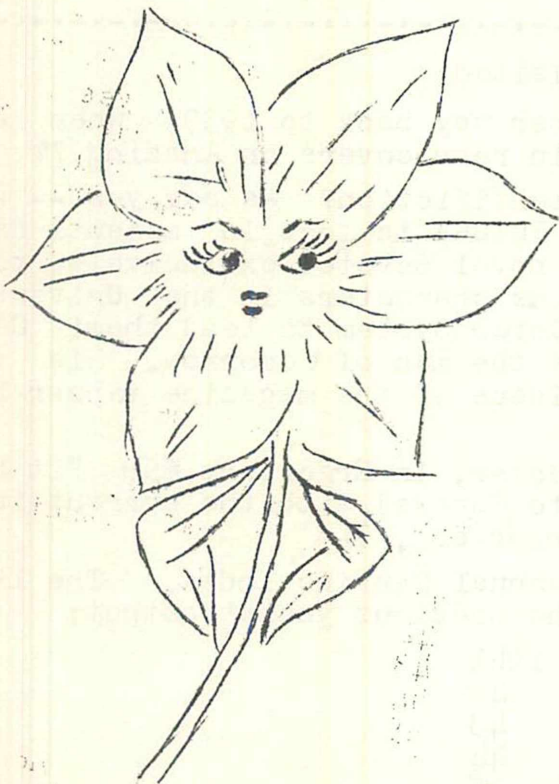


February  
1959

CHAPTER  
PLAY

"Don't you dare!"



: this is episode five of Chapter Play, the fanzine for contented fapa members; dirty work by Boh Tucker, box 702, Bloomington, Illinois; art work by Fern Tucker; duplicating by good old Ted White, Qwertyuiop $\frac{1}{2}$  :

E.E. Evans: While everyone was talking about what a bad year it had been, and repeating again and again the names of the deceased, I kept mumbling, "Not yet, not yet you fools! The year hasn't ended." Most obituaries and commentaries, however brief, fell into the same confused double-tense talk: 'John is dead; 1958 was a bad year'. But obviously, there were still a good many months remaining in the year when such talk started. So they fell like flies, in the most discouraging single year since the war. In point of fact, I don't believe any single war year caused as many deaths in American fandom, as 1958. In a 1944 issue of Le Zombie, I count the names of 95 fans in service; yet, during the entire war, I believe only five died. Fandom had been remarkably free of death from its very beginning.

I rather doubt that anyone in this immediate circle will speak of Evans as "our beloved Everett," and I find it a curious irony that he and Laney died only months apart. Those with moderately long memories will recall the juxtaposition formerly occupied by those two names. Well, I'm helpless in the matter of eulogies. Karen Anderson asked me twice to contribute to the Kuttner Booklet, and I tried desperately to do so, without success. Similarly, Ellick and Carr asked for something for their Laney Memorial, and again I was unable to deliver. So I have nothing to say about Evans, other than that we first met at the Chicon in 1940, have met again at conventions and poker tables almost every year since then, and that I was a party to a most curious conspiracy involving him during the above-mentioned war years. He was billed as co-editor on several issues of LeZ because he supplied money to keep it going while I was bent, or broke, or out of work. So be it.

-----  
 Le Zombie Revisited

The LeZ Olde Memory Dept: Do you remember way back to 1939, when J. Harvey Haggard began a campaign to obtain rear covers on Amazing ??

ibid: "Can there be anything new in scientifiction? We say yes -- and offer CAPTAIN FUTURE. Fellows, CAPTAIN FUTURE is tops in scienti fantasy! A brand new book length magazine novel devoted exclusively to a star-studded quartet of the most glamorous characters in the Universe! And the most colorful planeteer in the Solar System to lead them! CAPTAIN FUTURE! You'll find Captain Future the man of tomorrow. His adventures will appear in each and every issue of the magazine to bear his name." (a letter from Leo Margulies)

Well, Imagine That! Dept: Walt Dunkleberger, in Ergerzerp #5: "It has always been our policy to begin a sub (to Fanews) with the current issues." (( Ron Christensen published Ergerzerp. ))

From 1941 thru 1946, LeZ published an annual Fanzine Index. The 1946 issue offered this recapitulation on the previous years' output:

81	titles	in	1941
61	"		42
49	"		43
106	"		44
95	"		45
104	"		46

I wonder how those figures compare with recent years? And I also wonder if any one person receives them all today, enabling him to maintain a record? (Above figures do not include fapa magazines.)



THE CRASHING BOOR: (a department in which the egg-headed Master drops dribbles of knowledge to the unlettered peasants inhabiting the fapa.)

Ackerman and his monster magazine, and Larry and his monster magazine are merely copping rides on the gravy train, rather than blazing new trails thru the pulpy wilderness. The world has gone monster mad, perhaps because of the recent developments in rockets and satellites. Please don't laugh. If I can speak to people on the street who believe monsters come in rockets, you can too. The pulps of yesterday were responsible for this notion (remember, Grandpaw?) and the movies have found no reason to re-educate the masses along the Right Track.

In December, the trade magazines reported on the state of theater business for the third-quarter of the year. This report appears in the form of a chart showing which pictures made money, in selected but representative theaters across the country. Boxoffice grosses are expressed in terms of percentages, not money; the trade quickly abandoned the practice of revealing dollar incomes several years ago when Washington noted the large sums and began making tax plans. A percentage of 100 is average, the mid-point in theater grosses; if a picture falls considerably below 100 it has lost money. (For example, "Andy Hardy Comes Home" was a failure at only 85%.) Here, then is how the monster pictures made out this past autumn:

Queen of Outer Space:	100	
From the Earth to the Moon:	107	
Curse of the Faceless Man:	116	(Jerry Bixby screenplay)
It! Terror From Beyond Space:	116	(ditto)
Blood of the Vampire:	122	
Monster on the Campus:	122	
The Brain Eaters:	134	
The Spider:	134	
The Blob!:	148	
I Married a Monster From Outer Space:	148	

Some sample non-horror figures: Hot Rod Girl: 105, Onionhead: 139, The Last Hurrah: 147, and Cat on Hot Tin Roof: 280. So that's why Hollywood's shoestring producers keep turning 'em out, Harry. Our theater has played only the last two pictures named, and they did well. The Blob! was the damndest mess of tripe you ever did see, friend. It was, precisely, a blob of reddish-purple jello which grew larger as it devoured each victim, and it could have been venquished in the first reel if the script writer, the director and the players weren't idiots.

But didn't the pulps go thru this self-same stage? There were "The Brain Beast", "The Brain Eaters of Pluto", "Brain Leeches", and many many monsters: --From Mars, --From Nowhere, --Of the Asteroid, --Out of Space, --From the West, --of Callisto, of Mars, of Moon, of the Ray of the Mountain, of Evolution, of Moyen, and blah. I think perhaps I understand, now, why people laughed at us, then. So it's our turn.

Gertrude's complaint on her purchase of percale sheets reveals that she does not read Consumer Reports (or, if she does read it, she places little faith in it). The August '58 issue served up sheets, among a dozen other things. The article carried ratings on 14 low-count percale, 5 high-count percale, and 5 high-count muslin sheets. As she surmised, high-count muslin sheets (140 to 148 threads per square inch) have it all over other percales of any count in durability, handling and most important, cost.

(The blank space to the far right is provided for those who wish to make comments on PHLotsam) :

Gertrude, cont.: But somehow, I doubt that she reads Consumer Reports, which is considered not only radical but downright communistic in merchantile circles. The news that she and Mr Carr consider Time and the Post to be to the left of their political positions surprised me, for I had long held these two magazines to be as far right as one could get without offering the fascist salute. It is disturbing news to find them drifting leftward. I wonder if they really are; or is it that the Carrs are drifting more and more to the right, causing the motionless magazines to appear to move? (That's a vote for Einstein, now that a part, or maybe all, of his relativity theory is under question.) Well, anyway Gertrude, I enjoyed Peter Crumpet's "Fable" so the yarn evidently has appeal to all political degrees ... of course, I thought some of the ideas radical.

Saw an advertisement the other day which represents the ultimate in domestic brainwashing, MadAve branch. A new parlor game, with each player drawing cards in competition, pitting his knowledge and memories against the others. Name of game: "Brand Image". I wept.

The Modest Englishmen: according to breathless announcements in the trade press, 'dirty old pro' Charles Eric Maine has sold two more novels to the silver screen. Columbia Pictures said in January that they had bought "Escapement" and "The Man Who Couldn't Sleep" -- but wide awake neos in the hinterlands knew at once that only one book changed hands; "Man" is merely the American title of the British original. How many Maine novels have gone to the movies, including this latest acquisition? I've lost count. 'Charles Eric Maine' is, of course, that old fugitive from third fandom, Dave McIlwain; and around and about 1940 Dave McIlwain published a dandy fanzine entitled Gargoyle -- a quality mag which compares well to the best British fanzines of today. I was frequently pleased to lift and reprint Gargoyle pieces in LeZ. Dave's present works aren't winning the same acclaim.

This train of thought carried me to 'John Christopher' and his very well received "No Blade of Grass". Twenty years ago, Sam Youd was publishing The Fantast until the war hit Britain, forcing him to switch to a smaller, cheaper and more frequent sheet, Fantasy War Bulletin. I believe he continued this last until he was drafted --- a fate which overtook 99% of British fandom, eventually, and I can't remember if he ever returned to the fandom we know and love after his call. Well, anyway, Sam Youd changed into John Christopher and made a fortune in the Post and another in Hollywood; I seem to recall reading that he is now living plushly in Switzerland on his ill-gotten gains. 'Tis odd how these modest Englishmen change their names when turning pro. One would suspect they were attempting to hide their sensitive fannish pens from us old slant-eyed faaans.

There's a lesson here for fanzine editors, too: you want to be rich and famous if we allow you to grow up? Well, then ....

Not too many years ago, the habitual fanzine reader could count on the eventual appearance of a half dozen staple items in nearly every journal published. The newer editors were the most frequent offenders, but only because their elders had already gone thru the stage and now rejected such pieces. Among these Old Reliabilities were the serious and humorous pieces on How To Write Science Fiction, and How To Write A Fanzine Article, and What To Do At A Convention, and Fans Who Made



Good. (Good was not the name of a femmefan.) The opening paragraphs of this essay sound faintly like the beginning of a sermon on Fans Who Made Good, so let's continue into the matter.

First, we should not quibble over the quality and quantity of making good; one fan may manage a miserable single sale and thereafter spend his life and his heart's blood reaching for a second appearance; another may churn out a dozen or more acceptances in a short time. I can't pretend to know of every one in fandom who has made a sale, but an hour or so spent with old magazines produces at least 150 names. And I believe every one of these sensitive faces originated in fandom:

Forry Ackerman	Ree Dragonette	Bea Mahaffey
Henry A. Ackerman	Charles Dye	Judy Merrill
Brian Alldis	Harlan Ellison	John Michel
Martin Alger	Lloyd Eshbach	Ken McIntyre
Poul Anderson	E.E. Evans	Dave McIlwain
Evan Appelman	Fred Fischer	Sky Miller
Isaac Asimov	Tom Gardner	Scott Meredith
John Ashcroft	Randy Garrett	Paul McDermott
Neil Austin	Dave Gardner	Len Moffatt
Manly Bannister	Jack Gaughan	Sam Moskowitz
Garth Bentley	Chester Geier	Stan Mullen
Charles Beaumont	John Gergen	Kris Neville
Eando Binder	John Glasby	Alan Nourse
James Blish	Joe Gibson	Chad Oliver
Robert Bloch	Joe Gilbert	Jay Tee Oliver
Hannes Bok	Walter Gillings	Ray Palmer
Henry Bott	Allen Glasser	Elmer Perdue
Barbara Bovard	John Guinta	Leslie Perri
Marian Bradley	Kenneth Gray	Emil Petaja
Ray Bradbury	Dean Grennell	Fred Pohl
Bill Brudy	Bill Hamling	Mark Reinsberg
John Brunner	Jim Harmon	Duane Rimel
Ken Bulmer	Dale Hart	Frank Robinson
H.J. Campbell	Chuck Harris	Milty Rothman
Ted Carnell	Ray Harryhausen	Ollie Sarri
John Chapmen	Maurice K. Hanson	Julius Schwartz
Arthur C. Clarke	Peter Hamilton	Larry Shaw
Vinç Clarke	Russ Hodgkins	Jerome Siegel
Charles Cloukey	Charles Hornig	Barbara Silverberg
Ron Cline	Gene Hunter	Bob Silverberg
Chet Cohen	Leslie Johnson	Tom Scortia
Arthur Jean Cox	Milton Kaletsky	Ken Slater
Les Crutch	Ray Karden	Fred Shroyer
Betsy Curtis	damon knight	Jon Stopa
Mark Clifton	Cyril Kornbluth	Ron Smith
W. Mildew Danner	Erle Korshak	Jack Speer
Chan Davis	Earl Kemp	Paul Spencer
John de Courcy	Joequel Kennedy	R.D. Swisher
Dorothy de Courcy	Walt Kubilius	Lou Tabakow
Lester del Ray	Dave Kyle	Charles Tanner
Walter Dennis	Milton Lesser	William F. Temple
Judy May Dikty	Dorothy Les Tina	Atom Thompson
Thaddeus Dikty	Doc Lowndes	D.B. Thompson
Charles de Vet	Edward Ludwig	Robt. G. Thompson
Gordy Dickson	Bob Madle	Dennis Tucker
Harry Dockweiler	Katherine MacLean	the other Tucker

Harry Turner  
Ray Van Houten  
Bill Venable  
Graph Waldeyer  
Harry Warner jr

Bryce Walton  
Basil Wells  
Mort Weisinger  
James White  
Walt Willis

Dick Wilson  
Don Wollheim  
Rosco Wright  
Sam Youd

Comment: don't cringe so abjectly, Danner -- I found that s-a-l-e you made to 'Probability Zero'. A few other names are likewise represented with a single, similar sale as their claim to fame. I wonder how many of the above people are still waiting to be paid for some of their sales? Not a few, I betcha! One of those characters up yonder still owes me sixty bucks for a story he splashed across the cover. A surprising number of the above people are still-living proof that good old First Fandom is not dead! Matter of fact, many of them predate me in fandom:

Ackerman, Cloukey, Eshbach, Gardner, Glasser, Miller, Palmer, Schwartz, Siegel, Weisinger, Wollheim ... all snuck in under the tent flaps before I discovered the flea circus existed. (And perhaps others as well; because I did not hear of them until 1934 or '35 does not mean they weren't there, silently waiting to make their bid.)

Your additions and corrections to the list are invited.

"... our automobiles are overblown, overpriced monstrosities built by oafs, for thieves to sell to mental defectives." -John Keats, in The Insolent Chariots (Lippincott, 1958.)

Boyd Raeburn: I honestly wonder if I would have the courage to remain in fapa, if you said to me what you said to Gertrude? My skin is somewhat thick -- but that thick? I wonder, but I don't want to find out.

Bill Evans: it would be delightful if you would dig up and reprint Doc Lowndes' "Trigger Talk at Green Guna" and some of the more enjoyable pieces from HC Koenig's anti-hiss campaign. Both items are sufficiently aged as to make them fresh and wonderful to present-day fapa.

In January I received two letters from Leo Margulies, addressing me as a member of "Science Fiction's Inner Circle" I felt awfully exclusive, until I realized that five thousand other people got similar letters... I hadn't seen that phrase used seriously since Degler went out of business, but still it was nice to know that someone thought I was a "discriminating enthusiast." Leo will be considerably upset, I think, when he discovers how his new large-sized magazine is displayed locally. On some stands it is stuck in with the monster magazines, and on others it is turned sideways and filed with the regular s-f magazines.

Has anyone compared movie and TV cowboys to the real old fashioned kind lately? Has anyone seen the large-sized "pictorial histories" of the Old West, which contain photographs revealing what cowboys and Indians really looked like? These fancy dudes seen on the screen today are perverts when compared to the genuine article, and I'd like to see a flock of them thrown back into time for the hell of it. Man, but there would be a merry gaggle of lynchings!

If these pages seem disjointed -- they are. The issue grew in fits and spurts, beginning in November and ending in January. I meant to invite Bloch to send material, so that we could continue the collaborative effort began a long time ago, but forgot to write until near deadline. I trust the most honorable, most respected sage of Weyauwega will forgive me this once? (Bloch's presence always boosts my rating.)



Chick Derry: in view of Warner's perfect record for avoiding conventions, wouldn't you like to reconsider the Washington bid and move the location to Hagerstown instead? It still isn't too late, you know, and the battle cry of HAGERSTOWN IN 60! might well cause a landslide vote when the full facts-and-reasons become known. HAGERSTOWN IN 60! may have the same magical effect as SOUTHGATE IN 58, in that a fine fannish legend is involved. Neither Philadelphia nor Pittsburgh will stand a reasonable chance when you broadcast the news that You Know Who will (of course) be the guest of honor, and that You Know Who will (of course) be the principle speaker (replacing John Campbell), and that You Know Who will (of course) be the toastmaster, (replacing Bob Bloch). The best of all this, Chick, is that You Know Who will be your star attraction at all times, for he also avoids the bar and the poker rooms. (If you think he will journey up to Washington to attend YOUR convention, you have another think coming.) There is only one way to trap this man:

HAGERSTOWN IN 60!

(and then seal off all the roads leading out of town, and supply every con-goer with a secret map for finding 423 Summit from the south.)

To the best of my knowledge, J. Harvey Haggard was really J. Harvey Haggard, and if I ever knew what the "J" was for, I've forgotten it. When I corresponded with him two decades ago, he lived somewhere in the California wilderness, and was a devoted family man. His time span spills over from the very early Gernsbach Period to the Middle-Wollheim: he was in the October 1930 WONDER STORIES, and lasted until circa December 1950, in OUT OF THIS WORLD ADVENTURES. At some time in the early forties I read and admired some particular story of his, and wrote him a fan letter saying so. Up until now, I thought I remembered the story, but a check of Don Day's Index fails to reveal it, so time has confused the issue. (At about the same time I fell hook and sinker for E.A. Grosser's "The Psychomorph" in Unknown, February 1940, and I wrote him a fan letter, and we fell into correspondence, so the two writers and their yarns may have caused the cross-confusion in my mind. And I hope you can read sense into this explanation.) Anyway, I used to admire Haggard's story titles, whether they were thunk up by him or his editors: He Who Masters Time, Messenger to Infinity, The Professor Splits, 'Round About Rigel, and Through The Einstein Line. Them were the days of wonder, son. If interested, there is a Haggard biography in the February 1939 AMAZING.

(Note to purists: this is a science fiction discussion.)

Weren't those old titles fascinating things (together with covers and sometimes stories)? In the early Thirties, when I entered, some - one named Roger Bird (was this you, Bloch?) wrote The Universal Merry-Go-Round; old Charles Willard Diffin offered Spawn of The Stars, and Brood of The Dark Moon; and in the meanwhile Diffin's left hand, C.D. Willard was publishing Out of The Dreadful Depths. Anthony Gilmore was riding high, wide and handsome with his old friend Hawk Carse; a couple of Campbell's ---- Clyde Crane, and John W. ---- were flexing their muscles. Clyde Crane seemed fond of one word titles: Age, Gold, Fog, Avatar, Inflexure; whereas the other Campbell wore larger sizes: The Brain Stealers of Mars, The Derelicts of Ganymede, The Black Star Passes, etc. I wonder if either of the gentlemen ever dreamed the day was coming when they would be editing rival magazines? Well, it was fun when it was new and startling, and I think a reader has a right to lose his sense of wonder after so many years.



Derry, cont: I once worked with a man who made model planes during working hours; he must have assembled dozens of them and then perched them on every available empty space in the projection booth. After a while he turned to boats; he would first float them in the sink to test their sea-worthiness, and then fill the few empty places remaining in the booth. Next, his busy little fingers took up picture painting --the numbered type-- because (I suspect) there were no more shelves or tops of amplifiers left for planes and boats. The painting career was abandoned one day (after the walls were covered) when I criticized a nude in progress, and he turned to model trains. He had vast plans to build a complete railroad in the booth, with the track winding around and under the projectors, but the management took a Dim View. Watching him put me behind in my reading.

I suspect that the absence of Warner in the old magazines you read may be blamed on the same reasons as the absence of Tucker: the fool editors are unable to recognize deathless prose when they see it. I've never been able to sell to Campbell, except for a couple of items in the 'Probability Zero' columns in 1942-43; and have never sold to Gold, except for a reprint in his GALAXY NOVEL series. It is remarkable how those two gentlemen consistently publish hackwork issue after issue, yet refuse to buy classics offered by Warner and myself. Oh, I try, of course; I've been trying for years, but you should read some of the brilliant excuses they write into their rejection slips. And it seems to be ten times more difficult to sell either of them a book, for serialization, than it does a short story. The irony comes later, when their reviewers warmly praise the book and wonder why it was not serialized somewhere before hardcover publication.

One editor recently wanted a new book (for serialization) but was prevented from buying it when his publisher decided against serials; I was so close to acceptance I could already see my name on the cover --yet, a few weeks later, another editor rejected it as unsatisfactory. I've had rejections because "a good story, but no more after-the-bomb for us!" and because "why didn't you try us earlier? We're bought up for a year ahead". That sort of thing drives you nuts after a while. But I think the most frustrating rejection is the one which misses the point; I like to work up a novel twist on an old, old theme (and maybe write it as a comedy, to boot) and send it in. So help me, the man at the desk easily recognizes the old, old theme; but nothing else --- he bounces it as old hat and forgets the matter. My favorite along this line is the story of the Wandering Jew who winds up as the last man on the planet half a billion years from now. His appointment still has not been kept. But do you think the fools will buy this gem? Hah!

You aroused me, Chick.

Harry Warner: we were just speaking of you above, you devil. Stereo sound went into the theaters a few years ago, as you've doubtless discovered, but what an infrequent, expensive dream it turned out to be! In the beginning it was ballyhooed like cinemascope and everybody -- but everybody! -- promised bigger, better pictures in the amazing new wonder of the globe. All over the English-speaking world (and other tongues as well) theaters went into debt to buy and install the new equipment, and then began clamoring for stereo prints. Well, they're still clamoring, and their equipment is gathering mice & dust. I've never been able to pin down the management on an exact figure, but our theater spent between \$3000 and \$5000 to buy and install the necessary equipment; other theaters larger than our 900 seats paid out



considerably more, I expect. Last August, we ran a stereo print of "Around the World in 80 Days" and we were amazed ---- it had been so long since we'd last heard stereo sound that we'd forgotten what it was like. And that seems to be the gist of the world's newest wonder.

The most common stereo print has four soundtracks, on tape, which are cemented onto the film alongside the picture. In our theater, these four soundtracks (via four pick-up heads) distribute the noise to nine speakers. The other, more uncommon stereo print, has six tape tracks on a separate reel which is projected on a separate machine in sync with the picture --- this sort of thing is done in the metropolitan theaters which can afford it. Tape soundtracks are an added expense to the studios, so very few of them are made and that is why the cool equipment is gathering dust. 20th-Fox, the pioneer, still makes a few pictures per year with tape; while MGM will make two or three; and with the exception of exploitation specials like "80 Days", that is the extent of it. Is it any wonder the theater owners are mad at the studios which sold them a golden dream?

But still, two further evils are encountered. First, not all the prints of a given "stereo picture" are released with stereo sound. It sounds nutty, but there it is. Assume that Mogul Pictures has produced a gigantic epic they call "War & Peace in Texas," in glorious technicolor, cinemascope and stereophonic sound. To properly serve the entire country, Mogul will order 300 prints of this epic and scatter them around the 49 states. BUT, to save money, only 100 prints of the picture will be released with stereo soundtracks; the remaining 200 prints will carry the regular, optical soundtrack. Mogul will offer the standard excuse that not all theaters are stereo-equipped, so the remaining 200 prints are for the old-fashioned exhibitors. The results are a sort of bargain-day sales crush.

On opening day, at least three hundred theaters will clamor for the 100 stereo prints; but only the 100 largest "showcases" in the big cities will get them. The remainder play the remaining prints, or wait until the stereos trickle down to them (a month to a year later). Which automatically brings on the second evil. It always happens that during the following year, some theaters not equipped for stereo will get stereo prints --- and they run them, wreaking havoc on the tapes. The next theater, which has stereo, is often unable to use it because the tapes are now loused up beyond recognition. The saddest sight in this town is two theater managers crying on each other's shoulders --- the first-run manager is seldom able to beg a stereo print, and must run his picture the old way. But when that same picture returns to the second-run house, it will be a stereo print. The second-run house is not equipped, and so the two men get together for a good bawl. Me, I'd close my theater and tell Hollywood to shove you-know-what.

Well, anyway, our theater had its stereo picture for 1958. I enjoyed "80 Days," did you?

And Harry, you saw a different version of "The Key" than the one played here. In ours, the hero does not get the girl in the end. As he is running for the train, the gatekeeper slams the gate in his face and causes him to miss it. Disconsolate, our hero and his friend walk away into the drifting steam, muttering consolations. I think this proves that you live in a parallel time world.

Nick Falasca took violent exception to my recommendation, earlier, that "The Brothers K" was worth seeing. So don't you go; Nick may be right. I'm awfully close to the trees, you know.

The Backward Glance: a re-reading of the previous nine pages revealed an unintentional bias: almost all of them harp on fandom past, as if I were in my dotage and already depending on dreams. That's what happens when nine pages are spread out over three months--- I neglect to back-check to see what I've already written. Well, okay. Let's finish in the same vein, the ego-boo is lovely. I've found a fan poll taken by Art Widner jr and Manse Brackney, dated June 1, 1943:

Fans

1. Ackerman
2. Tucker
3. Warner jr
4. EE Evans
5. Ashley
6. Widner jr
7. Phil Bronson
8. Julie Unger
9. Mike Rosenblum
10. Walt Liebscher

Fanzines

1. Le Zombie
2. The Fantasite
3. Nova
4. The Acolyte
5. Voice of Imagination
6. Spaceways
7. Fanfare
8. Fantasy Fiction Field
9. Dawn
10. Light

Pulp authors

1. Heinlein
2. A. Merritt
3. EE Smith
4. Campbell-Stuart
5. Ron Hubbard
6. Stanley Weinbaum
7. Lovecraft
8. van Vogt
9. de Camp
10. Jack Williamson

Book authors

1. H.G. Wells
2. Olaf Stapledon
3. Thorne Smith
4. E.R. Burroughs
5. Branch Cabell
6. E.A. Poe (without Bloch)
7. John Taine
8. H. Rider Haggard
9. Arthur Machen
10. Jules Verne

Science fiction

1. Slan
2. Final Blackout
3. Invaders of the Infinite
4. Spacehounds of the IPC
5. The Time Machine
6. Beyond This Horizon
7. Forgetfulness
8. Skylark III
9. Skylark of Space
10. The Grey Lensman

Fantasy fiction

1. Ship of Ishtar
2. Fear
3. Sinister Barrier
4. Dwellers in the Mirage
5. The Moon Pool
6. The Blind Spot
7. Through the Gates of the  
Silver Key
8. None But Lucifer
9. It
10. The Snake Mother

A far cry from today, indeed. There were more than a handful of magazines, of course, but very few books from which to choose. Collecting books was a slow (and relatively cheap) process; one relied on reviewers and other collectors to accumulate volumes which had been published over the previous fifty or one hundred years. My oldest one was a volume published circa 1890, on the "sleeper awakes" theme. The collector haunted the rental book stores, buying up discontinued items which proved to be mostly fantasy and weird, rather than s-f.

The younger generation would rather build a tower to the moon.

QWERTYUIOPRESS

- Bob Tucker