

Dave Van Arnam, of 1730 Harrison Ave.,
Apt. 353, Bronx, NY 10453, brings you,
tax-free and absolutely non-fattening,
another issue of the World's Oldest
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Tomorrow a large carful of people
(including yhos) will be skillfully
transported down to Washington, D.C.
by Mr Ted White, Powerful New Writer,
for the purpose of mostly just sitting around at the Disclave with bunches
of people and enjoying ourselves. It's gonna be a short three days.

☐☐ WRITING CAREERS CUT SHORT IN THE PRIME O LIFE DEPT.: Well, Lancer
bounced the Gothic ("Actually we're not buying much right now, Ted...").
I hope nobody will be too upset if I add that I'm not too broken up
about this (except for the money; the money wd have been nice...), because
it means, after all, that I may not have to write the damned thing after
all.

Instead I'm gonna plug thru with THE BLACK MAGICIAN. I keep talking on
the phone with Lin Carter (my Friendly Neighborhood Guru) about our var-
ious fantasy epics, and we keep giving each other more and more fantas-
tic gimmicks and ideas to use, and bigholly I'm going to beat out Mr.
Howard and Mr. Tolkien and Mr. Eddison and God yet. Fantasy is a way
of life...

THE BLACK MAGICIAN -- Prologue: Midnight at Noon

It was not a chess game, no, not anything like it.

Its pieces were every facet of an entire world, its board a hazy magic
symbol of its progress, its players two dark and evil forces contending
through it for the ultimate prize, that prize itself the single meta-
phoric equivalent to the kings and queens of chess.

The game had begun perhaps five thousand years ago. Only now did one
of the players feel that it was possible to begin to construct "moves"
directly aimed at gaining the prize itself.

Neither player had ever knowingly seen the other; the power of each
was great enough to hide true identity from the other.

Undoubtedly they had met, however. For this game was not chess, and
the movement of magic symbols did not accomplish the intended act. Each
player needs must descend from mighty palaces of magic, disguised in
whichever fashion was necessary, and do the deed in person -- slay a
monarch, burn a city, get or birth a child of power (for one of the
Players was a woman).

Such things took time, much time indeed. A hundred and fifty years of
living among men might be required to energize the armies needed to
raze a province or conquer a kingdom.

And in such enterprises, paths must cross.

The mighty Azeltarem, the Black Magician, had lived for fifty thousand
years, the Lady Tza for thirty-five millenia. It was given to the world
to believe that these names were but titles, passed on through genera-
tions. There were those who knew, and knowing, with their own powers
had rendered hindrances to these mighty beings -- else all the lands
would have long been entirely steeped in their evil darkness. But those
are other stories. Now we speak of that which resulted from the clash
of two terrible spells of the Lady Tza and of Azeltarem, five thousand
years ago...

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☐☐ Th-that's all, folks! (for now,
anyway) Hoping you are the
sane... -- dgv