

ries included were by Bryce Walton, Walt Sheldon, Basil Wells, J. Harvey Haggard, Len J. Moffatt, and John & Dorothy de Courcy. Walton, Sheldon, and Wells were named on the cover. At the time I had read only Chandler (from my regular reading of *Astounding*), but I had heard of some of the others.

The section of comics again offered stories by John Michel, under his own name and his Bellin pseudonym (this issue as E. J. Bellin). The other authors were again W. Malcolm White (2-page text story) and Gardner Fox. Three separate Internet sources I consulted stated that W. Malcolm White was in fact Wollheim, but this particular name does not appear in any “official” list of Wollheim pseudonyms. The illustrators again included Joe Kubert and John Giunta; a third art contributor was A. H. Johnston.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this issue was the “Mail from Planet Terra” department with letters from readers who commented on the first issue. While one teenage reader from Minnesota liked the comics (“I just love your illustrated section”), the consensus seemed to be that such comics were not necessary to a SF magazine. One letter writer summarized this point of view with the following: “A reputation for good stories will sell far more copies than ‘Hey, Kids! They got funnies in the middle’.” This reaction is a bit strange when one realizes the importance comics played in the careers of many SF writers. Moreover, only a few years later the comics’ fandom explosion occurred; and the leaders involved were adults, not children. I myself was a charter member of the executive board of the Academy of Comic-Book Fans and Collectors, and I was in my twenties and a graduate student at the time.

The driving force behind comics fandom was Dr. Jerry Bails, a university professor; and other responsible adults were active participants who went on to careers in comics, SF, and related areas. Early members of comics fandom with SF ties included Buck & Juanita Coulson, Ron Goulart, Don Glut, Jim Harmon, Gordon Love, Richard Lupoff, Chris Steinbrunner, Roy Thomas, Don & Maggie Thompson, and Ted White.

The unsigned cover of the second issue showed a woman who has been stabbed lying on the ground. She was dressed in a brightly colored blue bikini and bra, and next to her was a many-legged creature of some kind. Another woman, similarly dressed (but in a red bra and bikini), was standing over her. A man, naked to the waist except for a sash with a lightning bolt on it, was kneeling by the stabbed woman. Incongruously, the man was wearing a space helmet, while neither of the women was so equipped.

Notable stories from the second issue were Chandler’s “Raiders of the Solar Frontier” and Moffatt’s “Alpha Centauri Curtain Call.” In the first, described as a “complete novel,” a battle between spider-like alien invaders disguised as humans and the inhabitants of a prison planet was described. In the second, a clever satire, a vaudeville performer told of performing before hostile aliens and literally “knocking them dead.”

Another Internet source reported that the comics section in *OOTWA* #1 was the Avon comic book *Out of This World* #1 (June 1950), while the section in #2 was the same as the comic book *Strange Worlds* #1 (November 1952). Tuck, in his *Encyclopedia of SF and Fantasy*, reported that the Canadian issues of *OOTWA* were published in November 1950 and April 1951, and that the comic section in #2 was different from the one included in the United States version of the magazine.

In conclusion, while not a financial success at the time it was published, *Out Of This World Adventures* has nevertheless become a collectible and copies of the two issues published now demand high prices. The magazine originally sold for 25¢, but in recent years copies in good condition have been priced as high as \$170.00 each. The comic books that provided the comic sections sell for even higher prices. In addition, posters of the covers of the two magazines are now being sold on eBay.

The Fantastic Writing of John Collier

by

Jon D. Swartz, Ph. D.

N3F Historian

Born in London, John Henry Noyes Collier (1901-1980) was privately educated by his uncle, Vincent Collier, a novelist. When, at the age of 18, Collier was asked by his father what he had chosen as a vocation, his reply was "I want to be a poet." His father indulged him, and over the course of the next ten years Collier lived on an allowance of two pounds a week -- plus whatever he could pick up by writing book reviews. During this time, being not overly burdened by any financial responsibilities, he developed a penchant for games of chance, conversation in cafés, and visits to picture galleries. He never attended a university, and was later married to silent film actress Shirley Palmer.

In his poetry, Collier said he tried unsuccessfully "to reconcile in that medium the intensely visual experience opened to him by the Sitwells and the modern painters, with the austerer preoccupations of those classical authors who were fashionable in the nineteen-twenties." He also said that his poetry was influenced by the writing of James Joyce, whom he unsuccessfully tried to emulate. I'm not at all certain what he meant by these statements, but I'm glad Collier went on to write prose.

Novels

His Monkey Wife: or Married to a Chimp (1930) [a man is tricked into marrying an intelligent chimpanzee]. As a private joke, Collier wrote a review of this book, concluding: "From the classical standpoint his consciousness is too crammed for harmony, too neurasthenic for proportion, and his humor is too hysterical, too greedy, and too crude."]

No Traveler Returns (1931) [a short, non-fantasy novel]

Tom's a-Cold (1933) [a gloomy fantasy -- set in the 1990s -- of a future England wrecked by war, its people turned into savages/published in the United States as *Full Circle*]

Defy the Foul Fiend: or The Misadventures of a Heart (1934) [a sardonic, humorous, non-fantasy novel about mis-matched lovers]

Short Story Collections

Green Thoughts (1932)

The Devil and All (1934)

Variations on a Theme (1934)
Presenting Moonshine (1941)
The Touch of Nutmeg (1943)
Fancies and Goodnights (1951)
Pictures in the Fire (1958)
The John Collier Reader (1972)
The Best of John Collier (1975)

Other Works

Gemini (1931) [poetry collection]

Paradise Lost: Screenplay for Cinema of the Mind (1973) [adaptation from Milton that was never produced as a film/Collier later revised it to make it more readable in book form]

Sleeping Beauty [short story used as the basis for James B. Harris' 1973 fantasy film "Some Call It Loving" (aka "Dream Castle"), screenplay by Zalman King]

Screenplays

Having moved to Hollywood in 1935, Collier wrote prolifically for film and television. He worked on the screenplays of "The Elephant Boy," "The War Lord," "I Am a Camera," "Sylvia Scarlett," "Deception," "Roseanna McCoy," and "The African Queen" – although he was not always credited on the screen for his contributions. His short story, "Evening Primrose," was the subject of a 1966 television musical by Stephen Sondheim; it was also adapted for radio for the series "Escape" (starring Elliott Lewis) and later by BBC Radio. In addition, several of Collier's stories were adapted for the "Alfred Hitchcock Presents" television series.

Selected Short Stories

I can honestly say that I have enjoyed reading (and re-reading) all of Collier's short stories. Still, some of them stand out from the others. A few of my favorites are listed and briefly described below.

"Ah, the University!" -- A father sees to his son's education. Required reading for every poker player, especially ones currently attending college.

"Back for Christmas" -- A doctor murders his wife and leaves England for America. Before she was killed, his wife had told their friends that her husband would be back home for Christmas – and she was always right.

"Bottle Party" -- A genie tricks a man into taking his place in the bottle.

"The Chaser" -- A young man buying a genuine love potion cannot understand why the seller sells love potions for only a dollar but offers a colorless, tasteless, undetectable poison at a much, much higher price. The final sentence tells it all.

"Evening Primrose" -- People live in a department store, hiding during the day and coming out at night/probably Collier's most famous story.

“Green Thoughts” -- A man succumbs to a strange hothouse orchid he is growing.

“Interpretation of a Dream” -- A man experiences disturbing and serial dreams of falling from the thirty-ninth story of the skyscraper in which he works, passing one story every night. In his dreams he looks through the windows and makes observations of the real-life inhabitants as he passes.

“The Lady on the Gray” -- A philandering male of Saxon descent meets a bewitching Celtic female. My wife's favorite Collier story.

“Over Insurance” -- A loving couple puts nine-tenths of their money into life insurance and becomes so impoverished that each decides to poison the other, unaware that the other has made the same decision.

“The Steel Cat” -- An inventor uses his pet mouse to demonstrate his better mousetrap to an insensitive prospect who insists on seeing the mouse actually die.

“Three Bears Cottage” -- A man tries unsuccessfully to poison his wife as retaliation for serving him a smaller egg than the one she served herself.

“Thus I Refute Beelzy” -- A rational father is confounded by his imaginative son.

“The Touch of Nutmeg Makes It” -- A man tried for murder and acquitted for lack of motive tells his story to two sympathetic friends.

“Youth from Vienna” -- A couple, whose careers depend on youth, are forced to deal with a gift of a single dose of rejuvenating medicine that cannot be divided or shared.

Stories Reprinted in Genre Magazines

Avon Fantasy Reader #3

“Evening Primrose” (1947)

Famous Fantastic Mysteries

“Thus I Refute Beelzy” (October, 1952 issue)

Fantastic:

“The Devil, George, and Rosie” (March-April, 1953 issue)

The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction:

“After the Ball” (November, 1959 issue)

“Man Overboard” (March, 1960)

“Meeting of Relations” (January, 1959)

“The Tender Age” (May, 1960)

“A Word to the Wise” (September, 1958)

Shock:

“The Frog Prince” July, 1960 issue)

“Green Thoughts” (May, 1960)

Conclusions

Collier was very popular in the United States, where his most memorable literary pieces were collected in *The John Collier Reader* (1972). Like many writers of fantastic fiction, Collier was largely ignored by scholars, but received high praise from the public. Critic Marjorie Farber noted in a review of *A Touch of Nutmeg* that “Collier handles clichés with the deft conviction of a poet.”

Commenting on Collier, fellow author and critic Anthony Burgess compared him to Saki and Mervyn Peake, but admitted that he did not belong to any known literary tradition. Burgess concluded: “Though not a writer of the very first rank, he possessed considerable literary skill and a rare capacity to entertain. He needs to be rediscovered.” Clifton Fadiman wrote that Collier’s humor “has nothing to do with phrases or even situations; it proceeds from a peculiar flip-ness of tone all his own, acetic, casual, always surprising” and his stories have “the infernal, neat touch of horror.”

A. L. Furman said that there had been no writer like Collier since Saki. Anthony Boucher (writing as H. H. Holmes) also compared him to Saki. Fred Hoyle compared him to both Saki and Poe. Genre writer and critic Judith Merrill compared his work to that of Al Capp, calling them both geniuses.

Commenting on his own work, Collier once wrote: “I sometimes marvel that a third-rate writer like me has been able to palm himself off as a second-rate writer.” Collier was my kind of writer, amusing even when criticizing himself!

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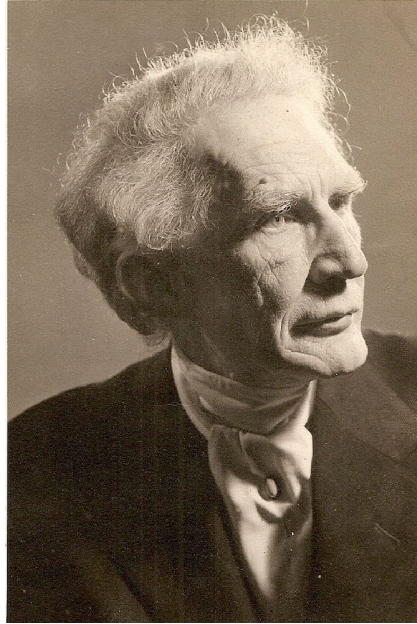
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Note: In addition to the above, several Internet sites were also consulted.

Ray Cummings

I am advised that our allegedly reliable computer search seems to have found an image of the wrong Ray Cummings in later life. The image below is believed to be accurate:.



Raymond King Cummings

Food of Famous Writers

Eat This While you Read That: Mackey Chandler
...Cedar Sanderson

I've had the pleasure over the last couple of years of reading Mac Chandler's two series, and watching him grow by leaps and bounds as an author. While April, his debut novel, was a very strong story with a terrific female lead who... well, I suggest you read it. It was rough but has been polished into the gem it should be, revealing the beauty I saw in it on first reading. Now that I've said that, and you can tell I'm a fan, I'm going to say that his second series, which begins with Family Law, is even better. It's a superb tale of science fiction, but mostly it's about people, and what makes family, family. Love, not DNA relationship, is the tie that binds.

When I asked Mac for a recipe or dish for this series, he suggested that there was a meal in April which would work for it. I know that food comes up a lot in that series – it has to, when you are dealing with teenagers who have been genetically altered to be stronger and faster. But Mac doesn't just make his food fuel, he writes an appreciation of meals and cooking into his work. So I was tickled to be able to create this for April, and her author.



Fettucine Alfredo with Pinenuts

I prepared this meal two ways – with and without pasta, as I am currently avoiding carbs. Served over a bed of sauteed kale with bacon, it was delicious and I didn't miss the pasta. The First Reader's comment was that it was very good, and I can make it again any time I feel like it.

I prepared our meal with chicken breasts, although you could go meatless if you want this as a side dish.

Alfredo with pinenuts

Alfredo, pinenuts, and more parmesan cheese because cheese!

- 2 boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 3-4 crushed garlic cloves
- 1/2 c white wine
- sprigs of thyme (optional)



Toast the pinenuts first and set them aside. They do not need oil in the pan.

In a heavy cast-iron skillet, heat the coconut oil over med-high heat and sear the chicken breasts. Set the oven to 350 deg F. Once the breasts are seared, tuck the garlic and thyme around them and pour the wine over them. Put the skillet in the oven. They will take 20-25 minutes to finish cooking through, depending on the size of your breasts. When you check with the meat thermometer, spoon the liquids over the breasts. When they are done, remove from oven and set aside. Slice into medallions just before serving. Chicken should be cooked to an internal temp of 160-165 deg F



- 1 small packet (mine was 2.5 oz) pinenuts
- 2 c heavy cream
- 1 c shredded parmesan cheese
- 1 stick (4 oz) butter
- cloves of garlic (I used 4-5)
- grated nutmeg

Before putting the oil in the skillet earlier, I had toasted the pinenuts. They are delicate and will burn so keep an eye on them and keep them moving.

alfredo sauce recipe

Making the sauce: cheese and cream and butter, oh my!

Once toasted, remove to another dish and start the oil for the chicken. In a saucepan, heat the cream to a boil with the garlic cloves over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Add the butter. When it is melted, whisk in the cheese. Continue to cook until the sauce thickens. If you want, you can remove the garlic cloves – I left them in.

Cook the fettucine to al dente. The sauce and breasts will make enough to serve 4, so a 1 lb package of pasta is about right for a meal portion.

shredded or chopped kale leaves
three slices of bacon, snipped with kitchen shears into 1/4" wide strips (across the short way!)
balsamic or rice wine vinegar

A lot of kale. This was enough for two of us, I would have used the big stock pot for a family meal.

In a heavy-bottomed stock pot or large saucepan, fry the bacon until crisp. Dump the kale in, swishing it around and turning it until it is coated in the bacon grease. Cover the pan. In a few minutes, repeat this process. Sprinkle with vinegar to taste (I usually use 1-2 tbsp). Cover again, and keep doing this until kale is bright green and melted (looks almost transparent) which will take about 15 minutes. This is the kale at doneness. Bright green and wilted.

On the plate, arrange the kale, then the pasta if desired, and 1/2 a chicken breast, sliced. Pour the sauce over, grate a little nutmeg on, then sprinkle the toasted pinenuts over. You can toss the whole thing together in the pot and serve family style if you aren't in the mood to be fancy! The acidity of the kale offsets the rich alfredo sauce very nicely, and the pinenuts offer a little crunch and a sweet, nutty flavor.

This meal works beautifully as a low-carb with no pasta entree.



Eat This While You Read That: Kate Paulk ...Cedar Sanderson

If there's one thing I am sure Kate Paulk is tired of hearing, it is: 'When is the next Con book coming out?' So I won't say it. I'll just look hard in her direction and think it. For this series where I recommend a book to read with a meal, I've had a lot of fun and different foods, and books. This one, I'm warning you now, should not be read while indulging in a beverage. I'm not responsible for damage done to screens. Sharp wit, fine humor, and a snarky exposé of the underbelly of the publishing industry, you don't have to be either a congoer or a writer (or even, shudder, an editor) to enjoy the con series. So go ahead and pick up ConVent before we fire up the grill.

Yes, I am going with an Australian cliché, and cooking this meal on the ‘barbie.’ When Kate and I talked about something Australian to make, because although she lives here in the US now, that is her background and very much a part of her, we decided it had to be lamb. Australian lamb, she told me. What is that? I asked. Just put lots of garlic on, she responded. For a woman who wrote Impaler, and Jim the vampire in the Con books, she sure likes garlic... I wonder...

Australian Grilled Lamb

Ingredients

- 4-6 lamb chops
- 6-7 cloves of garlic, chopped finely
- 1/2 c red wine (I used a merlot)
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

Put the lamb, garlic, and wine into a ziploc to marinade at least 30 minutes before cooking. Push all the air out of the ziploc and seal.

Start the fire in the chimney for the grill with 15-20 charcoal briquets. When briquets are fully engaged, pour them into the grill tray.

Place the lamb chops on the grill and cook with lid closed, 2-3 minutes on a side, until medium rare. Use a meat thermometer to be sure of doneness.

Allow lamb to rest, covered, for 3 minutes before serving. Salt and pepper to taste.

I served the lamb with medjara rice and caramelized onions, with a bit of chiffonaded herbs on top.

Medjara Rice

- 2 c basmati rice (or Jasmine)
- 3 c water
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp coriander seed, grind if you don't like the whole seed in your food (it's edible, but can be crunchy)
- 1 tsp turmeric or 2 tbsp saffron flowers (note: not saffron. They are a kind of marigold)
- 1 tbsp whole allspice, grind before putting in rice.
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tbsp oil

Optional: a handful of raisins or chopped dates

Place all ingredients in rice cooker, stir, and set to cook as ‘white rice,’ you can start this when you put the lamb to marinade, it will keep warm until needed. You may want to check and stir again during and after cooking.

Fresh ground spices

I ground the spices in a coffee mill.
Spiced rice

Various spices on the basmati rice, cooking them with the rice gives it so much flavor.



The rice when cooked is just perfumed with spice and tastes wonderful

The finished meal, packed with flavor and deliciousness.



We finished off the meal with the cherry mead our friends had brought to share. Sweet, but not overly so, it was a perfect finish to this spicy wonderful meal.

Mead from New Day meadery in Indianapolis.

Cheers!