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the fiction fanzine

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EXPERIMENT

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WHEN IN ACCORD WITH NIGHT

by Jerry F. Cao

When in accord with night that hovers near,
I feel the presence of a ghostly crowd:
The wandering shades, from this or other sphere,
Who drift among us like a fallen cloud.
Attuned to their unuttered memories,
I hear their terrible, unending death...
Their footsteps echoing on phantom seas
Aglitter with the smiles of Ashtoreth.
I sit in silence till the breathless dark
And all its entities of ageless age
Draw close together, and at dawn depart
To some unhuman, distant hermitage.
As often as Night, these visitors return;
And I, the curious, sit and listen... learn!

:as:of:July:27:1951:

WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN

Dear Paul: Sorry I've taken so long on this. You got me over a barrel two ways. First, I was in the act of moving from Taos, where we spent the winter, back to El Rancho Del BEM in Arroyo Seco. Secondly, you caught me with a deadline I had to make. Fredric Brown and I are doing a novel length for Sam Merwin's Startling and I've just finished my part of it. ##### At any rate, here are my opinions of Vol. 2, No. 1. I was quite impressed by the issue. Truly, most fan fiction is pretty bad—this was surprisingly good. In fact I've seen stories no better in pro-magazines. ##### CHOICE, by Al Leverentz. I assume that Al is more interested in criticism than in praise so I'll largely skip the latter, although I think the story really much better done than usually in fan magazines. Not quite saleable to the prozines—almost. Al needs a better title, a better narrative hook, and just a few more lines of putting the gimmick over. It also seems to me that the very long scene where—completely in dialogue—the Earthman tells the E. T. the deal, should be broken up in some manner. Most of all, I'd stress the need for the Narrative Hook. It becomes increasingly clear to me, as I continue to write, that a story can be made or lost in the first two paragraphs. If you can grasp the reader's attention in those first few lines, brother, you have him—and I don't care if the reader is a lowly fan or an EDITOR (prostrate yourself and bow threeee times!) ##### FAIR EXCHANGE, by Del Close, the short-short, was extremely well done, as far as the writing goes. As a matter of fact, the writing is quite professional. But brother! There's a hole in this story big enough to drive my herd of goats through. Not that it can't be mended, but this sort of hole just doesn't go with an editor. The first paragraph gives you to understand that the old millionaire is talking with the guy he's to exchange bodies with. The gimmick line lets us know that the young guy is dead. It would have to be reworked to eliminate that early scene. ##### WAR IS H___THY, by Ed Noble, I liked. I think there are some things about it a bit too weak to make it prozine saleable, but, obviously, if that weren't true we'd have been reading it in Startling instead of FAN-FARE. For one thing, the narrative hook. The first two or three paragraphs are dull, the dullest paragraphs in the story. They should be the most interesting. Another item, the matter of manufacturing humor by spelling names or words backward. Ed gives his planets such names as Ufans, Snafu in reverse. (Frankly, I never did figure out what Ufrat meant, but then, I'm behind the times.) This type of humor has been used since Poe's day, and although it might have been a humdinger then, it doesn't bear belaboring. ##### GUARD STATION, by Eugene DeWeese, I think suffers particularly from a lack of rewriting. The general theme is rather overworked in stf, and it is hard to find a new angle for it; and the end doesn't have quite enough punch. I think Eugene could have improved this story tremendously by letting it sit for about six months, then getting it out and giving it a complete rewrite. ##### THE TWILIGHT WORLD, by George Craig. This is the type of story I shouldn't criticize, mainly because I don't like the theme. It's not that it isn't well written; I just can't get excited about Conan the Conqueror, or John Car-

EXPERIMENT

BY EUGENE DEWEESE

"Are you still set on going through with this?" George Copper looked almost pleadingly at the man across the room.

"Sure." Ray Gilmur looked up from the little wiring diagram on the table before him. "What do you think I spent half of my dad's money and all of my time on this for, if I don't intend to go through with it?"

"Okay, okay. I just thought you might have gotten some more sense."

"Sense?" Gilmur nearly exploded. "Sense, you say? Whether you know it or not, this will be the greatest scientific advancement of the century!"

"Then how is it, Mr. Modesty," Copper inquired sarcastically, "you haven't gotten anyone besides myself, an old school-friend, to come and witness this great triumph?" Gilmur had been—and still was—one of his best friends, but his continual talk of how he had the greatest scientific brain of the age, the nearest thing to the next species of mankind, was getting on his nerves.

"Just because all those stiff-and-staid stuffed shirts that call themselves scientists are so damn narrow-minded and short-sighted, they can't see beyond their own private little worlds of cracked theorizing! That's why!" he finished almost bitterly.

"So scientists are all narrow-minded, short-sighted stuffed shirts, eh? Well, what makes you think you're any different? You call yourself a scientist, remember? How do you know you're not just one more stuffed shirt with a lot of cracked ideas?"

"Why? Because I realized that that was just what I was starting out to be twenty years ago—and I did something about it.

"I threw out about half of their theories and repaired most of the others. And now I've gotten myself a set of rules that mean something, that aren't just a lot of incomprehensible, useless calculations, that I can get to work for me—and get some tangible results.

"Like this!"

Gilmur waved his arm expansively at a large, clumsy-looking box-shaped contraption; it took up one entire corner of the room. There were a number of dials, very finely calibrated, with several sets of knobs, one set for each dial. Surmounting the apparatus was a metal chair, a shining metal sphere clinging to its back near the top.

"Like that?" Copper echoed. "Like that? But how do you know it'll work? It's based on nothing but theories. Your theories at that—half of them have been contradicted, almost laughed down, wherever you mention them. What makes you think you're such a super-scientist that you can re-arrange, almost completely make over, the entire modern concept of science?"

"I haven't completely re-arranged it," Gilmur told him. "Science itself often discards outmoded theories! I've only carried them through to their ultimate conclusions, developed new ones from new data. Take a look at what you call 'science' some time! Most of the

theories contradict each other or some known fact! I haven't changed many of the rules of nuclear physics, for instance, those that led to the atom bomb about two-hundred years ago. I just extended them!

"Besides: People like Galileo and Copernicus changed their sciences almost completely around! My mind is at least the equal of theirs!"

"Okay, okay. I'm just a stupid layman you tricked into helping with this. I wouldn't know enough about it to prove you're crazy. But I'm still entitled to my own private opinions, which are, in general, those held by every scientist I've ever heard of.

"And I still think, no matter what you say, that the whole thing is too fantastic——"

"What's so fantastic about a huge macrocosm? One in which this entire universe, the metagalaxy, is but one tiny atom? Can you or anyone else prove that it isn't?"

"Well, I guess not. But can you prove it is? I may not know too much about all the sciences, but I do know enough about astronomy and atomics from my high school physics to know that the resemblance between the solar system and an atom is so small as to be almost nonexistent; just a negligible structural similarity, that's all."

"How many time do I have to explain that to you? Don't you see it yet?"

"It's not each star system that is an atom in this macrocosm. It's our entire universe, our entire metagalaxy, possibly, probably, others as well, taken as a whole which is probably——no, positively!——the nucleus of an atom! This universe of ours is but a part of a group of nucleons in this super-atom."

Gilmur stopped for a moment to glare directly at Copper, then continued, "And now I intend to prove it, first to myself beyond all doubt, then to the world, especially those stuffed shirts who so enjoy themselves laughing at me!"

"But look," Copper objected, "How will you get back? How can you get back? If this universe you're going to is so large, how will you ever find your way back to Earth? Why, it won't be any more than... than nothing. Like trying to find one particular amoeba out of all the billions, trillions of them that exist on Earth.

"And even more," Copper continued before Gilmur could interrupt to explain. "Even more. To exist in a world of that size, the time rate would have to be infinitely slower. Why, if the time rate remained the same, it would take an infinity of time for light to move even scant inches.

"The time rate would have to be so infinitely slower that while mere seconds went by up there, billions, trillions and more centuries, millennia would have gone by here on Earth. So how could you come back to this world you know in time to prove anything. You would return to Earth so far in the future that Earth might not even exist."

"Oh, Good Lord!" Gilmur flopped his hands in the air exasperatedly, "I've told you time and time again: that machine not only enlarges me, but when its effect wears off and I descend into this universe in the remote future, it will automatically reach through time and pull me backward to the present.

"Well, all right, I won't argue. But I can't help thinking these ideas are still just theories——yours."

"Yes! My theories!" Gilmur turned away, impatience scrawled across

his features in foot-high letters, "I know they're right. And if they aren't, I'm the one who will suffer, not you." He stepped toward the apparatus in the corner of the room.

"But look. You came here to help with this experiment—or demonstration—so let's get on with it. I can't wait to show up all those fools that call themselves scientists."

"Okay, okay. But before you start on your way, I'll say good-bye to you. I still don't have as much faith in that business as you."

"Well, I do!"

Gilmur went silent suddenly, refusing to return the farewell that Copper offered him. He climbed up onto the machine and into the chair, settled himself back, and motioned to Copper.

"Okay, it's your funeral," shrugged Copper. He knew it was no use to try to argue further; Gilmur was set, and that was all there was to it. "Thank God you set the controls before you got up there. I wouldn't want to take the responsibility."

Copper reached up and pushed slowly at a switch until it had rotated through a full 180 degrees.

The machine began to hum slightly, softly, and the dials wavered for an instant as the power surged through. The sphere attached to the back of the chair glowed steadily with a harsh white light. The form of Gilmur blurred momentarily, solidified for an instant, then—disappeared.

He did not come back.

* * *

A wave of blackness swept over him. The personality, the mental arrangement that had been Ray Gilmur became nothingness for an instant, then began to flow slowly back into shape.

He had a sense of falling, falling through a whirling, swirling tunnel, vortex, of blackness.

Then it began to take on colors, colors of all imaginable hues, some he had seen, some he had never even imagined could exist, some that had been above and below visible light but had become visible to him now.

The whirling sensation ceased slowly, the whirling lights slowed. Finally, a tiny pinpoint of clear, stable white light appeared before him.

His sight cleared more.

The light became a small fiery globe of brilliance, giving the impression of incredible solidity.

He swung his hand at it, mostly out of curiosity. At the last instant, he tried to hold it up, realizing that it was his own sun.

But it was too late.

He felt nothing as his hand smashed into it: no heat, no pressure.

He looked down; and saw that it had passed through his hand, unharmed.

Apparently he had expanded so that the sun was on a different plane of physical existence than he.

Even as he watched, the light seemed to come closer, yet rather than becoming larger, it gradually shrank with an ever-increasing appearance of incredible density.

Finally it swam inward and touched him, disappeared from view—

somewhere within his own body.

He glanced slowly around him. On every side were hundreds of tiny dots of brilliance, of all colors.

They too swam inward toward him, disappeared within him.

He closed his eyes involuntarily, as if to shut out the vastness of what was happening to him.

Here he was: Floating in space so large that with one swipe of his hand, he could span a galaxy.

The thought unnerved him all the more.

In this tiny universe that had once stretched farther than any telescope could see, that was now a midget group of lights all about him—and within him!—he had no physical existence. Nor had he any in the super-universe above him.

He was a universe in himself, one floating in the vastness of the space between infinite largeness and infinite smallness, having no existence in either.

A universe in himself...only such universal things as light extending from one to the other.

Light?

The thought set him to wondering. Light? Heat? And suns?

Yes, suns. Why were they blasting away at their incredible rate? Why were they pouring out energy as they were? And how had they gotten started in the Beginning?

Yes, he thought, how...how did they get started? And what was their purpose?

Anything so vast, so great as those countless super-atomic furnaces, had to have a purpose of some sort.

Something...

He opened his eyes.

All around him, at all distances, were countless minute disks of all sizes and shapes, some circular, some spherical, others with tenuous arms reaching far out into intergalactic space, sometimes touching neighboring galaxies.

And they all had a movement—a slow revolving movement, ever increasing in speed. Revolving about some unknown center of gravity in the heart of each.

Somewhere down there, thought Gilmur, somewhat unreasonably, somewhere down there my own little Earth is flashing about a dot of light thousands of millions of times as each second passes for me. Billions of people are dying each instant, entire generations, living and dying...

Perhaps the human race is no more.

Perhaps that tiny, invisible mote of cosmic dust somewhere down there in that cosmic vastness grown so small exists no more.

Maybe even the sun has waned and faded into a dead and blackened cinder.

Perhaps, perhaps...

Thoughts of all sorts, disconnected, almost irrational, flashed fleetingly through his mind.

Thoughts shooting through his mind as the galaxies, now but minute specks or dots of light, but becoming strangely more intense and brilliant, flowed in toward him, always shrinking, becoming denser, brighter, moving faster, finally disappearing beyond his field of vision—into his body.

Finally, after what seemed an eternity, an eternity of floating, falling unreality, all space about him was a great gaseous expanse—billions, trillions upon trillions of galaxies taken as a whole, seen by a being infinitely larger than any of the huge galaxies.

The light from the flowing, glowing gas was becoming more intense, uncomfortable to the eye.

Suddenly there was a snap, sending a sharp pain through his entire body and mind.

His first thought was that he had, in that brief instant, expanded into the great macrocosm of which his entire universe was but an infinitesimal part of an atom.

It was true.

In a brief instant, he could see the world about him.

It was one similar to Earth in many ways.

He was suspended above a city, a city of steel and cement towers, stretching upward into the sky and spreading out in all directions over a broad, flat surface.

Also he realized, for a brief moment, the answer to all his questions. He knew why the countless suns in his universe shot out their energy at their incredible rate; why his universe was always expanding, and.... how they had been activated, how the infinite stars had been roused, started in their incessant, roaring life of life-giving destruction.

All this was comprehended before the life-essence, the reasoning consciousness, that was Raymond Gilmur, vanished into oblivion, perished in the hellish fury of the atomic explosion he had expanded into.

The End

AN IDLE THOUGHT

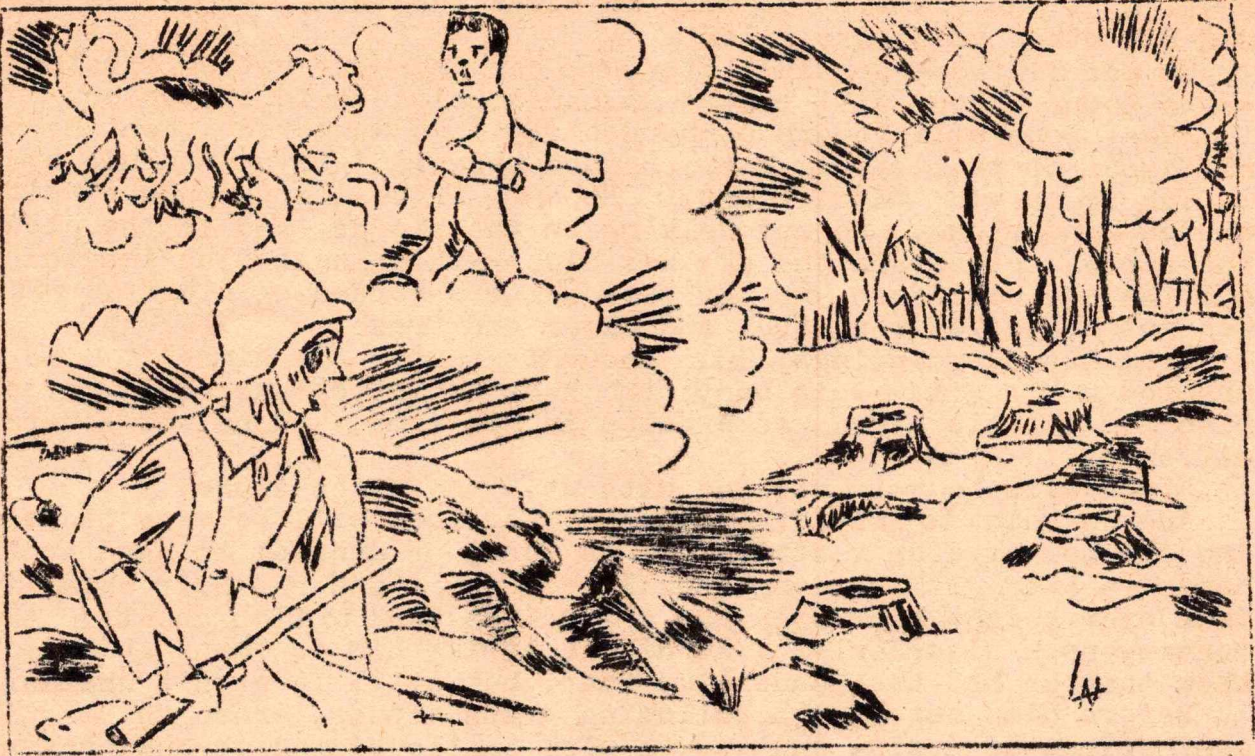
A firefly
Is a star,
Shining in another sphere,
Warming another cosmos,
Shedding a light
Which we may only glimpse
As a remote spark,
As we see the stars.

I wonder if others
See our stars
As fireflies?

—Toby Duane

ASSAY REPORT —by the Editor

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(4)	WAR IS H <u> </u> THY	ED NOBLE	3.206
(5)	GUARD STATION	EUGENE DEWEESE	3.882
(6)	LAMENT	TOBY DUANE	4.719



A PARADOX OF DREAMS

by TOM COVINGTON

He lay in the muddy trench, a hot sweat beading his forehead, a knot of wriggling butterflies in his stomach and his throat muscles contracted chokingly. Occasionally an artillery shell burst back in the woods behind him. He knew the boys were getting hell back there. But the thought that other guys—scores of them—were in the same condition didn't help him any. He was terrified—trembling with a horror—a great horror—almost more than he could bear. It was not panic such as had ruled him in his boyhood in Johnstown—strange he should think of that now—when he had gotten his foot caught in the railroad tracks and seen the impassive face of the locomotive coming around a curve—it was something more terrible than that; it was a cold, merciless, indescribable fear that swelled his heart to the bursting point and held him in its clutches—immovable.

The flash of exploding shells was around him and the noises—no, not noises—noise—it was one continuous unending, colossal noise which beat into his senses—his brain—battering itself against the black terror there—black noise against black terror. He laughed and thought, Noise and terror, terror and noise, battling for his brain—his brain, what brain—battling in darkness; the struggle of darkness in darkness—and there was darkness.

"We must take him to Zoon," said one voice. "Yes, we must take him to Zoon." And the other voice was quiet, and, therefore, not a voice

because it was quiet. "To Zoon we shall take him," spoke the voice, and the other voice was silent.

He was lifted—gently lifted, and carried—or rather floated off—to Zoon. "Zoon will reward us handsomely," said the voice.

"Yes, Zoon will reward us handsomely," he answered. Then the significance of that struck him. He had answered! He opened his eyes.

The scene was magnificent. He was traveling through a whitely misted wonderland. He was walking on the clouds, and in the clouds. The air was clear and the sky was blue—the bluest blue imaginable. And the sun beat down on the snow white panorama of clouds, yet it was not hot, just beautiful and clear and fresh.

From his surroundings, his thoughts turned to himself. He was cradled in his arms—his body, the hunk of protoplasm which had carried him all his life, was cradled in his arms, and he was something different.

"Zoon will be very pleased with us," the voice spoke.

And he said to his other head, "Yes, Zoon will be very pleased." And somehow it didn't strike him as funny or unusual to have another head—a head with a long beak like a bird and red hair which fell down over bright pink eyes and around the beak to flop about a thin, scrawny neck disorderly. It didn't strike him as funny at all. He knew that he had two heads like that, but still it wasn't unusual.

Before him, out of the billowing white clouds, arose the magnificent spires of a pink castle—a pink castle viewed through the snow white clouds against the blue sky—a sight of strange majesty. He knew that here was the palace of Zoon.

Suddenly, from the corner of his eye, he saw something. It was somewhat like a gigantic dachshund dog with ten legs and no head. And yet, it was very vague looking—as if it wanted to defy description, as if it didn't matter how it looked. "What a strange thought," he mused. "As if it didn't matter how it looked indeed!" Then he ran.

He ran instinctively. There was no tangible reason to run—the being had done nothing hostile, but, somehow, he knew that he didn't want himself to be caught by it. He didn't know why he felt so, but he did.

Faster and faster he ran, gliding over the cloud humps and gullies, drifts, and valleys as if he were as light as a feather—and indeed, he was.

And the thing came after.

He ducked into a cloud bank. The white mist obscured his passage from the black thing's view. But it came on. It followed him through the cloud and out the other side, and he ran the faster.

He ducked into another cloud and traveled on and on through the weightless, moistureless fog. It was beautiful in the cloud. In every direction he looked he could see nothing but hazy opaqueness. Then the cloudish vapor began to take on a new hue. It became rather pinkish—pinker and pinker. Finally it was so pink that his vision could not penetrate it. He wanted to go back. But which way was back! Perhaps it was that way, or that. Or perhaps it was the way he had been going. Come to think of it, which way had he been going? Perhaps he had been going back. With this thought in mind, he stumbled off.

The pinkness had become more intense. It was now a redness—then a purpleness—later a dark purpleness—a blue—a black. And again there was blackness.

He screamed. He screamed again. The silence—the black silence, broken only by that drop of water dripping on the cold stone floor of the dungeon—dripping with its monotonous rhythm—its unalterable steadiness, was driving him mad. Slowly mad. First there had been the screeching sound—the droning—going on and on and on, batting out his ear drums, piercing his brain and making him want to try and beg them—if there was a them—to stop it, to stop it and let him die in peace. Finally, when he had screamed, it had stopped, and there was silence—wonderful silence—deep silence. For a while he had hung there—suspended by some kind of cable—enjoying the luxury of silence. But then the silence had become as terrible as the droning, screeching noise. Then he had heard the dripping of water—the blessed, homely sound of dripping water. He had listened with all his might to that sound, blessing it with his whole being and hoping it would never stop. Now he was screaming because of them. He hated water. He hated it violently. He hated life. He wished it would end.

Suddenly the place—the dungeon—was lit by a bright light. It hurt his eyes and blinded him. And the dripping of water had stopped. He recovered his vision. His eyes had become adjusted to the sudden light. He looked about him. The room was built of unbroken rock. Large rocks, damp rocks. Rocks which years of dampness had covered with a film of green moss.

Then he saw it. There was a hole in the wall to his right. And from that hole was poking the end of some great prong. And it was moving toward him slowly. And there were holes in the other walls. And from them, too, prongs were coming. They were moving slowly toward him—all of them. Four great prongs which would meet at this place where he hung. Four great prongs which would bite slowly into his body until they met and he was dead. Suddenly he didn't want to die. He screamed. He screamed again and again as the prongs came closer. Slowly, ever so slowly, they came. Closer and closer, and closer still. One of them—all of them—were just a foot from his chest—no, his stomach. They would all plunge their sharp heads into his stomach and push until they touched one another. Perhaps, as he hung there, they would sever him and his lower half would drop to lie on the floor—food for the rats—as his upper half hung there—forever. He fainted.

Her soft cheek was pressed against his, her lips—her wonderfully soft lips—on his ear. His face was covered by her fragrant hair and her soft, clean body was pressed against his snugly. She was crying.

He rolled over and put his arm about her shoulders, comforting her against he knew not what. He didn't even know where or who he was but, in this beautiful moment, it didn't matter. Her hair was soft and clean and her cheek was warm and smooth as he kissed it, and knew that he loved her.

He slept.

The artillery shell dropped right in back of the trench with a deafening roar. The rattle of a fifty calibre machine gun and the crack of a multitude of M-1's were heard off in the distance. Some-

where to his right a BAR chattered—five quick shots, a short pause, and then another short burst. Another shell droned overhead sounding like a jet plane as it buffeted its way through the atmosphere. It struck—back in the woods it struck, and he could see the flash and hear the roar as it struck. Out in the field—the muddy field ahead of him—something moved. The enemy. He fired. He fired again. Then, beside him, a dark shadow loomed. A bayoneted rifle was raised in the air and brought down with all the strength of wiry muscles. He rolled, but it plunged into him—into his body—spilling his guts!

She was not crying. But he hugged her shoulders to comfort her anyway.

The End

THE SPACER'S SONG
by Helen Louise Soucy

When you're millions of light-years from nowhere,
And there's hardly a sun in sight;
When space seems to stretch on forever
In a frightening, endless night;

When you're out there alone in the stillness,
And there isn't a sound to be heard;
When home is merely a memory,
And comfort only a word;

When it's months since you've seen any humans,
And months till you'll see any more—
When day after day after day is the same,
And whatever you do, it's a bore—

It's then you begin to wonder
Why you chose the spacer's life;
Whatever made you come out in the void,
And of what use is all your strife...

There are folks back home who describe it
In long terms that are glowing and bright;
Though they've never been off their home planet
And know space not even by sight.

But they speak of the thrill and adventure,
Of the beauty, the uplifting scenes,
And they praise the life of the spacer
Knowing nothing of all that it means.

Then you wonder how much they would like it
If they ever came out for a taste,
If they had to endure that chill horror:
The dread loneliness of the waste.

And you wonder again why you stay here
When there's everything con, nothing pro,
But you know in your heart the reason—
It's just: Space won't let you go!

THE GAP IN THE CURTAIN

In the July issue, we intend to give you another extremely humorous short novelette by Eugene DeWeese entitled THE TALE OF O'TOOLE:—we also expect to have a long tale by Andrew Duane for your enjoyment. FLASH: Alice Bullock (DORMITORY OF THE DEAD) has sold two tales, one to Avon Publications. We expect great things from her in the future!

It's A Lie!

by MARIE-LOUISE

"What's in a name?" queries Shakespeare facetiously. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." And practicing my own mad philosophy of living dangerously, I presume to question the veracity of the immortal Bard's rash statement. In other words — Willie, you slay me!

Let me cite an example; suppose a rose had been named stinkweed. Imagine Tony Martin's magic voice crooning into your living room that tender ballad of last summer "Roses" thusly... "Stinkweed, I bring you stinkweed!" And in the closing measures adjuring his beloved to please dear embrace the stinkweed until he came to her. Any self-respecting female would grab his curly, black head, dump it gently against the wall and tell him to stick his stinkweed.

Memory conjures up still another instance of the tragic importance of what's in a name. Comes clearly to mind the one-room country schoolhouse where I learned beside the basic three R's, an astounding number of fascinating four letter words. Eight grades were presided over by one Miss Worth who tried vainly to live up to her name. I remember perfectly her long, perennially wet nose, buck teeth, and big, floppy ears that gave her the appearance of Bugs Bunny. To further the rabbit illusion, every day she carted to school a huge paper bag of lunch which consisted mainly of raw carrots.

"Eat plenty of carrots, children!" she admonished us, chomping gaily. "They contain all the essential vitamins!"

"Essential to what?" wondered Gwen, eyeing cruelly the tangible result of an overdose of vitamins. Children are the most inhumane animal alive. I am appalled now, when I recall what little monsters we were, the delight we took in ferreting out one another's weaknesses and capitalizing on them. We should have been beaten regularly, like a rug.

One particular day a new boy appeared in our midst. A tall, ungainly creature, he made friends with no one and shied away from all overtures. In vain we tried to discover his name. No one knew.

Recess time arrived and we followed him about in a group trying to pump him. To no avail. Finally we cornered him against the double, wee, sma' hoose in back of the school. (One side for the girls, one side for the boys, and never the twain shall meet.) His back to this modern structure, he faced his tormentors.

"What's your name?" I demanded for the fiftieth time. He kicked at a loose pebble and said shyly, "NONE OF YOUR GODDAM BUSINESS!"

Stung by such ungentlemanly conduct, and pursuing my usual policy of galloping in where the denizens of Heaven fear to tread, I said suspiciously, "How come you won't tell us your name?"

He thrust his face down to a level with mine and asked coldly, "How'd you like to kiss my arse?" I thought of a dozen exciting replies to this one, but remembering just in time that after all, Mother was a D'Orsay of Baltimore, I merely inquired politely, "Does it look anything like your face?"

Next morning we listened breathlessly to roll call and had our reward. Down the line of familiar names went Miss Worth with maddening speed and then "William Titt!" Utter silence for a moment, then a

savage voice from the rear muttered, "Here!" From that moment on we made his life miserable.

Not too long ago I was absorbed in Stefan Zweig's BALZAC and came upon this interesting sidelight of that imaginative genius. When he was about thirty and utterly discouraged with his mundane life, he suddenly announced to the world in general that his name was really "de Balzac." And in the face of jeering friend and foe alike clung to this aristocratic "de" the remainder of his life. Who can say how much of his later success was due to the magic of two, small letters? A classic example of "what's in a name," if I ever heard one.

My mother, in longago days, when she was a student at Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, was courted passionately by a handsome youth who bore the thoughtful name of Walter Openbottom. According to my maternal parent he was the lover every girl dreams about and seldom meets, and could have given Romeo himself a few pointers. But obviously, no girl in her right mind would care to be known as "Mrs. Openbottom" so she waved bye bye to the romantic Walter and married Dad instead.

At the very thought of how narrow an escape I've had of slinking through life as Marie-Louise Openbottom, my ego shrivels to pinpoint dimensions and I feel such passionate gratitude toward my male parent I rush about in a frenzy trying to please him.

"Dammit! I don't WANT my bedroom slippers! And stop trying to set me on fire! When I want a smoke I'll light my own pipe! When a man works hard all day you'd think he was entitled to read his paper in peace. And for Christ sake, lay off the smooching! I'd as soon have the cat wrap her tongue around my face!"

Where was I? Oh yes, what's in a name?

"Fan-Fare" by any other name would still arrive bimonthly.

The End

THE LONELY

by ANDREW DUANE

In my veins flows the blood of an alien race...

I walk in the night-time, forever alone,
With the shadowy trees as my guide;
And memory, graven like ciphers in stone,
Hovers, still, like a ghost at my side.

I see crystal towers that are not of Earth,
And high-arching bridges of light,
A world full of people all shining with mirth—
Where the stars are a music at night.

The whole Earth is strange, and the sun and the moon;
But the stars—shining stars!—they are mine:
I tread them in dreaming, with planets for shoon,
And I worship their light as a shrine.

Oh, the Stars—shining stars!—and the vastness of space..,
In my veins flows the blood of an alien race.

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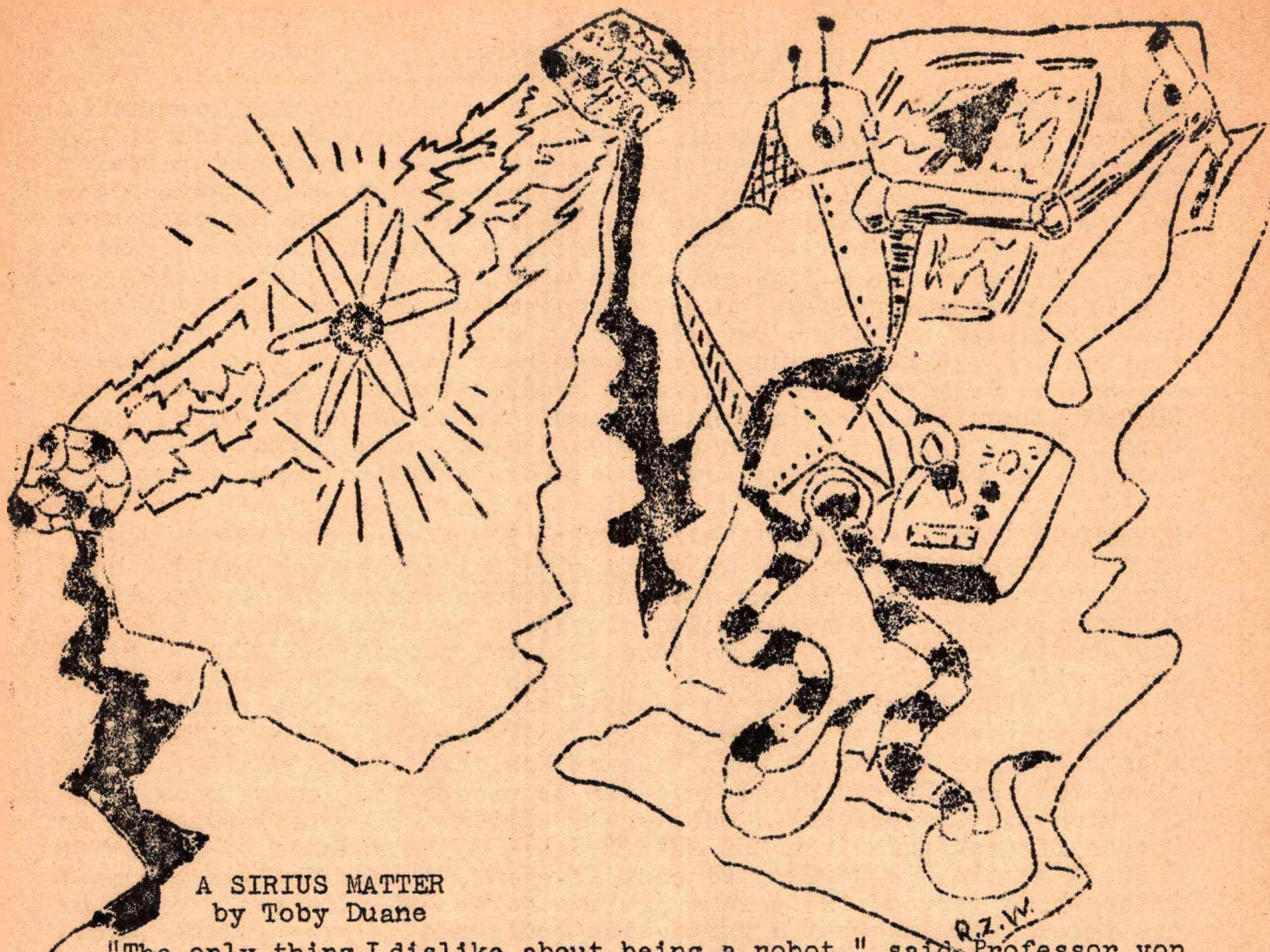
THE HAUNTER OF THE DARK AND OTHER TALES OF TERROR, by H. P. Lovecraft, (Victor Collanz, Ltd., London: 10/6d). A collection of ten of the best known—and best all around—stories of HPL. Since no rare tales are reprinted here, I wouldn't suggest this book to the casual reader, but it will of course interest the completist and the collector as the first collection of this author to be printed outside of America. Included are a good selection of the Cthulhu Cult stories—cosmic terror at its best, in my opinion—as well as the old standbys: "Outsider," "Colour Out of Space," etc. I don't doubt there are some members of fandom who have never read HPL, perhaps considering a weirdist too low for their elevated reading tastes developed through SF, but I know I'd certainly hate to come across one of the naive creatures. In fact, I don't think they could rightfully claim to know anything of SF without having read some of HPL's limited classics in that field.

SOMETHING ABOUT CATS AND OTHER PIECES, by H. P. Lovecraft (Arkham House: \$3.00). This is a follow-up to Marginalia, and is the collection of the Lovecraftian miscellany which that volume did not print. The title essay is a delightful thing which glorifies cats and condemns dogs for the stupid creatures they are (and also the people who like dogs). I agree with all Lovecraft has to say on the matter. The book is filled out with HPL contributions to various non-pro magazines, some of his poorer poetry, and five photographs (only one of which is HPL, and that being him as a small boy). The ex-Mrs. HPL, Hazel Heald, Adolphe de Castro, and Robert Bloch have six stories spread among them, none of which was exceptional. The last 88 pages are various tributes to Lovecraft: reprints from the ARKHAM SAMPLER, an addenda to Derleth's "HPL: A Memoir," a poem by Vincent Starrett, et al. Perhaps the most interesting part of the volume are the notes HPL made for various of his tales, showing what a particular craftsman he was. Indispensable to anyone who really loves HPL! This book gives many valuable insights into the life of this great American supernaturalist, and no HPL collection could be complete without it.

—ALE

EXILES OF TIME, by Nelson Bond (Prime Press, \$3.00). Upon finishing this story, I could do nothing for a full five minutes except sit and stare and mutter, over and over, "Well, I'll be damned!" The passage of time has dulled that astounded reaction, but still I wonder at the extent of human ingenuity—or, to be specific, that of a certain Nelson S. Bond, author. "Exiles of Time" is not, in itself, so exceptional a book: typical blood-and-thunder adventure with some admittedly ingenious scientific postulations woven into it; but the short two-page epilogue, which was not written by the author at all, raises the story to the level of a minor classic. A paradox? Not at all. Bond took several assorted legends and myths and part of the folk-poetry of a certain country and wove them all into an extremely well-planned and often thought-provoking story—the catch is that the reader does not recognize that fact until he has finished the book! Even with the foreknowledge that a review such as this might furnish, you can be completely and ignominiously amazed. Read the book, by all means, but don't look at the ending first. You'll never forgive yourself if you do. ((183 pp.))

—Edd Roberts



A SIRIUS MATTER
by Toby Duane

"The only thing I dislike about being a robot," said Professor von Harbenschultz, "is that I can no longer enjoy a good draught of beer!"

Ted Fox grinned at the imposing metallic figure which reposed on a steel-lined couch. And since his brain had not been transplanted to the stainless-steel head of a mechanical body, he proceeded to drain his own glass of foaming fluid.

Professor von Harbenschultz managed to look painfully resigned despite the inflexibility of his robotic features. The tale of this famous American scientist's unfortunate accident during a series of crucial nuclear experiments is no new one, we are sure, since he was the first man to survive the death of his mortal flesh. Or most of it—the grey cells hidden behind polished steel were still very much alive.

As a robot with a man's brain, the good professor slipped from the role of experimenter to that of experiment. But that was years ago, before spaceships, before the colonies on Venus and the outer planets, —and before any hint of interstellar invasion!

"I think I can sympathize with your emotions, professor," Ted replied. "Perhaps we should devise a method of fermenting your lubricating oil, or making it taste like beer. Instead of having you bathe

in the stuff every Saturday night, we could arrange for it to be imbibed."

"Now there's a suggestion!—there may be some hope for the younger generation after all!"

"It's too bad we won't ever have the chance to try it. That's the reason Dad couldn't accept your invitation for tonight. It's the Sirian situation."

Professor von Harbenschultz slouched in his chair. As a robot he did not require bodily comfort, but he found that his visitors were generally more at ease when he, too, sat.

"But I'm glad to meet you, at any rate. It has been longer than ten years since I saw you and your father last—when the final research on my robot body was completed. You've changed quite a bit." He paused. "What have Sirians to do with your father—he's a bio-chemist, not a diplomat."

"We need more than diplomacy. Sirius has demanded that the Solar System surrender to the Sirian army—they've sent a fleet of ships, to enforce the demand. They've got atomic power, while Earth still uses chemical rockets and chemical weapons, except for a few crude atomic-reaction bombs."

Fox glanced at his watch. "The Sirians want the Solar system for more than just another province. If they don't surrender, the earth will be razed completely—devoided of life!"

Again Professor von Harbenschultz's inflexible features seemed to register an emotion. He looked tolerant, "I doubt that they can do that," he murmured. "Earth is a pretty big place."

Fox looked at his watch again. He appeared to be pondering something. "Well," he said, "whether they attack or not, we can't do very much about it. How about this new invention of yours, professor. Can you demonstrate it? It's what I came to see."

Von Harbenschultz arose, and, shaking the steel-reinforced floor, led the way down to the cellar, where he had set up his own fully-equipped laboratory.

Ted was, like his father, a bio-chemist, although he had not completed a course of study comparable with his father's string of degrees. He had had, in this course, a little physics. It should have enabled him to comprehend any ordinary apparatus.

The structure in the far corner was not ordinary. Von Harbenschultz gestured toward it. "This," he said, "has already begun to revolutionize nuclear physics!"

It looked like someone had let a madman loose with a lightning-generator! There was a control panel with several meters and dials that were roughly hand calibrated but unlabeled. Wires snaked through a fantastic tangle of material that included resonators, transformers, radio tubes, and all sorts of queer coils. Huge cables led into it from the wall, and others led to the distorted lightning-balls.

Ted looked at von Harbenschultz. "I guess you'll have to explain it—show me how it works."

"I intended to demonstrate it," von Harbenschultz told him. He moved forward to the control panel and pushed a button. At once the lights dimmed as electrical current flowed into the apparatus. There was a faint humming sound, then a loud thwap!

Ted jumped, but nothing had happened. The thwap! came again and again, at regular and short intervals. The lights dimmed, brightened, dimmed, brightened...

"I have my own dynamo, of course," von Harbenschultz muttered. "And a small atomic pile."

Fox watched in silence. Looking closely, he could apparently see streamers, similar to heat waves, travelling from each bulboid, clashing furiously in the center, then dispersing. The queer radiations appeared to form an intangible crystalloid directly between the electrodes.

"That manifestation," he was enlightened, "is actually caused by the refraction of light, the same cause of so-called 'heat waves.' It differs only in that the reason for this refraction is less ordinary. Heat waves are caused by air expansion; these are caused by air enlargement. Each atom and molecule is being enlarged. The resulting factors—the heaviness and the fact that the ordinary thermal motion now carries it measurable distances—combine to cause a perfect vacuum in that space. Or almost perfect."

"Why almost?"

"Because of an added factor. As you know, the Sirians make use of a tractor beam in many of their weapons. That and some sort of atomic ray. The government brought me one of the former which had been stolen, with the intention that I develop methods of duplication. I succeeded, of course; and afterward, used the principle to construct an antigravity field within the vacuum. It now holds several atoms. If you look closely you can see the cluster."

He could. They began to enlarge, and imagination suggested that the rate of enlargement was actually visible. Soon the professor began to shear off clusters. After ten minutes he stopped working.

"Now all it needs is a little time," he announced jubilantly.

"How long?" Ted demanded brusquely.

"Why, about ten more minutes. Just about ten more minutes."

"You are the second person ever to observe an atom," von Harbenschultz told Ted. He did not reply. His mind was completely absorbed by the wondrous spectacle of the atom floating before him.

"A Nitrogen atom!" he breathed.

"Yes. Well, there it is. How do you like it?" Professor von Harbenschultz beamed.

Fox consulted his watch once more. "Professor, do you think that you could shear off an electron? And expand it alone?"

Von Harbenschultz shook his head slowly in the affirmative. "Yes, I believe so. I accomplished it once."

He bent his head to the controls. Carefully he maneuvered the nucleus over to the edge of the force field. The nucleus suddenly appeared to collapse, and Fox felt a severe wave of heat for a moment. Several of its retinue of electrons dissipated also, but three out of the five in its outer ring remained.

These were growing at an actually visible pace.

Two of them suddenly collided—and merged. Von Harbenschultz's eyes lit up, and he grabbed a battered notebook and stubby pencil, and began jotting scrawling equations. The third electron followed suit quickly enough, and now one huge electron lay imprisoned in the field.

He looked up finally, to observe the other noting the time.

"You aren't still concerned about this Sirian invasion, are you?" he demanded.

"Certainly. It is due in less than an hour. Will you explain now how the electron obtains energy?"

"You should know that," chided the professor. "My apparatus here is not a great secret. It is being duplicated in several places. You should know that it drains the nuclear energy produced by atomic disintegration."

Ted grinned. "Ah yes, of course. It slipped my mind."

Von Harbenschultz appeared to sigh deeply. It was only an appearance, of course, but it was remarkably conveyed. He spoke softly.

"I am not a fool. I realize quite well that if you were so very worried about the Sirian invasion you would have little interest in my experiment here. I also realize that you know more about physics than Professor Fox's son—a bio-chemist—should know: because there were several questions you did not ask. And now, you should not know when the Sirian ships are invading. If any Earth official knows, I'm sure a young bio-chemist would be the last one to receive the knowledge."

Fox stopped grinning.

"You have been a bungler," von Harbenschultz continued. "And since my body is composed of steel, you have little chance of escape."

Fox pulled out something that resembled a gun. He pointed it at von Harbenschultz.

"I have not bungled completely, if at all," he smiled. "You remember mentioning Sirian weapons? They are atomic. This will effect metal quite as readily as flesh."

"Very well," groaned von Harbenschultz. "But if you intend to use that thing on me, will you satisfy my curiosity first? Who are you?"

"Certainly." The gun did not waver. "I am a Sirian, of course. Do I look human? Well, there is a resemblance; and our plastic surgeons are efficient. Sirius is cautious—although Earth ships were powered by fuel-jet, not atomic drives; although Earth weapons depended upon chemical reaction for the most part instead of nuclear reaction; despite all the apparent inferiority of Earth, we had to be cautious. We had to be sure of your helplessness. We became sure. Thus—we attack. In," he consulted his time-piece, "fifty three minutes."

The electron-fusion was becoming larger. It was as big as a man's head. Von Harbenschultz's hand reached out to cut off the power, but a warning gesture from the Sirian's fission-weapon moved him back.

"But Sirius surely could ascertain that in much less than a year!" the professor exclaimed.

"Ordinarily, yes," the pseudo-Fox said. "But Earth is special. It contains natural fissionables in great quantities. Our intentions in regard to Earth differ from usual conquest. I see no reason why I can tell you that your world will be transformed into a cosmic atomic pile after enough slaves have been taken from your people."

"You are becoming interesting," muttered the professor. "I had considered this mere interstellar politics—a normal and necessary formality. Continue."

"No doubt you wonder why I should invade your privacy, and desire to observe your experiment. Your apparatus here is not unknown, in theory, to our science. In practice we have found it impossible of attainment. We have always been on the lookout for it upon the planets which we add to our empire. For we know what it will do!"

"And what is that?" von Harbenschultz asked.

"It will blank nuclear fission!" said the Sirian savagely. "The Earth government has refused to surrender. Instead, they intend to attempt resistance, and if that fails—as it surely will—they are prepared to explode their atomic energy piles, bombs, and other sources of processed fissionables."

"I see."

"There are forty nine minutes remaining—much more than sufficient. I have here"—he withdrew something that looked like a cigarette case—"a space radio set, which I shall use in a moment to signal the oncoming fleet that my mission is successful. It is electrically-run, so it will function—in the force-field."

And he turned his atom weapon full blast on the electron.

It expanded. At first, slowly—though incredibly fast, in comparison to its former rate. It enveloped von Harbenschultz's robotic body, but he remained passive in the assurance that it was harmless to life. Otherwise the Sirian would be committing suicide. There was a slight jerk and then normalcy.

The electron encountered the atomic pistol, and whatever incredible atomic pile its chambers contained. It expanded, then, more rapidly.

It engulfed the atomic pile which the professor had installed a few hundred yards away. It had taken only a fraction of a minute to expand this far. And then it really began to expand!

Von Harbenschultz ignored the electron field—it was too late to stop that, too late to halt the incredible expansion that would render all atomic disintegration useless as a source for power—useless because the energy was sopped up as quickly as it was produced.

He ignored it, for the moment, because he had an idea. He had got the idea only a little before. It involved the electron, and it involved the cigarette-case radio. And there was little to lose if it failed.

He said softly, "And now what of your weapon?"

The Sirian glanced down at the now-useless atom gun, pocketed it, and produced an Earth-type revolver in one fluid motion. "I'd forgotten that the weapon wouldn't work in the electron field. But you just watch me shoot out those electronic eyes if you act queer."

He prepared to activate the miniature radio.

"Sorry." Von Harbenschultz's metallic arm reached out to brush him aside. The other arm shielded his eyes as the pseudo-Fox emptied his weapon. The steel of von Harbenschultz's construction was of better grade than the steel which jacketed the leaden bullets. The Sirian threw the empty gun, and turned and ran.

Or started to turn and run. Metal was swifter than flesh.

"In the event you are interested," murmured von Harbenschultz instructively, "my electronic impulses are 2.3 times faster than your nerves."

He bound his prisoner thoroughly, and set to studying the subtle changes caused by the electron field. The only thing he could have desired was a foaming mug of beer.

Since scientific instruments had gone insane all over the world,

there was much confusion, much effusion, and, here and there, a little bit of cerebation. The latter was responsible for visits to Professor von Harbenschultz by, chronologically, a physicist, four policemen, an irate atomic energy commission official, seventeen reporters, two anxious granddaughters who streaked in from the city, the real Ted Fox and his father, and the President of the World.

As you may deduce from the listing von Harbenschultz had to tell the story seven times.

And after the last telling, the President of the World added the epilogue.

It seemed that Professor von Harbenschultz's idea had worked.

Unwarned by the false Fox, the Sirian fleet had plunged at full-velocity into the swiftly-expanding electronic field. And, of course, the atomic piles that ran them simply stopped functioning. Unable to deflect themselves, they continued onward until they were caught by Earth's gravity.

All but two were well reduced to a cinder by the time they were mashed to a pulp as well by the violence of their crash. The two exceptions happened to approach the Earth in the correct position for an orbit around the planet. Earth's puny defending force—seventeen wobbly vessels with hastily-improvised weapons—rose upon their feeble chemical jets and blasted them into smoldering hulks.

Von Harbenschultz did not tell President Lawlor of his fear, for, obviously, no one could do anything. But the professor was worried about what would happen when the electron encountered the sun.

He is still worrying about it—he, and a lot of other people, are batting their brains out over it. For nothing happened. Except that the electron field was dissipated. But already the President had ordered a larger version of von Harbenschultz's equipment to be set up as a defense mechanism.

And he was very happily contemplating the beauties of portable varieties aboard chemical rockets, with an added set of atomic engines, reproduced from the battered hulks. Rockets which would owe their supremacy to the fact that they were powered by primitive chemical engines, while the enemy used atomic power.

And von Harbenschultz? Like the President, he is content. It was difficult, of course, and for anyone else, it would have been impossible. But Ted Fox's father, as we have told you, was the leading bio-chemist of the age.

Professor Heino Ulrich von Harbenschultz, savior of a world, can now lubricate himself internally with an oil that has the unmistakable flavor of good beer.

The End

A POET'S CYNICAL THOUGHTS ON THE MOON AS A CHALLENGE TO MANKIND'S MIGHT
by Lee Gann

There is no softness here—the moon is hard;
The moon is bitter cold and sharply bleak,
Unlike the mellow spheroid of the bard,
Unlike the kindly goddess lovers seek.
The moon is deathly white; no browns or greens
Ameliorate the austere Lunar scenes.
Bare rocks with jagged edges taunt all space,
Defying Time's great power to efface
This grim and glaring challenge to our race!

E N T R' A C T E

Again I apologize to Stan Crouch, of United Scientific and Cultural Organization; you recall that last issue his USCO ad had not reached me—well, this issue it has become temporarily lost under the litter of papers that has piled up while I have been ill with near-pneumonia. Sorry, Stan. Guess you people will have to write directly to him for information on USCO, SCIENCE & CULTURE, and BIZARRE. Address is Stanley E. Crouch, Sterling, Virginia.

Just in passing, I would like to note that your editors have been very fortunate. Robert won an Honor Society scholarship by being the seventh-highest in the country, for \$250, and a Northwestern one for \$330. And I took a \$350 state one, and a \$100 University of Buffalo one. But don't worry! Despite our combined majors in chemistry and mathematics, FAN-FARE will not turn into a dry scientific journal.

The N.T.H.S. News Association, a temporary local group to which I belonged, has a mimeograph for sale at \$11 including postage. It is hand-fed, although there is a regulator so that the paper goes in correctly, and open-cylinder, so it may be inked without removing a stencil. Its sole defect lies in the roll, which must be handled with care; but three issues of a 30-page magazine were put out within six months—the mimeoing done by one person—on this machine. If you're a would-be fan editor, here's your chance. There is an extra ink pad, and I'm sure they'll provide instructions. Write in care of me.

Notice to all: our ban on professionals is hereby lifted. If any professional author or artist wishes to send in material, come ahead. We shall expect higher standards in work from professionals however.

This paper is neither as good nor as cheap as our former stock—but we are unable to procure the "Alcor" paper we formerly used. And this new stuff has one advantage—we can add a page, making 24, without increasing the postage. And now we come to:

FANIMESTATIONS: a fanzine review

SCIENCE-FICTION DIGEST, from Henry Burwell, 459 Sterling St. NE., Atlanta, Georgia, is the most promising new fanzine we've seen in a long time. It is a reprint zine, the "Reader's Digest" of the fan world, and besides FAIR EXCHANGE from our Annish, carries quite an excellent cross-section of fan work. No price listed, but I think it's 20¢—and worth it! FANVARIETY, 10¢, from W. Max Keasler, 420 South 11th St., Poplar Bluff, Mo., is more subdued this issue. ALL OUR YESTER-DAYS, best column, discusses Bradbury's fanning days. The just-out PEON, dated April (I should talk) is satisfactory at 15¢, 9/\$1, from: Charles L. Riddle, PN1, USN, Fleet All weather Training Unit, Pacific, c/o Fleet P.O., San Francisco, Calif. FANTASY ADVERTISER, 15¢, 1745 Kenneth Rd., Glendale 1, Cal continues the good work. AD-O-ZINE from 2058 E. Atlantic St., Phil. 34, Pa., gives it stiff competition, at 5¢ a copy. CHIMERICAL REVIEW, 15¢, from 146 Ridgewood St., SE, Gr. Rapids 8, Mich., is good this time. ISFCC's EXPLORER is as superb as usual. IMAGINATIVE COLLECTOR, comb/w DAWN, 203 Wampun Ave, Louisville 9, Ky., is much better, despite a starrv-eyed drive to "clean up the fanzines." And SOL, a hecto/mimeo from 704 S. Princeton, Villa Park Ill. New issue, I guess, but there is hope for the future. And, we also have QUANDRY, several issues; main feature Willis on the recent convention in England. How about trying some of these?

—THE EDITOR

(Cont. from p. 3)

ter, or any of the rest of the sword-wielding mass butchers. Possibly I'm getting too old for it—I'm 33 and have been through a real war—but I can't get a thrill out of a story concerned almost exclusively with men cutting each other up. I don't care if the scene is laid in the future, the past, or even the present. All this I hate to say, because I understand that the author of Twilight World is a pretty good supporter of my tales; I'd like to say the story was fine. This much I did like: the descriptions of mountains and desert, most of the verse used as chapter leads—the obvious hard work that went into writing the tale. By the way, there is much too little dialogue in this story; notice some time what a large percentage of dialogue makes up the average pro story. ##### LAMENT, by Toby Duane. A little gem. Fine stuff. ##### The cover, by Jim Bradley: I just don't think mimeographing lends itself to art reproduction. I don't believe I've ever seen a decent illustration mimeographed. I'm sure it has nothing to do with Bradley's original; I wouldn't care if it was a Bok, I just don't think anybody can turn out a decent cover on a mimeographed magazine. ##### The verse, reviews, etc. I still say that Andrew Duane must have some dictionary of the future! Everytime I read one of his poems he stumps me half a dozen times, and my dictionary, too! In general I thought all the shorts were excellently done.—Mack Reynolds, Box 1, Arroyo Seco, New Mexico.

Dear Paul: Delirium had a good idea behind it, was written well, and though maybe it could have been written better in spots, (for instance, when Jack is looking down at his delirious friend, the short, choppy sentences he used detracted a little from the overall effect), it was good enough for first place for me. ##### You have too many good stories, they're all too close together, and that makes them too hard to rate. Please have some bad stories soon, if possible. If you have a perfect zine, then no one will buy it because they will----mmm, what was I going to say? We wonder! When you remember, please let us know!—Ed. / ##### If I buy more than ten BLAGUES, do I get a free one? Oh—I didn't think so.—John Davis, 913 E. Navajo Rd., Tucson, Arizona.

Dear Cat: Since the March issue asks for more ratings on the January one, I'll start on those. It was difficult to place them, for I liked them all, but here's the way I listed them, and the thing that impressed me most strongly about each: 1. THE TWILIGHT WORLD. Probably the best story F-F has published to date, but the writing could be better. 2. CHOICE. I was startled to have it end so soon. I quite expected it to be longer. 3. WAR IS H THY—also about 3rd best of the Littlechip series. 4. FAIR EXCHANGE. A neat bit of writing, exactly the right length, style, etc., to be most effective. 5. GUARD STATION. Written, perhaps, just a shade too dramatically. 6. LAMENT—Nice space-filler. ##### Now for the March issue: 1. DORMITORY OF THE DEAD. Fan-Fare's best-written story. 2. SHADOWS IN THE FOG. Interesting, but the attempted atmosphere of wonder and apprehension fell flat, perhaps because of the lack of explicitness in any details—For it's the details that form an atmosphere in a story, not rambling suggestions. 3. DELIRIUM. Might have liked it better if it hadn't been so obvious from the first. ##### The article was well-written, but why pick a subject that can be found fully described in

any high school physics text? Why not an explanation of some less common apparatus or theory? [Note that the article dealt mainly with a description of a method of building an electroscope. The explanation was brief, and, incidentally, incomplete. It is supposed to be the first of an extended series—but still extended in the author's mind, I guess. Oh well, maybe next issue...] Not necessarily an involved or difficult one, but something less well known. Say, for instance, a comparison of the main ideas in the two most generally accepted theories of the formation of a solar system; or a description of the new method of dating prehistoric remains from the study of the amount of radioactive carbon left in them. I don't expect long, technical (Heaven forbid!) but short, layman's-eye-view descriptions. Can you beg, bribe or blackmail some out of your writers?—Helen Soucy, 106 Forest Avenue, Port Colborne, Ontario, Canada.

All right, perhaps it doesn't—but where else can we put it:

"TWO LETTERS" — contributed by George Wetzel

66 University St.
Providence, R. I.

Editor, FAN-FARE

Sir: Enclosed please find two mss. of mine, "The Cry of Chunhuhu" and "The Avoided House," which I am submitting for your consideration for future use in your fanzine. Most of my fiction has been printed in prozines; you are the first amateur magazine I have thus submitted to. Haunted-House Publishers have just published two collections of my stories, entitled respectively "Across the Abyss of Sleep," and "The Insider." I have had, you see, some considerable experience in the writing of supernatural fiction.

Respectfully,
H. P. Cheesecraft

*

FAN-FARE
N. Tonawanda, N. Y.

H. P. Cheesecraft

Dear Sir: I am sorry but your mss. won't do. We would not use your "The Avoided House," especially, as it is too awful and might frighten some of our readers. However, if you join our author's league and pay your dues regularly, perhaps we can place some of your mss. Your stories are "horrible" but not in the sense of being shuddery or fear-inspiring.

Yours,
Ed. of FAN-FARE

Dear Paul: Enclosed is a belated addition to TWO LETTERS. It is positively the last. However, if you reject this contribution, or use it but delete certain sentences or words (like "Ed. of FAN-FARE") or forbid the use of the present enclosed addition, rest assured, my dear sir, you will not hear the end of the matter. Steps will be taken. It is possible that I may revise TWO LETTERS [Again!?!] in any of the above eventualities, with certain (need I say what?) additions to my masterful expose of conditions in the fan field. In plain words, any persnicketty action of yours, sir, will be duely accredited to your account in my little black book; and in any later revisions of TWO LETTERS you will find I will have rewarded your attitude if it is cadish by inclusion in said expose.

Yours,
George

[Don't hit us again, we give up!!]