young.

This sequel to "Starscape with Frieze of Dreams" (in Orbit 8) is more a continuation than a separate story. But Young fills in the essence of the first tale without reverting to a clumsy plot synopsis and makes his new story of Starfinder and the spacewhale readily clear to new readers. Starfinder here finds himself confronted by the female avengers of wrong, the Furies, and seemingly doomed to death in the blood of his own guilt. The classical elements are handled nicely and the story is well-written and impressive. I hope Young continues these yarns.

Science:

Death Comes to the Megafauna -- L. Sprague de Camp.

MAGAZINARAMA: Contents of Recent Proazines

THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION -- June, 1972 (Vol. 42, No. 6; whole # 253) -- Short Novel: "Son of the Morning", by Phyllis Gotlieb (cover story) ("... concerns, among other things, a couple of unusual aliens, specifically, two huge, crimson cats, who pay an unplanned visit to a 19th century Polish village"); Short Stories: "Variation of a Theme", by Curt Siodmak; "Affair with a Lonesome Monster", by Paul Walker ("a compelling account of a conflict among three aliens, not all of the extraterrestrial variety"); "A Hundred Miles Is Forever", by William D. Cottrell; "Tarzan of the Grapes", by Gene Wolfe ("the subtle and surprising account of a search for an 'ape man' who has been invented by the media"); "Sad Solarian Screenwriter Sam", by Frederik Pohl. Features: Cartoon, by Gahan Wilson; Index to Vol. 42; Science Article: "The Week Excuse", by Isaac Asimov; Film Reviews, by Baird Searles (Night of the Living Dead; The Orchid); Book Reviews, by James Blish (No One Goes There Now, by William H. Walling; Absolute Zero, by Ernest Tidyman; The Eclipse of Dawn, by Gordon Eklund; The Flying Sorcerers, by David Gerrold & Larry Niven; Universe Day, by K.M. O'Donnell; Sleepwalker's World, by Gordon R. Dickson). Cover by Ron Walotsky; no interior illus. 114 pp. 4 covers; digest-size; monthly. 75¢ (30p) ea.; \$8.50/yr. U.S., \$9/yr. Canada & Mexico, \$9.50/yr. elsewhere. From: Box 56, Cornwall, CT 06753. Published by Mercury Press, Inc. Edited by Edward L. Ferman.

July, 1972 (Vol. 43, #1; Whole # 254) -- Serial: "The Brave Free Men" (Part 1 of 2 parts), by Jack Vance (cover story) (second novel in Vance's "Durdane" trilogy (1st was "The Faceless Man", F&SF 2&3 '71)); Short Stories: "A Practical Invention", by Leonard Tushnet (about holography); "3-OK", by Ruth Berman ("about a couple of topical issues that have been half-buried..."); "For a While There, Herbert Marcuse, I Thought You Were Maybe Right About Alienation and Eros", by Robin Scott Wilson; "A Sense of the Future", by Stephen Barr ("poses one sticky problem about the matter of time travel"); "A New and Happy Woman", by Wayne Bongianni ("about quite a different kind of transplant operation"); "Shaffery Among the Immortals", by Frederick Pohl (about "an inept and melancholy astronomer who dreamed wild dreams of a discovery that would make his name famous and who, one day, quite by accident, succeeded..."). Features: Cartoon, by Gahan Wilson;

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