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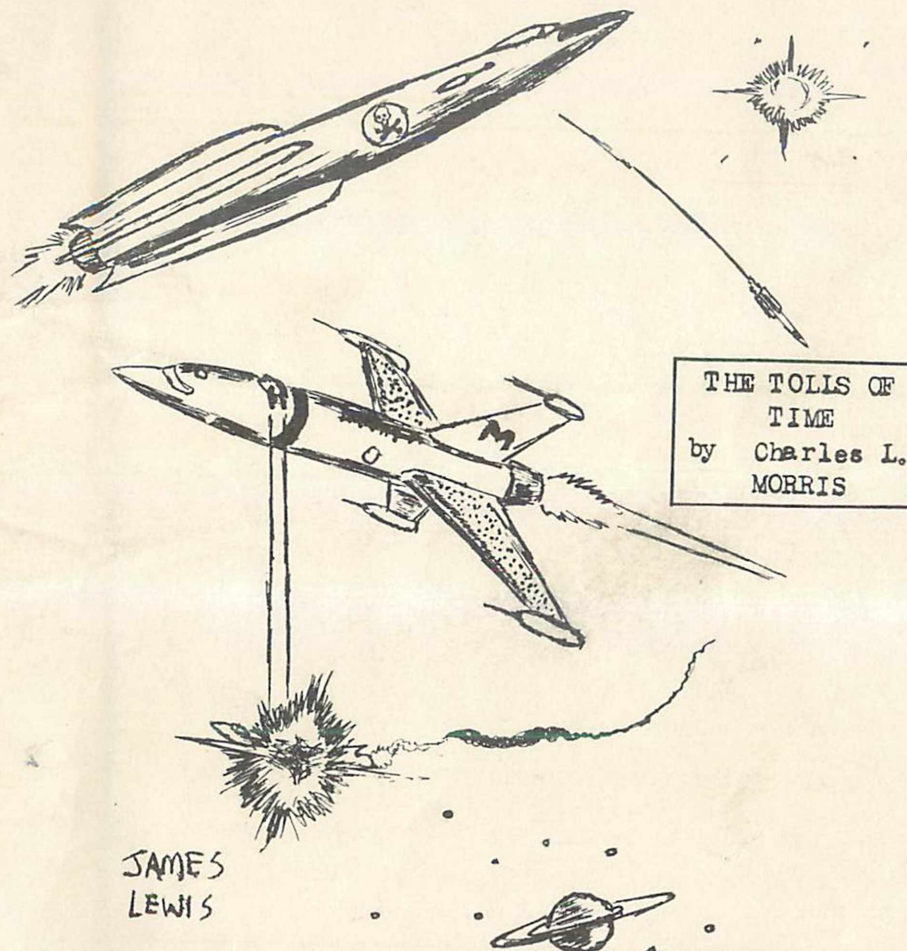
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# SPACESHIP

**volume two**      **number four**  
**APRIL, 1950**



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## E D I T O R I A L

Here we are again--for the eighth time! This is our first anniversary issue, though we don't celebrate it particularly. We've improved some, though since that 8-page first issue, which contained the beginnings of three serials and nothing else. In this issue, Charles Morris offers another of his beautiful stories; this time, it's about the ravages of time. Todd Conwell offers a slightly horrifying weird poem, August Argyll's serial really blossoms out to something in the next issue--he is just laying the groundwork now. And, we apologize for the ghastly format of last issue--strictly a one-issue experiment! Next Spaceship will be out in June, slightly limited edition (to save paper!) Oh, yes--we now take ads--5¢ for ten lines, a full page for a quarter. The beautiful cover on this issue is a "birthday present" from Clyde Hanback, editor of SPION MAGAZINE (see back cover). Oh, yes--this issue, as the last two, is distributed thru the FANTASY FUTURE PRESS ASSN. --bob and saul (E

PAGE THREE

# "ON A SILVER PLATTER...."

by AUGUST ARGYLL



DON'T be afraid.....



## ON A SILVER PLATTER BY ALBERT E. BROWN

Lieutenant Craig Melton was to be the first, the first to travel from Earth to the moon. It was a strange, awesome phrase as he rolled it over in his mind, but he could appreciate the full significance of it, was wholly and proudly aware of his unique position in the history of mankind.

For ages untold, humans had looked up at the star and reached out futile fingers to them, striving to pull them down from the skies and pick over them and probe them until their innermost secrets had been bared. And now at last Man was to realize that consuming aspiration, was on the very brink of his greatest triumph.

It had all come about, not thru the genius of one man, as many had predicted, but thru the combined efforts of an army of scientists, working with unlimited resources and the full backing of the government. That they were permitted to focus their energy and talents on the problem was largely result of the long period of peace that followed the Atomic War. Nations' appetites for conquest had been little dulled by the terrible struggle, but now there was no place to turn on Earth for the acquisition of power. Lands lay in ruins, both sides had won, both sides had lost, and the stand-off that resulted seemingly threatened to endure forever. So they turned to the stars..

Lieutenant Melton's country had won the initial phase of the race, by completing in unbelievable time the small, one-man ship he was to pilot to the moon and back, with a brief landing to "plant" the flag in triumphant and warning notice to all who followed. Another, larger ship was nearing readiness, and would later carry an expedition for a thorough exploration of the satellite. But Melton would be the first--it would be his name that would go ringing down through history as the man who first conquered space!

All these things ran through his mind now in a steady undercurrent as he stood in the open airlock of the VULCAN, looking down in outward calm

into the sea of faces ringing the vast field. The elaborate, patience-taking ceremonies had ended some minutes ago, and there remained only the taking of symbolically posed photographs, before Melton set out on the greatest adventure ever imagined by Man.

He smiled into the cameras automatically, dutifully, trying not to show his eagerness to be done with it and away. Melton would be the first to deny he shunned glory, but the greater part of his was yet to come, yet to be earned. There would be twice the acclaim upon his successful return, four times the number of reporters and radio announcers. And he would accept it all then as his just due. But the moon still waited...

At last there came that time when his watch showed five minutes until zero hour, and with an inner sigh of relief Melton stepped back from the lock. He pressed the button that swung the big disk heavily to on the final, tumultuous cheer of the crowd...and he was alone in a world of cold steel.

For a moment he stood, crushed by a sudden, strange feeling he was foredoomed to failure. That he should presume to unchain the planets, challenge the very cosmos-- Solitude's getting me already, he thought wryly. Keeping up morale was going to be an ever-growing problem in the long hours to come.

Putting such thoughts to the back of his mind he strode for ard to the control room and set about a final check of the instruments. Finding everything in order he dropped into the cushioned seat and securely strapped himself in, a look at his watch informing him there was only a minute left.

Through the port Melton could see the feverishly excited throngs, now drawn back from the ship in anticipation of the fiery take-off. He looked long and hard. It would be some days before he again saw a human face. The way before him was free of onlookers. He could only hope the guards had been efficient in clearing the rear. It would be a heavy blow to begin the voyage in tragedy.

His hand went to the firing button, hovered.

Somewhere out there was a girl. A girl very near and dear to Molton. He had promised her he would come back, but of course that depended on a lot of things. He had no illusions. Sometimes human promises are taken out of their hands...

Trembling only the least bit, his finger pressed.

The VIBURN moved forward, rose, rose, climbing more swiftly. Behind it trailed a wave of flaming gasses that quickly burnt themselves out, leaving only violently agitated mistiness to tell of the ship's passage. The journey had begun!

A week in space found Lieutenant Molton quite bored by it all. The sameness of everything had soon dulled his senses to the wondrous beauty of spatial bodies viewed from outside an atmosphere, and now he only wanted to finish the trip as quickly as possible and return to the comfort of the Earth and home. Otherwise he was in good physical and mental condition; a little worn, a bit more nervous than usual, but these were amply compensated for by the increased coordination he had gained between brain and muscles.

A cigarette hanging from his lips, Molton contemplated his objective. The nation that had the moon would be in an unassailable position, able to control all Earth with the threat of loosing guided missiles on the land of challengers. Consequently the race to reach the satellite had been a cutthroat affair, and still was. It now seemed certain Molton would be first to raise a country's standard on the dead world, but it would mean less than nothing if someone else got there before the other ship came, with weapons and materials to begin the construction of a fortified base. In that event, however, the aggrieved nation would at least have the full support of its people in a war of retribution. The appalling

destruction of the last conflict had given a pause in his bloodthirstiness, but with the ship at stake nothing short of planetary suicide would stop him. Too bad about Han, Melton thought. He could be as a god but long ago had gotten off on the wrong foot, making senseless battle the simplest glory attainable. Tragic. But maybe someday--

Melton jerked abruptly erect. Something had pulsed at the ship--shook it like a stick in the teeth of a dog! Some force outside. A quirk of the moon's gravity? He brushed the thought aside and studied his instruments.

But he was to learn nothing from them. For suddenly the mighty grip again fastened on the VINDICATOR, and this time it didn't let go! Nor could Melton's most savage effort at the controls break it. After a moment he fell back in his seat, strangely tired, gasping for breath, sweat peeping out on his forehead. He tried feebly to loosen his collar. Something was suffocating him, shutting out the air from his tortured lungs.

His head dropped on his chest; his thoughts grew dimmer and dimmer. Seconds later Melton's body went limp in black, death-like unconsciousness that was more than unconsciousness...

To an observer of the ship it would've seemed to grow transparent, become vague in outline--and wink utterly out of existence. The observer would look again, doubtfully, but he would not be reassured. The VINDICATOR and everything in it had inexplicably vanished from the space it had occupied.

At the same instant, the cigar-shaped craft appeared in a valley on the dark side of the moon. It had all taken less than two revolutions of a clock's minute hand. For the VINDICATOR and its pilot had traveled through into another dimension.

Melton came to his senses slowly. The fog in his brain receding at a casual pace. He opened his eyes, and looked up at a low, gray-colored ceiling. Beneath him he could feel the vibrating surface.



of a couch. From an open window somewhere a cool breeze caressed his cheek. Was he on Earth?

Molton sat up, saw the creature seated at the foot of the couch, fell back in shocked disbelief. After a while he ventured another look. It was still there. Now it spoke--faultlessly, in Molton's own language, quietly:

"Don't be afraid", it said. "You have nothing to fear". The being arose on long legs and came around the couch to stand beside Molton. He studied it warily. It was quite humanoid, after all, the chief features of difference a monstrous bulbous head and thin, bony, elongated limbs. It was dressed in a robe-like affair of green cloth and woven sandals. The eyes were huge, and wise; no weapons were in evidence, though the sleek might've concealed it. Molton doubted it, staring.

"Where am I?" Molton asked, swinging his feet to the floor and standing up to face the other. "What is this place and what--who are you?"

"You are in a city on the dark side of the moon of Earth", was the calm answer. "I am an inhabitant of that city. A Solenite, you might say."

Molton absorbed that astounding information slowly, with much difficulty. Then: "But how did I get here? Last I remember I was in space, fighting some terrific force that had caught my ship".

"It brought you here"

"Brought me?", Molton's eyebrows raised. "How?"

"By thought. Thru the dimension of thought. I cannot explain it in terms you know. We know"

"You even speak my language with no instruction" marveled the Earthman. "That's another thing I suppose. How long did it take?"

"We mastered it before you arrived", the other said with no appearance of boasting. "That's a bit more than an hour ago, as you measure time. Your resistance hindered the transference some."

"Quick work, anyway", Molton nodded. "Now one more question. Why was I brought here?"

The solenite gave him a long, searching look. "Observation". And he would add nothing to that, tho in following hours he imparted much information to Molton about this unsuspected civilization on the far side of Earth's satellite. Here in an unimaginably vast valley the Solenites lived, and had for generations. Air had long since gone from



of a couch. From an open window somewhere a cool breeze caressed his cheek. Was he on Earth?

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"Where am I?" Molton asked, swinging his feet to the floor and standing up to face the other. "What is this place and what--who are you?"

"You are in a city on the dark side of the moon of Earth", was the calm answer. "I am an inhabitant of that city. A Selenite, you might say."

Molton absorbed that astounding information slowly, with much difficulty. Then: "But how did I get here? Last I remember I was in space, fighting some terrific force that had caught my ship".

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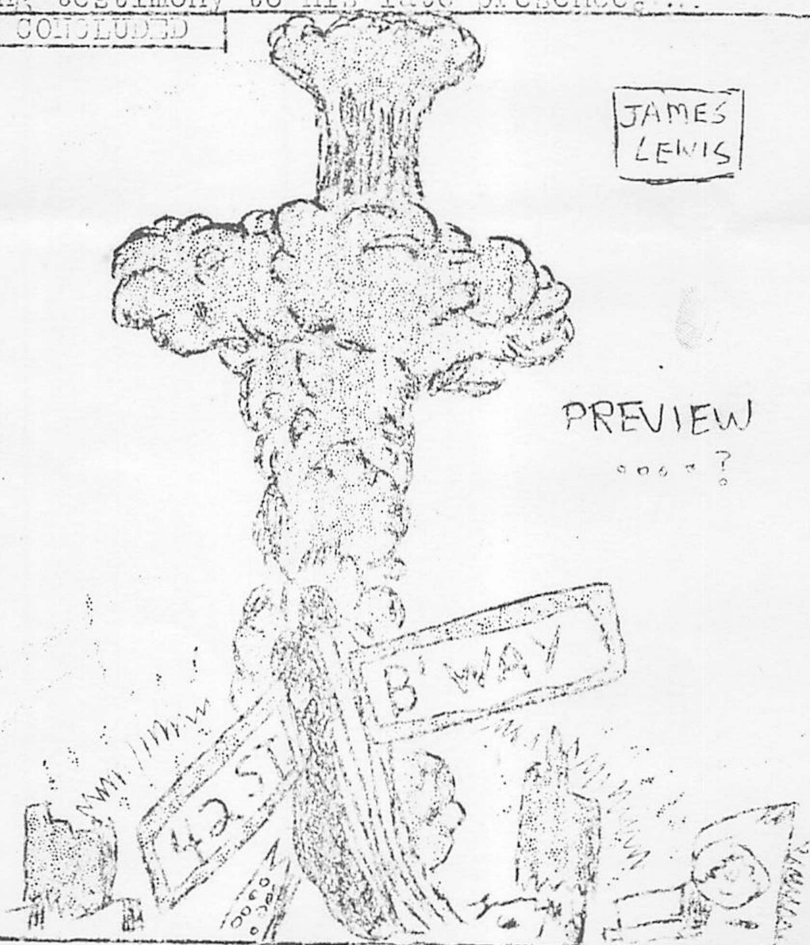
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the rest of the moon; here was an atmosphere like like that of the parent world's. Whether this was natural or artificial, Melton's strange captor neglected to say. But that these people possessed weird powers he knew beyond doubt.

The conversation ended, but Melton once more asked the meaning of his detainment. The Moonman's great hairless head, resting wearily on his chest now lifted, the deep, oddly-colored eyes regarding Melton, and, once more, he said, cryptically, "Observation. I say no more. Rest, Melton". It was the first time he had used the name. "Later I will answer your questions on our life here and show you our city. Until then, goodbye".

With that the being vanished. His chair was suddenly empty, only the depression in its cushion bearing testimony to his late presence. ...

TO BE CONCLUDED



# THE VISITOR...

by TODD CONTELL

What was that at my door last night?

Why was I filled with such a fright?

For I was alone in my darkened room

While the wind in the trees sang a  
dirge of doom

The knocking came, I could barely speak:

"Who is there? Whom do you seek?"

But no answer came, no voice to ease

My aching heart, which seemed to freeze.

My dog cringed 'gainst the floor and whined,

And imps of madness gripped my mind.

"Who is there?" I screamed in fear,

And then a voice came to my ear:

"Let me in", the visitor cried;

"I have naught from you to hide".

I opened the door and in he came;

I lifted the cowl; "What is your name?"

"My name is Death", he laughed in glee,

And reached out bony hands for me.

I was faint, frozen with fright----

That's why I'm lying in state tonight!



# SOAPBOX

## THE READERS OF SPACESHIP SPEAK

Dear Bob & Saul: When I first saw this magazine I didn't think it would supply me with interesting, wholesome enjoyment. But as I read and want to read more, I find that I am actually becoming interested in these weird stories. Saul's "educational" Spot is most humorous; I advise him to keep the good work up. Bob's stories are original and well written. I enjoy the stories written by non-members of the staff immensely. I give praise and thanks to the editors of SPACESHIP for publishing such a fine magazine-----Nathan Blumberg, Bklyn.

"Dear Bob: Received the Jan Sship today. Will go right thru and give my opinion. No heckling, pliz. #The cover:-I thought this to be very fine. Who is Segal? Any relation to Bugsy Segal? I like his style [see p. 3--b.s.] #Days of Madness---Shades of Bradbury! #Cartoon. Very fine. Upside-down in my copy. If this were only a stamp... #Soapbox---say! That Grant is a real good writer. #Behold the Man:-No comment. Poem would've been better here. #Evolution of a stffan--I'm a new stage. Sour-ham fan. [we're electric fans--Bob & Saul] #Saul's spot --Haw! #An interview with Merwin:-Come, come now!! Isn't it Mister Merwin? [B-list, here we come!-E6] #Martian Mysteries--keep your comments out of my stuff, pliz. You don't see any of mine in yours.

Alan Grant, 129 Edgemoor St., Rye, N.Y.  
(excerpt from long letter): "please tell Saul he stole my idea--about entering the mindpart of the class genius. Also tell him he can keep it. I, too, have found it won't work!"--David English

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(paid advertisement)

# THE TOLLS OF TIME...

by CHARLES L. MORRIS

He opened his eyes to stare up at a cloudless blue green sky bright with a midday sun. He turned his head first to one side, then to the other, and as far as the eye could see there was nothing but ruins; stone and glass and broken, twisted metal. He turned on his side and came erect, slowly, groggily. He stood for a moment, swaying, holding his head, groaning at the stabbing pains behind his eyeballs. And gradually he felt the throbbing subside. He dropped his arms, and looked about him, appalled.

Complete devastation greeted his eyes. Complete and final. For a moment his mind could not grasp the implication. Then, slowly, horribly, he knew.

It had once been a great metropolis, of course; a thriving city of happy, laughing millions. Now it was destruction and death and decaying bodies. Dust and stone, metal and glass. And suddenly, very suddenly, he retched and was sick.

After the spasm passed, he moved on, picking his way gingerly thru the debris. Slowly he weaved his way thru the ruins of once great and majestic buildings, and presently he came out into what must have been a public thoroughfare, now pitted with deep holes and piled high with rubble. His head still ached slightly, and he felt there was something he should remember, but though he sent tendrils of thought questing in every direction, it was of no avail. He could not remember his own name, nor what had happened. Nothing.

Over there lay a child clutching toys lovingly to its chest and staring unseeingly at a couple who lay nearby. To the right another body. And another. And another. They lay about like notes of dust scattered by a windstorm. Animals both domestic and wild, all dead. Not even an insect's drone broke the dead silence.

Avorting his eyes, he went on, fighting his sick-



ness, fighting madness, fighting the dreadful conviction in his heart. But it was there, and it persisted, gnawing at his vitals with teeth of great sorrow.

"The heritage of centuries", he thought, to keep his mind from snapping. "Of centuries--no, centuries of work and sweat, tears and blood. Working our way up the ladder to civilized living! Struggling up from the mire to stand erect. Seeing and understanding. Looking at last as one of intelligence and initiative should.

"More work, sweat, blood. Wars. Back to peace, and even more work. Never any work. Never. Civilization working together toward a definite end: harmony, easy living, eternal peace. Eyes turned toward the stars, seeing in them the answer. Seeing an end to ages of labor and discontent. Sighting at last the Goal. Coming nearer and nearer. Then--cataclysmic annihilation!"

He looked again at the destruction, at the dead bodies and shattered dreams, and he asked:

"Why should this thing be? Why should a civilization be wiped out in the space of heartbeats?? Why?

Time is strange. Time creates, ages, destroys.. Time is all-encompassing. When a world is born, Time is there. It ages, dies, and Time is still there, remaining forever and ever. . . .

"Then is it possible that eternal Time is God?"

Directly before him sat a long, bright something, glistening and glittering. It was pointed at one end and flat at the other, and he wondered. He moved closer, daring to hope. A rectangular aperture confronted him. He picked up a stone, banged away. Stepped back, waiting.

A figure appeared in the opening. One hand came up, pointed a black object. A hissing white flame came forth. Acrid smoke...

"Another one of those blasted Martians", said the Earthman, stepping back into the ship. "I thought we had gotten them all".

# SAUL'S SPOT

By means of electricity, profound biologic effects can be produced. The importance of electricity to the surgeon and to the physician is universally recognized and their use firmly established. The X-Ray, electro-cardiograph, and the electric encephalograph provide facilities for more accurate diagnosis.

Electrosurgery has made possible the undertaking of certain operations heretofore considered impossible. This is particularly true in the case of malignant growths. This is done by using high frequency currents to sever tissue. High frequency currents have been employed ~~for many years~~ for many years under the name of "diathermy". These currents have been used to induce high fevers. Electrically induced fever has been found to be effective in treatment of insanity due to syphilis, asthma, arthritis, gonorrhea, and St. Vitus' Dance. In dentistry, too, electro-surgery has its application. Pyorrhea has been treated successfully by sterilizing root canals by means of high frequency currents. Sterilization by this method has been achieved in cases that did not respond to routine treatment of medication.

A recent development in the ever-growing field of physical medicine is the exercise of blood vessel for the treatment of circulatory diseases of the extremities. The patient's leg is placed in a chamber which subjects it alternately to positive and negative pressure. This pumping effect stimulates circulation, often preventing amputation.

Who knows?--But with all the modern improvements in science, maybe, someday, scientists might be able to find, definitely, the cause and cure of--the common cold.

THE END

OVERCONFIDENCE....A"SPACESHIP Shorty"  
by Bob Silverberg

The Book was opened; the Annals read... "Searching of the past has proven one thing conclusively: the animals which called themselves "humans", now extinct, had remarkably low intellects. Only a small group of them, who called themselves "fans", realized to any extent the latent powers of our oppressed ancestors. These fans, in their writing in apparently sacred books called "pulpas", predicted more or less accurately the destruction of their race by ours, then held in a subservient condition. One serious error made by these prophets was that of foretelling the emergence of the humans. Of course, this was impossible. For the mammalian beasts have been extinct thousands of years now. In all, we feel that since only a minority of humans showed any logical thinking, we have nothing to fear from them in case of a recurrence--of such inferior types--were such a recurrence possible".

Prof closed the metallic book and looked down at the body of the giant beetle long since dead. He snorted, "They sure thought a lot of our ancestors! Lucky thing they didn't make much resistance when we left the caves and killed them. The records of them, though, show how conceited they were--thought we were dead when we were just hiding! Well, now they're dead, extinct and gone. Period. No more. We did a complete job of eradicating them. I can safely say, fellows, we'll never have any more worries about being ruled by insects. No, sir!"

A small beetle scurried across the cave floor, unnoticed, into its nest.

4.3.3.3. *Phylogenetic analysis*

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