

The *Newsbreaks* never seem to stop coming; ah, it's rushrushrush and New Things all the time, and yhos Dave Van Arnam (of 1730 Harrison Ave, Apt 353, Bronx, NY 10453) is perhaps beginning to weary of the frenetic haste with which events continue to pile up one atop the other like unto icefloes in a jammed river-mouth...

STAR GLADIATOR #133

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NYCon, NYCon, here we come!!

NOW I ASK YOU DEPT.: Can a guy with a prose style as cumbered up with useless metaphors as is evinced by the above 9-line-long sentence possibly ever make it as a professional writer?

NOW I TAKE THE ANSWER OUT OF YOUR MOUTH DEPT.: Well, yes, apparently; according to Henry Morrison, an outfit known as Belmont Books is willing to buy -- on the basis of that 13-page outline I mentioned last week! -- a 30,000 word book by me which, on the suggestion of Lin Carter, I have christened, for a working title, STAR GLADIATOR (leaving the way open for sequels like STAR BARBARIAN, STAR GUARD, ~~STAR~~ MAGICIAN, etc.).

MY PLAN DEPT.: My plan is to write the thing and get it into Henry's hands before the check for the advance arrives -- which Henry told me shd be about one month after the contract is signed next week. After all, it's only 30,000 words, 135 pages the way I type manuscripts these days, and by the example of Lin Carter and Ted White I shd be able to do 10-15 pages a day. It sez here...

It's been interesting for me to discover that it's not that hard to learn how to write. Hm, for "not that hard" read: it takes a lot of work writing lots of inferior stuff, but one can learn how. It'll be interesting to see whether I really can manage it.

Among other things that shd help are the unstinting aid of people like Lee Hoffman, Lin Carter, and Ted White, all of whom have unhesitatingly and at great length told me exactly what is wrong with everything I've ever showed them...

...and have so far been 95% or so right. Oh, I tell you, it hobble, it hobble, bringin' yo po' chile all lovely in every little perfec' detail, in front of one o' them fanged monsters. Rend, tear, bleed, bleed, bleed, gasp, hack, rip, chomp. Ptui.

But slowly and surely they're learning me, they are. I'll catch on one of these days. Write saleable first draft copy, Lin writes: "You've got to take AHOLD of each scene, not just fumble along. That's why I counsel you to LEARN TO WRITE IN FINAL DRAFT. I know what you're doing: you are taking the easy way and writing what you KNOW is rough first draft, knowing you will go back and revise, and by writing in this fumbly way, you feel out various connotations and directions the scene can take. THIS IS UTTER NONSENSE, and a bad writing habit to fall into. It gives you fuzzy, soft prose, disjointed narrative, sloppy craftsmanship. Write LAST DRAFT always, and think each scene out beforehand. Be crisp, precise, and keep the action moving..." (This quite-correct analysis and prescription -- which I commend to anyone who wants to sell the pb action story market -- comes on the second page of a 15-page analysis -- elite type -- that Lin did of a 30-odd segment I let him read, and it, on top of the constant objurgations of Ted and LeeH, has finally gotten thru to me. I think. "As a Born Reader," Lin ended with, "I have a vested interest in doing everything I can to seeing that people write good books. Even if I gotta shove their noses in their own dumb meatheaded writing, ole buddy!" Which I think is quite reasonable, not so?

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I AM AN AMORPHOUS BLOB, HEY!



MY AUTHOR IS A PROFESSIONAL WRITER...



FOR MONEY.



WHY THEN, YOU ASK...



DOES HE WASTE TIME...



MONEY...



TALENT...



ON AMORPHOUS BLOB CARTOONS?



I DUNNO...



IT MIGHT BE FOR EGOBOO



BUT HE ONLY GETS THAT FROM ALAN SHAW.



THEN AGAIN



I CD. CON- LEIVE OF A GIGANTIC PLOT...



DESIGNED WITH FEARSOME SKILL...



TO STRIKE FEAR INTO THE HEARTS OF FANDOM



USING ME - THE AMORPHOUS BLOB! - AS THE KEY DEVICE!



BUT-



IN THAT CASE I'D BETTER SHUT UP!



AFTER ALL, YOU SHD BE ABLE TO FIGURE IT OUT -



WHICH IS WHY I'M...



...hoping you are the sane!