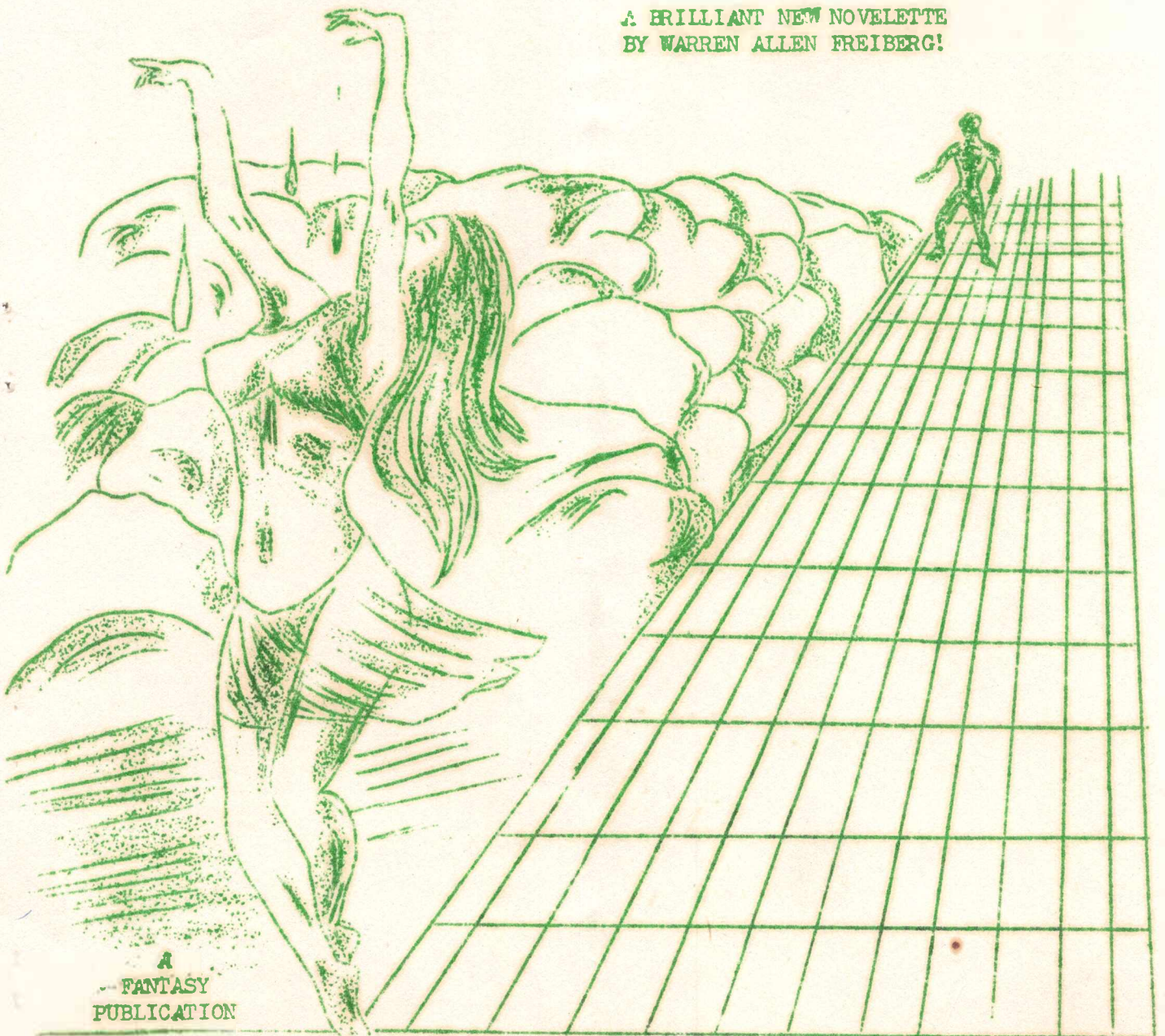


BRILLIANT ADVENTURE

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1953

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BY WARREN ALLEN FREIBERG!



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Brevizine

OCT. - NOV., 1953

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 6

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BREVIZINE ADVENTURE: is published bi-monthly by the Fantasy Pocketbooks Company, at Oak Lawn, Illinois. Editorial Offices: 5369 West 89th Street; Oak Lawn, Illinois. Subscription Rates: \$1.00 for twelve issues, \$0.25 for three issues.

WARREN A. FREIBERG; Publisher. ERWIN HUGHMONT; Managing Editor. GERALD KAMEN; Associate Editor. HENRY MOSKOWITZ; Correspondent. WILLIAM REINS; Art Direction..

Contributions: Contributors are advised to retain a copy of their manuscript. All manuscripts are subject to necessary editing and revision. Return postage should be attached in case of rejeactance. The names of characters in all stories are purely fictitious, with no similarity between anyone living or dead. Printed in USA.

GREEN WORLD

By ROBERT G. WARNER

The vivid sensations he experienced -- his clear memory of the incidents ... It was hard to believe his dream world could shatter!



Did you ever have one of those nights where you found your dream world far better than reality? Well, take Bob Warner's word for it: Don't get too involved! Why not? Hell, that dream world might fall in love with you! The master craftsmanship you have come to expect from a Warner-yarn weaves a strange pattern of bizarre fantasy - E.J.H.

DEEP WITHIN HIM, singing throughout every fibre of his body, was the feeling. To say that it was a feeling, he realized, was very indefinite, but that was all he could say about it...

He lay in bed and felt the summer night about him and tried to analyze the feeling. A feeling from far off. Not a feeling of the body itself, but a feeling entering the body from a far place.

Where exactly was the feeling the strongest? He lay very still and mentally inspected his entire body. Inside and outside, all over, it was there.

Something, somewhere, was calling him. At the sudden realization of this he did not become overly alarmed and begin asking of himself, "Am I crazy?"; instead, he seemed rather pleased that he did know what it was

For a long while he lay breathing shallowly and thinking about the feeling. It came from such a long distance.

He went to sleep and dreamed a dream that was not quite imagination.

IT WAS MORNING and he was sitting up in bed trying to remember the dream, trying to pull aside the curtain which obscured it from his consciousness. It was no use; it was forgotten. Perhaps, he thought, throwing back the covers, it's better that the dream is forgotten.

He dressed, left the apartment. Out onto the street, empty in the early morning calm. Into the car and off to work.

Within him the feeling stirred into life, and he shuddered just the slightest at the call.

Sitting at his desk trying to sort out a stack of week-old reports, he suddenly and completely remembered the dream.

A world, a dim and green world, floating, sleeping, dreaming in a space of darkness. A lonely world perched on the very edge of time and space. And on the world a race of people. A very old and very proud race of people, toiling, building, creating, dreaming. For a time he had dwelled there among them, had become intimately associated with them, had, in a brief period of time, gotten to know much of them, their deep inner selves. No wonder he had wanted to remember the dream! But there was something else -- the something else which had made him want to forget the dream. It was the atmosphere of the world. It was the things he could not learn about the people, the things they would not let him learn about them. He would stand among them, one moment laughing and talking freely -- the next moment staring into the sky as they stared. Feeling the fear which radiated from them. Feeling the world underneath him tremor ever so slightly. And feeling fear himself. Turning to them to ask, "What's wrong?" And getting no answer save the long tired looks of uncertainty.

The ending of the dream. The swirling green mists that had descended. The

people about him, dying by the hundreds while he could do nothing except stand among them and fear for them.

And when the last of them had fallen the green world under his feet laughed long and loud, and a voice came down from the mists and said, "Now they are gone. Now I have you."

And there the dream stopped.

He sat staring down at the top of his desk, his hands clenched tightly into fists. He got up from his desk and left his office. He hurried from the building, thankful when he stepped out into the sunshine.

He left his car parked in front of the office building and began walking. He walked toward the crowded section of town. He wanted people -- people and reality. He wanted to talk to someone and hold on to this world. The picture of the dim, green world drifted into his mind and he hastened his steps.

"Hey! Get yer extra here!" The sound, the old familiar sound, the link with this world. He paused for a moment to purchase a paper. He unfolded it and began to read at random.

ALL THROUGH THE day he walked through the crowded streets. He even went to a movie, but became restless half-way through the picture and left. He visited stores and shops, stopping to talk to with just anyone who would return his conversation.

Lazy afternoon. The crowds were thinning. He was tired. Nothing else to do but go back to the apartment. No. But what, if not that? He couldn't just keep wandering around.

He returned to his car, got in and began driving. He would not go back to the apartment. Not just yet anyway.

The light turned red. He pulled the car to a stop. The light turned auburn, then green. And suddenly it became a little green world. He pressed down on the gas pedal and the car shot forward with a screech of the wheels.

After driving for several hours, he finally decided that it was time for him to return to the apartment. He would have to call and give some excuse for running away from his work earlier in the day.

EVENING? COOL, SUMMER cool. He sat in his room, reading from a stack of magazines which had been collecting over the last week or so.

He looked at the clock on the table beside his chair. Ten. He let himself relax in the chair.

Slowly, very slowly and very carefully, and very completely, the feeling came over him. Sung throughout his body. It called him and he again saw the drifting world, dim and green.

He wondered if it would help if he consulted a psychiatrist. No. His problem was one of too much reality, instead of not enough.

He went to bed at twelve-fifteen. He lay awake with the feeling very strong within him for a few moments, then slept.

The dream which was not a dream at all. The swirling green mists and the green world. There was the more than frightening feeling of being awake while asleep. Of the feeling inside him, calling, tugging at him. He tried to wake, tried with all his will.

Quite suddenly he was awakening. The room could be seen through his sleep-laden eyes. But there was something wrong with it, something utterly and damnably wrong! Everything stretched and swirled out of its natural perspective. The objects began folding together, flowing into themselves. He put his hands down to touch the bed, and it became sticky, melted like cotton candy at his touch. He fell. Up, down, sideways?! Which way did he fall? There was a vast nothingness about him. A turbulent rushing of wind blowing across the face of the Universe. A sense of illimitable distances, stretching on into infinity. He screamed once, and the sound of his voice seemed magnified a million times out across those awful distances. A great and merci-

ful darkness came over him

HE OPENED HIS eyes and looked about him, knowing full well what he would see. He inhaled sharply, and the green air was incredibly sweet.

The people stood over him, smiling down at him. He got to his feet, the heavier gravity of the green world tugging at him.

The people stood in green shadows. He looked up toward the swirling green mists overhead. The world must ever stay in a green twilight. He stood there for a long while, breathing deeply of the sweet air and asking of himself, "What has happened?"

He knew, in a way, what had happened. He had been pulled across a Universe of space to this world of his dreams. The how he did not know; the why he would not admit he did know.

TIME PASSED? HOW much he did not know. His watch stopped and refused to run anymore. He gave it to one of the children.

They taught him their language. It was a slow, complicated process, for the gap between their two languages was great. But he had nothing else to do, and when one of them had to leave him, he would go to another one, thereby learning the language slowly but very surely and firmly.

His favorite teacher was a girl not too many years younger than he. Her name was Nal-Yan, which signified that she was of a well-bred lineage. After he knew the language fairly well, he asked of Nal-Yan, "How did I get here?" and she shrugged, he thought, daintily and replied, "That is something which has been a mystery to me, also. You were just here. The others -- the olders -- seem to know. Being a younger, I am not allowed to ask of such things; however, I did ask, and it upset my mother very much. She did not answer."

THE DAY OF the storm came. We stood and watched the green mists together. He was angry inside -- angry at the people. He had come to know them well. He had discussed his world with them.

He had learned of their history -- in age, fifty thousand of his years or more. He knew of their dreams, their achievements, their future plans. He knew them as a good people, but as a sad people as well. He had asked of the world, and they had looked at him as though he had spit acid upon them. They would not talk of the world.

Standing in the dimness of the green world, waiting for the Storm to come he became angrier. What were these people? And where had they come from? He cursed softly under his breath and thought of Earth.

The Storm came on quickly. It was the second to descend from the green mists since he had been there. Suddenly all the others were coming from the cube dwellings to stand motionless and stare up into the swirling mists.

Green drops began to fall. He watched them come down. But none of them dropped upon him! There were screams, and the people began falling. He ran to them, and the mists above closed up that none of the green drops touched him.

They turned to watch him approach, those of them still living. The green showers came down heavier, and soon all of them lay motionless.

The green mists descended, swirling in a crash of howling sound, flattening the city and scattering it across a hundred miles. He stood and watched, and the wind flowed about him, not touching him.

HE STOOD AND was drained of all emotion. The people -- fifty thousand years of an evolving culture -- wiped out, strewn across a world in turbulent violence before his eyes. And he stood and watched, and not so much as a scratch did he suffer! He laughed, and the wind rose to match his laughter.

Out of the green mists, then, came the voice, as he knew it would:

"Now they are gone. Now I have you for myself."

The green world trembled beneath him -- breathed the green, sweet air out at

Him.

"Oh my God! What's happening!"

The green surface of the world pitched and rolled underneath him. He lost his balance and fell into a rolling canyon. Down, down, down, and he didn't have time to be afraid. He finally came to a stop. He turned and looked up. There were the green mists, far above.

About him the green world throbbed, and a firm, woman-voice whispered, "I love you, my darling. I love you."

He screamed. "My Lord God! What have you done to me!"

The world cooed to sooth him. He beat at it until his fists became lead weights. Then he collapsed and lay breathing heavily.

"The others!" His voice was a hoarse scream. "The others -- who were they that you destroyed them so completely? My God -- fifty thousand years of evolution, then you -- "

"Hush!"

"I don't understand these hellish things! Where am I and where are you and what are you!"

The world caressed him. "Hush, now, my darling. I am a very lonely world."

"The others -- !"

"The others were my pets." A puff of sweet air in his face. He coughed and blinked his eyes. "Damn it, don't do that!"

The world trembled. "Do not address me so harshly, darling."

He tried to stand, but the surface of the world rolled under him and he fell sprawling. "Please, darling." Another puff of sweet air.

There were thoughts racing madly within his mind. Did he still retain his sanity after what he had been through? And what had he been through?

"Why did you choose me?"

"I do not know," the green - world voice answered. "I reached out, in my loneliness, and you were there. I called you and you heard. You knew and believed that I was real and it was easy to bring you through the Great Distance. That is all I know to tell you."

The world folded about him. "New - - love me!"

"Damn you, you're crazy! Whatever you are -- you're mad!"

The world constricted. It was angry, quite suddenly. "You cannot say such things. Not even you! I love you -- but my love is hate also!"

He screamed once, while the world sprouted green arms and quickly tore him apart. Then the world settled again, the madness left it. There was calm, a green calm. A lonely world perched on the very edge of time and space. Someday it would call again, when the loneliness became too great. Someday . . .

A PORTFOLIO

BY DONALD O. CANTIN

Somebody, or other, once said that genius is 25% madness. Now we don't know whether or not Donald O. Cantin (better known as Doc) is a genius, but he certainly does possess one of the above-mentioned qualities.

In presenting these sketches we hesitate to use the word: 'Art'. Yet, in the strict sense of the word Doc's drawings portray life as it should be done . . . with a slight touch of genuine insanity, boiled until simmering over a kettle of sarcasm. Cooked, we mustn't forget, by the most lewd (if not nude) women you'd ever want to see. Just one more thing before we let you enjoy these things: William Reins (our art director) loved 'em!

And who-in-the-hell is going to argue with the art department?
- EJH.

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doc



A BREVITY ADVENTURE



A DOCTOR FAMOUS STORY.....BY OTTO E. PAUL

Jay Portor was unusual, in that he loved one thing, and that only; his life. Oh, he liked other things. The wine that seemed to give him life, and . . . but that is another story. It is suffice to say he loved life. His own, that is.

Portor was in his fifties, and he was not happy. The doctors had informed him that he had little chance to live past sixty.

What to do? Ah ha! Here's a small paragraph in the back of the newspaper concerning a young scientist named Edd Famous, who had developed a drug which sustained life. It guaranteed immortality. IMMORTALITY! Oh that Jay Portor could become immortal. Perhaps...yes, perhaps this Dr. Famous would sell him some of this life drug . . . but no, here it says in plain print that it is not for sale. NOT FOR SALE?! W-e-l-l.....There are other ways of obtaining it.

"Who goes there? Friend or foe?"
BANG!

Mr. Portor had gained entrance to the lab.
Dr. Famous whirled. Portor had a gun.

He said so . . .

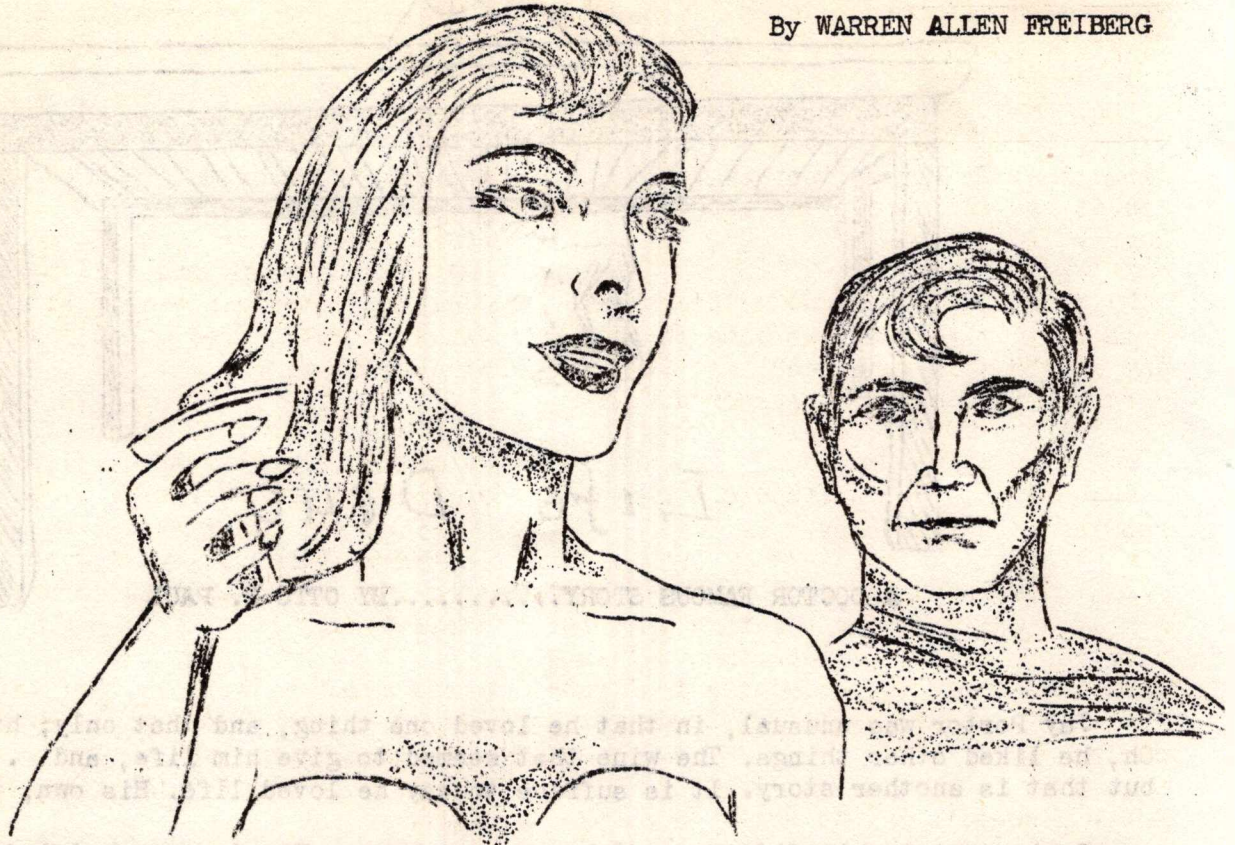
"Well, what do you want?"
"Your Life Drug." The way Jay said it, you knew it was capitalized.
"So you really want it?"
"Quit the melodrama and hand it over!"

"You killed a guard for it." It was a statement, and as if to back it up, there was a distant sound of sirens. "They'll send you to the chair!"
"Aha, but you're wrong. Not if I take the drug. I couldn't be killed. I'd last forever!" Then Portor related why he had wanted the drug in the first place. The sirens grew louder.

When Portor finished, Dr. Famous said, "If you drink it you'll get a Life Sentence!"

MY LORELEI

By WARREN ALLEN FREIBERG



It is with a great deal of pleasure that we present Mr. Freiberg's first fiction piece in these pages. Known to readers as the publisher of Fantasy Pocketbooks, this tale shows another side to his many and varied talents. The degree to which you enjoy "My Lorelei" should be measured as an interpretation of our title, "Brevizine Adventure." We guarantee you'll find it suspenseful, a challenging mystery, and above all: Highly entertaining. - E.J.H.

THE MOMENT BEFORE you die your whole life flashes before you. It's an old line, but a very true, very precise one. These are the last few moments of my life . . .

Yes, today, I, Charles Newart, electrical engineer, cease to exist. For thirty-eight years I have lived, but yet have not tasted the flavors of life... the real flavors of life! The caress of a woman, the soft breeze of an open lake, the sight of nature's wonderous beauty. Without such experiences, without life that I have not yet savored, I die.

Business. Business, was MY life. Work and toil, struggle and hate for every miserable step I advanced in my cursed plant.

Damn. Damn. My life was beginning. It

was beginning only when I met her ... She was beautiful, soft with hair the color of flaming red fire, the eyes with green jewels burning within, devoured my soul, my being, my inner self.

It is hard at this time to recall when first I met this creature I speak of. As best I can recollect it at this point it was in the apartment in which I resided. From the first minute I saw her desirable body I knew I could be satisfied with no other. She was all that any man could want.

In the intervening weeks it was an exciting pleasure to my drab life, as electronic expert to try and meet this feminine woman. Somehow I knew. I knew that she too was anxious to strike an acquaintance.

* * * * *

For several weeks without much luck I worked on the woman known as Lucia Marlen . . . I worked without success. That is, until the night of February Eighth . . .

"Mr. Newart?" the voice that came over my telephone wire was a soft inviting tone. It was definitely female, and it was definitely the property of Lucia.

My pulse quickened and my heartbeat rose rapidly to meet the same speed. Why should this woman call me, in the middle of the night. I answered hesitantly, but yet excitedly:

"Who is this?" I pretended I had no knowledge of my caller.

"This Lucia Marlen in 308, Mr. Newart. I'm afraid I'm having a little trouble with the lights in my apartment. I know from several of our neighbors that you're an electronic engineer. I was wondering if . . ."

She needed to say no more. In a way it was an invitation. Passion reached my flaming mind . . . I was engulfed in burning desire.

Grabbing a small tool kit I made my way towards the closet. Donning more appropriate clothing I went to the front door and out into the brightly lighted hallway. 308. Her apartment was up two flights of stairs.

Usually I found myself panting heavily after even a small flight of stairs. Lack of exercise, or something, my doctor said. This time was no exception but I was not panting from weariness but rather from expectancy . . .

305...306...307...Ahhh, here it was: 308. I knocked softly, fully expecting that at any moment my alarm clock would ring and my dream-world would shatter about my frame. No such thing happened.

Attired in what was undoubtedly guaranteed to raise the blood-pressure of the average American male Lucia opened the door. She stood in the amber glow of a desk lamp. The night sky-line of a window outlined her form. A form of cur-

ves . . . placed in precisely the correct spots.

"Come in, Mr. Newart. You can't very well help me standing in the apartment hallway."

"On the contrary?" I regained my composure. "I could help you anywhere."

She led the way into the spacious interior of a swank room. "I hope you don't mind any inconvenience that I might be causing. But I'm so unhandy with anything electrical . . ."

It was my turn to make with polite laughter. She pointed a wallbox which controlled the apartment lighting and I opened it with a screwdriver. This was not in my line . . . but for an introduction like this, exceptions were always available.

The trouble Lucia had was fairly simple to adjust, and I would roughly estimate that it took me no longer than fifteen minutes to fix the electrical circuit.

I turned and looked at her. She was lovely standing there in the moonlight glow; lovely beyond description, or expectation. Mumbling something about her circuit being all right I walked towards the door.

A gentle voice called back to me. "Mr. Newart I feel terrible about getting you up at such an unearthly hour. I think it would only be right if I repaid you with a little drink.

"Please," I said. "Just call me Charlie."

"All right --- Charlie . . ."

Her graceful body moved over to a small cabinet in the left-hand corner of the living room. She withdrew from its inner depths the remains of a bottle of gin, a soft drink, and two glasses.

"I'm afraid, Charlie, this is all I have to offer in the way of refreshments"

I made myself comfortable on the small sofa, and presently she came over with two mixed drinks. We sat for what seemed

a long while just looking at each other. Damn the boundaries of civilization.

IT WAS AN insane thing to do ... as I look back at the scene now I know that I never would have it if not for ... if not for --- God, but I loved her!

"Darling!" I whispered.

She was in my arms, not struggling but simply willing herself to me. Her bosom pressed close to mine and I felt the soft warmth of her exquisite hands. Looking down into her eyes I knew then that all 'civilization' and its 'customs' were lost.

Her warm breath came in short gasps and I felt two ruby lips placing themselves close to my own. It was nectar from the gods themselves . . .

"I've wanted so long to do this, Lucia?" I said.

"I want you?" she said hungrily.

It was crazy, insane to love like Lucia and I. For the duration of that night was spent in a whirlpool of love, romance and beauty . . .

* * * * *

THE NEXT TWO weeks were undoubtedly the most serene, the most glorious two weeks I have ever spent. The idea itself was wonderous in thought. To think that a young woman such as Lucia was, a woman who could have her pick of men, would fall in love with a 38-year-old bachelor. I wanted so much to make her completely mine ... I wanted her as a wife.

For sometime I had been hinting towards such an ultimate goal, but with little orho success. Each time I felt that she was using an evasion to the subject of marriage I brought up. It was hard for me to grasp this, as she freely admitted she loved me with all her soul.

I HAVE NEVER been a man of extreme courage and it was one of the hardest things of my life to make that final proposal, the one where I brought my feelings out for her to know. It was in Lucia's apartment after I had taken her to

the theatre that I finally willed myself unto the thoughts of marriage.

"Darling, I can't go on like this any longer, seeing you just nights, torturing myself through the rest of the day until the final hour when we go out together.

"Lucia, I--I want you to become my wife! We've gone about the subject too much and I can't go about this way any longer!"

She looked up at me, her eyes like limpidpools of understanding. "I know how it's been for you, Charles. It's been that way for me, too; but --- I - I can't marry you."

It's strange how in one earth-shaking sentence all your dreams will melt and burst around you.

"Lucia?" I said. "Can't you understand if this is what we both want---then it's got to be. . ."

Once again her eyes met mine but this time not with understanding; but rather with Fear.

"You don't understand. Charles I love you in every possible way it is for a woman to love her man but I can't and never will marry you."

I sat there for a long time while her words registered on my brain. It was the calm before the storm as I lurched out and grabbed her supple figure.

"Why?" I screamed, "Why can't you marry me?"

Her face was contorted with pain. "Charles, I'm -- I'm already married."

I freed my grip on her white arms as the words became numb like daggers, and cut into every possible space on my body. Lucia --- married! My delicate Lucia -- belonging to someone else.

She sobbed in my arms breathing heavily as she did.

"Don't -- don't look at me like that. It's true I've been married for eight years. I never loved the man, Charles, honestly I didn't. I married him for his

money. How else do you think I could afford this apartment? When I moved here he'd just left for a monthly business trip I registered under the name of Miss Lucia Marlen. When he came back we were going to travel to another state. Charlie you must understand -- I never dreamed I'd meet anyone like you when I came here. Charlie, I love you -- I love you...."

Her voice, the voice with the delicate tone, faded away into a mass of whimpering sobs. The words were a chaos of mixed up sound within me. I knew though that any man once having Lucia would never give her up.

The neon lights several feet away outside the open window blinked steadily on-and-off, illuminating the remains of a broken man and a crying woman.

Suddenly, however, no longer was the woman crying, but her face, too, beamed with an unusual kind of light.

"Charlie," she cried, "he'd hold on to me forever -- unless -- unless you kill him."

Her lovely face, the one I wanted, was a wrinkle of sadistic expression.

I must have been crazy to even take her seriously but I was blind -- blind with the rage of human emotion; blind with love hate, beauty and want.

I moved my face down to hers and kissed her for a long, long time.

"You'll have to be careful when you do it Charlie, careful when you kill a man as important as Carl Marlen, the oil tycoon."

So that's who Lucia's husband was -- Carl Marlen -- one of the richest men in the west. I had to have a foolproof way to kill someone as important as that. What was that old quotation: "You can't have your cake and eat it, too." How wrong and silly quotations could be ...

THE NEON LIGHT blinked steadily -- on and off -- on and off --.

Suddenly with Lucia in my arms the idea came to me. The neon light! That's how I would accomplish the murder -- I would kill him by electricity!"

* * * * *

IT IS HARD to think when the idea first occurred to me of using the telephone as my instrument of destruction. The idea itself was not particularly complicated, but it was clever -- and foolproof.

By some ruse Lucia and I would make Carl Marlen pick up the phone in his apartment . . . and with so simple and deft a movement he would be struck dead! Oh it was a simple plot, all right, for the phone would be wired with just enough electricity to shock the heart into stopping its intervals of beating. We would say he died of a --of a-- heart attack.

I made it a point not to tell even Lucia my plan ... in my habit of remembering quotations the one about the "best laid plans of mice and men" was a prominent one. Even the woman I loved could unknowingly foil my scheme.

During the next week and a half I worked furiously with all sort of preparations. Lucia knew the time of our symphony of death was drawing near but she did not question my plot; but rather simply added to the pleasure of knowing eventually that she would be mine.

* * * * *

CARL MARLEN WAS a huge man made up of vast enthusiasms; The heartiest being the one for life. It seemed this obese human creature cared little for his curvacious wife, but yet often expressed a deep fear of possible loss. He was so near the truth...

Lucia introduced me as her cousin from Philadelphia who was spending a few days in the city. Since the apartment was spaciouly large, she lied, that she was putting me up. Marlen seemed to accept the fact and greeted me warmly upon his return from the business trip.

I lingered on in the apartment as a "guest" for several days, each day noticing Lucia turning more gaunt as to when this fat person that was known as her husband would be destroyed.

IT WAS A desolate rain-swept Tuesday night that I finally made up my mind as to his obliteration. It was going to be as simple as rolling off a log with m-

cia and I attending a motion picture. I would excuse myself during an intermission and dial their number. Carl, being home alone would answer the phone ... and fall dead. Previous to this, I would have naturally wired the phone for instant electrocution.

It all worked so smoothly, so very smoothly. Even then, however, I noted Lucia was strangely silent. While we walked from the apartment building I told her we would no longer be troubled with Carl. She accepted the fact readily, but merely stated: "I love you, Charles."

All through the first scenes as the picture unraveled its tales, I was unconscious to the things around me. Lucia never questioned my method and continued in being mute to conversation.

In my mind's eye I imagined the fat sloth in his room comfortably reading. I laughed at the weird thought that presented itself. He would never finish his book . . .

AT LONG LAST the first intermission arrived and I excused myself with some vague pretense. I sensed that Lucia knew the end for her husband was near. Walking across the small theatre lobby I changed my quarter for two dimes and a nickel, and stepped in an adjoining phone booth.

I dialed the number. At first my fingers were hesitant, my mind thoughtful... then I thought of Lucia and my fingers fairly sped over the dialing apparatus. Nevada 6-5932.

Once again I turned toward my imagination for a picture of what was going on across town. With the ringing of the phone in his ears his huge body must have gotten off the couch and waddled across the room and into the hallway.

The operator was ringing again now. One...two...three times. Why doesn't he hurry and answer . . . Hurry up and die!

A tiny 'click' was heard. I could imagine him picking up the receiver. I could imagine him starting to speak ... then; and only then, it would happen.

"Hel---"

There was a short muffled cry and then a sound as if suddenly a huge massive weight had hit a hard object. A ghastly picture came into the view of my eye's projector. I could almost see what happened in the few previous seconds. He picked up the phone and his face went white, eyes bulging from their tired sockets he died an agonizing death as the full voltage of currents passed through his piggish body.

The husband of Lucia Marlen was dead.

* * * * *

LUCIA AND I left soon after the phone call. I told her nothing more than that Carl died. She did not pursue the matter further, instead she sighed softly and leaned against my shoulder. We caught a taxi and I told the driver the address of the apartment. Before a few hours elapsed I knew I must clear all traces of the deadly phone.

Somehow I was in a whirl of utter triumph. Lucia was mine, her husband was dead. The world itself revolved for me.

It was a short ride from the theatre to the building. I paid and tipped the driver and we walked hurriedly into, and across the lobby of the main floor.

We made our way to the apartment I had gotten to know so well since that first night in February. Apartment 308. The apartment where a man lay slain . . .

* * * * *

RESIGNED TO THE sight we would see when we opened the door I went through the motions of unlocking and entering the apartment.

Across the small hallway lay the body of Carl. Stepping over the short, fat form I moved towards the telephone.

"Charles, darling? Lucia said. "I'm going to blow your head off."

I turned, startled. In back of me she stood holding a pearl-handled woman's revolver.

"You stupid fool! she snarled. "How did you think a woman could ever love you. You're almost as old and as dull as he was."

Indicating the body of her dead husband she continued in a low diamond-like tone.

"All this time, Charles, I've needed you for only one thing -- to kill Carl. I could have never done it alone. I doubt if I'd have been clever to kill him and try to get away with it. From the first I could tell you were clever, Charles. A clever enough person to accomplish murder. I don't care how you did it, but I'm sure it was most successful. With him out of the way you're easy; who would miss a 'nobody' like you? And, Charles, I'll be so happy with Carl's money."

I stood looking at this female creature that would have no qualms in shooting me. I moved steadily toward her knowing I would never reach her, but at least I would have the satisfaction...the satisfaction of . . .

* * * * *

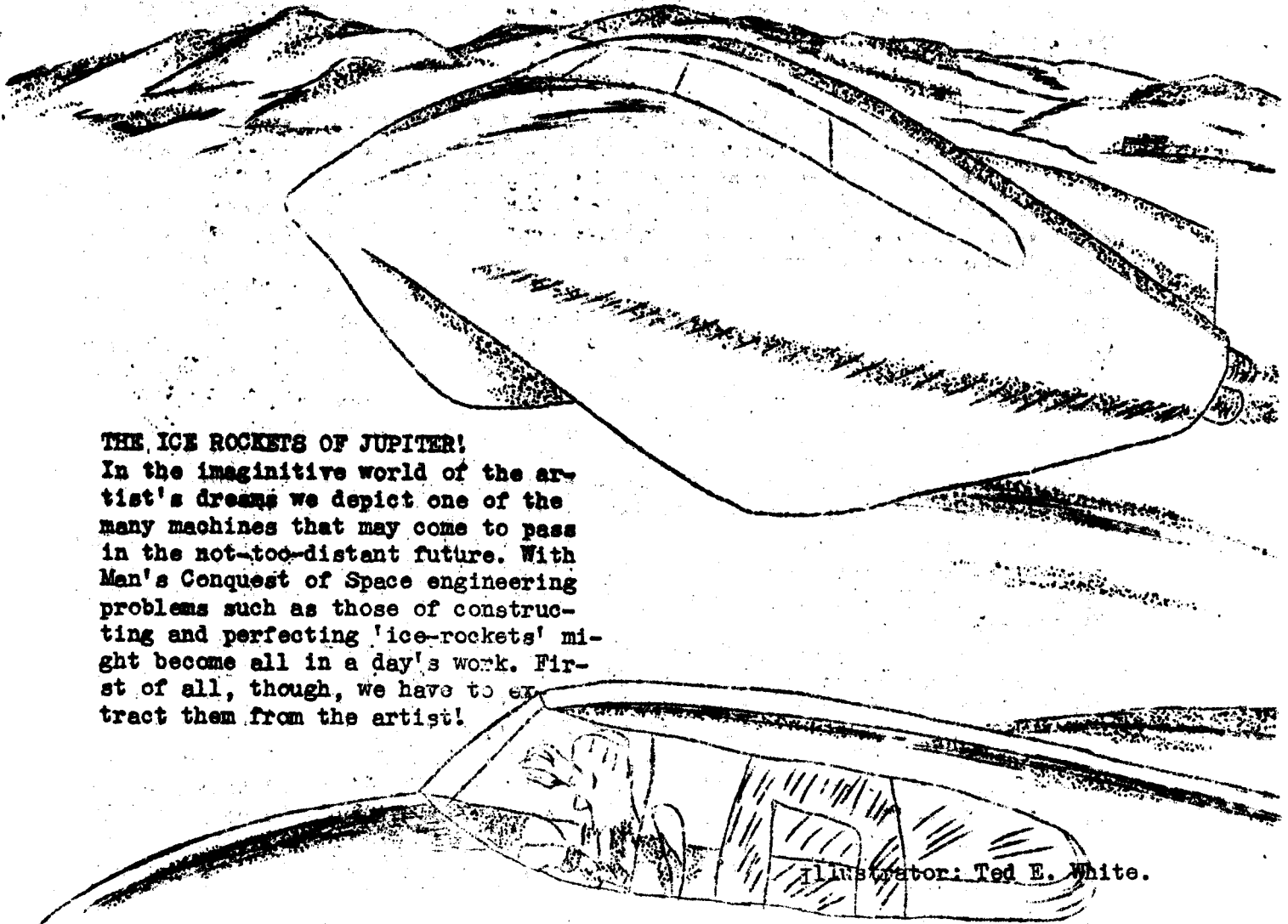
"Goodbye, Charles -- darling."

A loud sound resided throughout the apartment. Looking down I saw a hole as large as a dime in the left side of my breast. A thick gooey red substance ficated like some lazy river from the inner depths . . .

"And now Charles?" she continued, "I'll pick up the phone and tell the police a prowler entered, I shot him, and my husband died because of his weak heart."

I watched through dazed eyes as her perfectly formed hand picked up the phone. It did just as good a job as any electric chair. . . The red river is flowing more freely now and the pain has come numbing my senses.

What was that quotation? Yes, the one that goes: "The best laid plans of Mice and Men." and women . . .



THE ICE ROCKETS OF JUPITER!
In the imaginative world of the artist's dreams we depict one of the many machines that may come to pass in the not-too-distant future. With Man's Conquest of Space engineering problems such as those of constructing and perfecting 'ice-rockets' might become all in a day's work. First of all, though, we have to extract them from the artist!

Illustrator: Ted E. White.

SPATIAL RELATIONS

CONDUCTED BY HENRY MOSKOWITZ

Three Bridges, New Jersey, Sept. 8, 1953. -- After a lapse of three months and some days, I again take up with SR, starting right at the beginning again: With Theodore Sturgeon. As I said the last time, he's working up an anthology and writing full-time ... at Congers, N. Y. His second collection of stories will be coming from Abelard Press (most likely before week's end), titled E Pluribus Unicorn. As long as we're speaking of Sturgeon's collections, I would suggest obtaining his first: Without Sorcery (Prime Press, 1948). He has also done a novel based on Baby Is Three, a novelette which first appeared in the October 1952 issue of GSF. Ballantine Books has this one all tied up.

Clarke has been busy of late. He's gotten married, after a whirl-wind courtship (This is an Englishman?) ... He's had published Island In The Sky ... and Against The Fall Of Night ... and the abovementioned novel ... He's had various magazine story placements ... He's had published, in England, a work of non-fiction, Prelude To Space (enlarged and revised since its appearance here in 1951 as GSF#3). Nice going!

We would like to call your attention to and RECOMMEND Science-Fiction Handbook, a non-fiction work by L. Sprague de Camp, dealing with the writing and selling of "imaginative" fiction. A history of the genre ... thumb-nail sketches of the editors in the field ... how to write and sell your fiction output ... And neatly spun, a complete chapter biographing the top authors in the field: Asimov, Sturgeon, Heinlein, Brackett, Bradbury, etc.

Abelard Press has brought out an original by Sam Merwin, Jr.; it also promises a new novel by Fritz Leiber the younger, author of the classic, Gather Darkness! Merwin, by the way, has left the new FU to take over Jerry Bixby's place at GSF. Bix took ill. We have been told with its next issue FU drops pages ... and price to 35¢.

The October S-F, now officially a bi-monthly, has a nice story by Philip Jose Farmer, illoed by Finlay. In the October-November AS, there is as different a voodoo story as we've ever come across: A Way Of Thinking, by Theodore Sturgeon. His novella in the September GSF, we're sorry to say, is flat - - nice wording, though. The Caves Of Steel, by Isaac Asimov, which started in the October GSF comes exactly one year after The Currents Of Space began in aSF ... happy to report this job is much fresher and easier to digest. Another Manning Draco story in the November TWS; another in the January ish. A nice novelette by Lewis Padgett (Who's he?) in the September aSF.

Poul Anderson is the first author to have novels running serially at the same time--the first time in years. Three Hearts And Three Lions and The Escape, in TMO&SF and SSF, respectively. Both are two-part serials; both started in the September ishs.

Although Boucher and McComas have asked for comments on serials, they have gone ahead on their own hood (and with Larry Spivak's \$\$\$) and commissioned Chad Oliver to do a serial novel for them. That ain't bad no-how!

Good news: HJ Campbell, editor of the British AUTHENTIC SCIENCE FICTION (Hereto and Forever to be known and referred to as aSF) ((Ain't Fate wonderful?)), has seen the error of his ways. Since his mag revamped this year, it has been using American reprints. In the seven issues past--January to July -- only three items are of any particular worth: Immortal's Playthings and Mind Within Mind, by William F. Temple (the former appeared in OW, February

ish as Field Of Battle); and The Rose, by that fine writer from New England, Charles F. Harness. The others were reprints from OW and I.

In "Fanzines"; a review department of same, Editor Campbell lampooned the January 1953 ish of Harlan Ellison's Science Fantasy Review as being a waste of stencils and paper. This was the GSF Appreciation ish, We agree so far as saying that that particular ish, being what it was, could have been much better. Sadly lacking was a review of the fiction which GSF has run.

Scotland has a mag of its own now, has had it for about a year, titled NEBULA SCIENCE FICTION. Starting as a quarterly, it is now bi-monthly. Carrying 128 pages, it is slightly larger than the average digest, about the same size as NWSF before its June ish of this year. Its wordage must approximate 75,000. Selling at home for 2/-, it can be gotten here for 50¢, I believe. The cover of the Autumn ish was handsome enough to make me buy it, after having past the first three. I looked it over and promptly bought the Summer ish, too. In the latest ish: WFTemple, Eric Frank Russell, 4s; Ack-Ack, etc.

NEW WORLDS has gotten itself a smaller size and more pages (now totaling 128). It has dropped its price /6 (5¢ here). A beautiful Quinn cover equal to Bonestell or Schomburg. Good fiction, too. The same change-over will be seen in the quarterly companion to this fine bi-monthly, SCIENCE-FANTASY (Hell of a sentence, that.). At the same time, Nova Publications, publisher of these two mags, brought out a new series of stf novels, following the line set by GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS. NOVA SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL #1 is Stowaway To Mars, by John Beynon (Harris), who is also and better known as John "Trifids" Wyndham, who has a collection coming from Ballantine (or is it a novel?). This present job is pre-war. Other in the series will be Renaissance, by Jones, Cosmic Engineers, by Simak, and Bullard Of The Space Patrol, by Jameson. Also sells at 1/6.

What Ray Palmer has done with OTHER WORLDS is atrocious, especially after all the talk about "our" mag and "our editing it together." What surprises me most is that Bea Mahaffey didn't object, for at the Con in England she said that OW's rates were now 2¢ per word. On a defunct mag? I say; here and now in public print, that OW's death was brought about just so that 44 pages could be cut.

Taking over UNIVERSE SCIENCE FICTION, Rap has already announced a fts story for the next--November--ish. To hell with guys like that, if they think they can drag fts into a stated stf mag. I warned him about that in a letter. He doesn't know what he's doing.

We recently saw The War Of The Worlds for the second and third times (on one ticket) and are happy to report that its excellence does not diminish with returns. Several questionable points are given rise to by the modernizing of this story. One, why should it be narrated by an Englishman if all the action occurs in the U. S., more specifically on the West Coast? Two, although wonderfully wrought upon the screen, why should the Martian force-fields be jar-shape? Any generator would find it easier to throw out a spherical screen.

Look for the new SPACEWAY ... and SPECTRUM SCIENCE FICTION...and GEORGE PAL'S TALES OF TIME AND SPACE (or is it SPACE AND TIME?). Del Rey's FF is already a month overdue. Rumored that a former Popular Publications editor (female) will take over Merwin's chair at FU. FFM's future is questionable (very), especially in Popular's hands. Would suggest a general sprucing up... and monthly publication. VORTEX SCIENCE FICTION is not a one-shot, for Whitehorn is still buying material. IMAGINATION using serials starting with the October ish. Look for a two-parter beginning in the February ish by Swain.

Note: Is it true that Mari Wolfe has divorced Rog Phillips ... and that Rog has quit the writing game and taken a job? How about this one: Judy Merrill has divorced Fred Pohl and married Walt Miller, Jr.?

Scheduled for October: An Ace Book (paperback), World Of Null-A and a revised The Shadow Men (January 1950 SS), both by Van Vogt, with an Orban jacket.

The Department Of First Issues:

COSMOS SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY (word "MAGAZINE" added on cover and spine). 35¢; 128 pages, bi-monthly. Published by Star Publications, Inc. A nice Schomburg cover, slightly out of proportion and with a flag that should not be flat. Stories by top names: Anderson, Dick, Chandler, Clarke, etc. The paper stinks and so do the illos. A short article by Dr. Richardson, too. The Inside Back Cover has four biog sketches, with photos. The Back Cover is an editorial titled "Why One More?". It's one of the most assinine things we've ever read. We still want to know: Why?

ORBIT (words "SCIENCE FICTION" added on cover and spine). 35¢, 128 pages, quarterly. Published by Hanro Corporation. A nice cover ... 4sj reports that it is by old-timer Belarski (if memory serves). The inverted-L pattern begun by GSF and now used by ASF, SSF, SFA, FF, RS. Not exactly top names ... but good fiction. Gateway to Yamara, by EEEvans, had an unexpected kick. Monster No More, by Basil Wells, is good. Mack Reynolds comes through with a competent piece. The lead story is by new-comer Richard English, a novelette titled The Heart Of The Game. We liked it, but we can't describe it. We'd quote the editor's blurb, but it would seem that he had the same trouble ... no blurb! Read it and see. Nice paper. Dick Shelton came through with some nice sketch-type art, but we wish he'd read the stories before he attempted to illustrate them -- witness D.P. From Tomorrow and its illo.

SCIENCE STORIES. 35¢, 128 pages, bi-monthly. Published by Bell Publications, Inc. This is what's left of my favorite battler, OW. A nice cover by Bok, but ineffective due to its need for a larger area. It would have looked good on a pulp or a large-size job. We haven't read it ... and don't intend to, for quite a while. We have no liking for this one at all -- makes us feel sickish.
- Henry Moskowitz.

' ... AND THE SAME HOLDS TRUE ! '

Quoted from The Argosy of March, 1911: "...I spoke of the manner in which science in the shape of modern inventions had played into the hands of the fiction-writer in the way of giving him fresh subjects about which to weave his plots. But there is one--custom of the day, shall I call it?--which has done just the reverse of aiding the novelist. No longer is it possible for him to get the same thrill of excitement from the reader when he describes a base villain forcing the heroine to marry him, while the traduced hero is striving to get to her against time with a true explanation of the calumnies that have been uttered against him. In these days of frequent divorce, your reader is very apt to mutter: "What's the use of Algernon breaking his neck this way? Let him take his time, state the facts, send the lady to Reno, and get a separation." - Lawrence Lersner.

DON'T BE IN THE DARK! FOR THE TRUTH BEHIND THE FANTASY WORLD - READ:

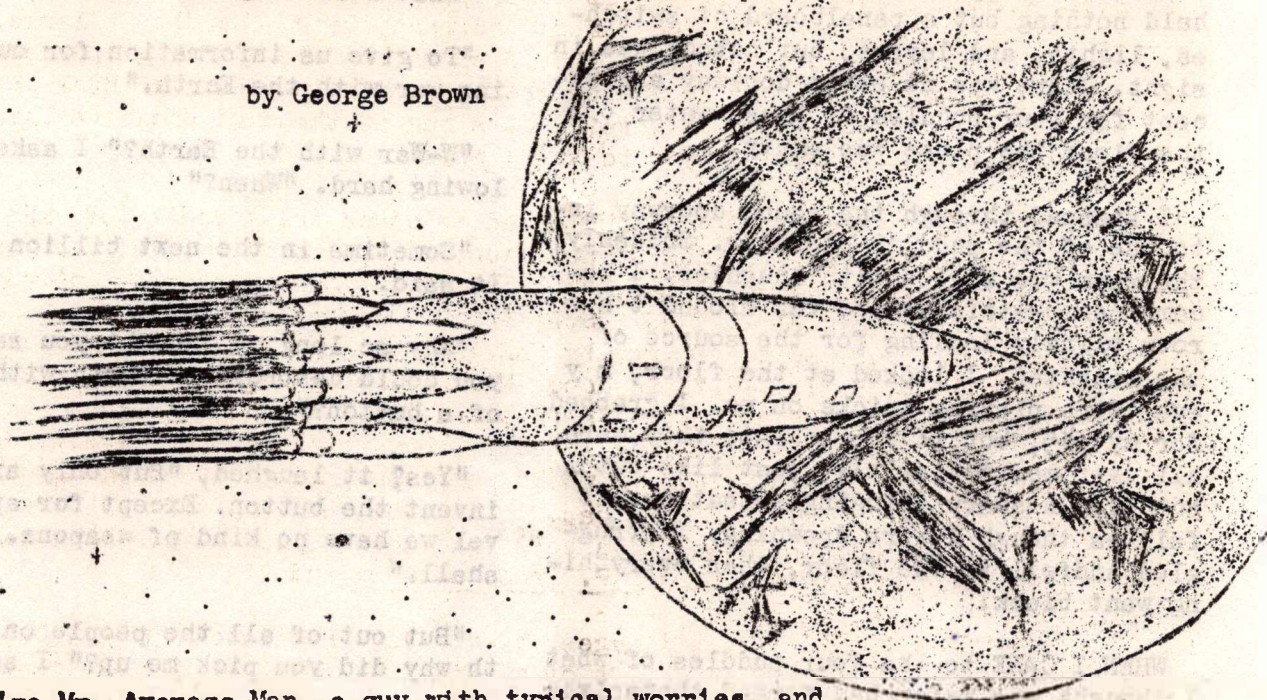
" THE SCIENCE-FICTION FAN: A JACKASS " BY W. A. FREIBERG
in the November issue of Z I P from -

WHITE ENTERPRISES; 1014 N. TUCKAHOE, FALLS CHURCH
Virginia.

Patrol

MISSION COMPLETE

by George Brown



You're Mr. Average Man, a guy with typical worries, and an ordinary family. You get home at night and read your newspaper ... and you wonder, Mister, not about Russians or atom bombs; you're worried about these Invaders From Outer Space! And you're scared, buster, real scared! - EJH.

IT HAS BEEN two days since the weird triangle shaped space ship had landed in old man Whitsel's corn field. It's occupants, through some kind of speaker, had warned the scientists, who had rushed to the scene, not to tamper with the ship or try to destroy it.

The next day, in big bold headlines, the papers carried the story. The ship had come from the moon. They claimed that they could destroy the earth with the push of a button. They also claimed to be friendly. They said that they did not want to make contact with the earth's people as yet but that they would later and if we did not wait for them to make the first move, their move wouldn't be a friendly one. "You must trust us and wait." Was their comment.

The Army had thrown up a wall of men around the ship and no one was allowed to pass. I was one of the guards, and from where I stood I could look down into the valley below onto the grim, awesome ship.

The scientists were tickled pink at the

Sight of the ship and they waited around mumbling like a bunch of school boys.

Patience isn't one of my traits and anything I don't understand I first want to find out what makes it tick, then protect or destroy it. As I peered through the heavy downpour at the ship I sensed a feeling that it should be destroyed.

I knew that if I was caught I would get shot, but right or wrong I walked down the muddy slope toward the ship. I tugged through the muddy corn field and paused beside the ship. There was a humming sound coming from within. I looked at my watch and dropped to the ground just in time. The huge light swung slowly around the ship looking for intruders on its hourly check. After it had past over me I crept beneath the ship. As I crawled I saw a round opening in the bottom of the ship, just about the size of a manhole cover. I pulled myself up into the ship and stood against the wall.

Being the first person on Earth ever to enter a ship from outer space was almost too much for me and I shook all over with excitement. I pressed as tight against the w

wall as I could and walked slowly toward a round opening at the end of the brightly lit passageway. Strange, weird, and continuous sounds filled the passageway. I peered through the round doorway. I beheld nothing but a panelboard of switches, lights, and levers, but nobody was in sight. There was no other doorway and except for four puddles of green water on the floor the place was empty.

I stepped through the round doorway into one of the puddles of water. Suddenly the room was filled with laughter. I became panic-stricken and ran around the room blindly looking for the source of the laughter. I looked at the floor, my eyes were playing tricks on me. I grabbed for my .45, but it was too late they were all over me. Wet, slimy, just like water but with a sharp stinging sensation. It felt as though I were drowning. I struggled and fell to the floor, then everything went black!

WHEN I CAME to the four puddles of what I thought was water had formed themselves into four walking beings with four arms, green and evil-looking. Three of them were seated in front of the huge panelboard. Suddenly with a blast like that of a cannon the ship lifted.

I figured that we were probably headed for the moon, and I wondered what the scientists back on Earth were saying right about now.

"Name and rank?" barked the being above me almost in a human tone of voice.

"Walter Drake, private, United States Army," I said, "What do you want with me?"

"We're following out orders." It said.

"Orders?"

"Yes, our Supreme ordered us to capture an Earthman, but not to cause the Earthmen any anger."

"What for?" I asked.

"To give us information for our coming war with the Earth."

"W-War with the Earth?" I asked swallowing hard. "When?"

"Sometime in the next billion years." It said.

"Why so long, I thought you said that you could destroy the Earth with the push of a button?"

"Yes," it laughed, "But only after we invent the button. Except for space travel we have no kind of weapons. But we shall."

"But out of all the people on the Earth why did you pick me up?" I said.

"Do not ask me, Private Drake, ask yourself. We knew that if we made fantastic claims that soon curiosity would finally bring one of you to our ship. All we had to do was wait." The creature went to the panelboard.

It was right, curiosity killed the cat and it also made me the first prisoner of war between the Earth and the Moon.

"Get the Supreme," It said, "Report Patrol Q-25, mission completed."

- George Brown.

* * * * *

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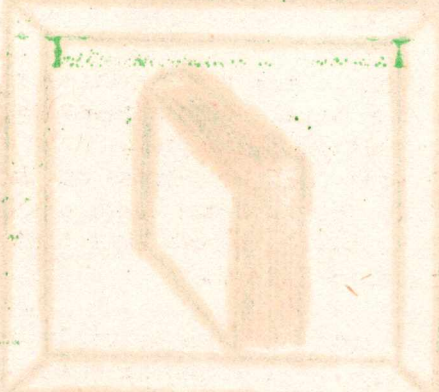
THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMPANY FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1954.

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ANNUAL

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