

This is Dave Van Arnam, as if you didn't know after a hundred and seventy-eight issues. I forget my address.

FIRST DRAFT #178

Vol. 30, No. 4

11 Aug 67

We have here for your delectation once more a selection from the works of Me, the first part of an outline for a proposed 30,000 word Belmont Double. Read it and, er, ... weep?

STEVE STILES FOR TAFF!!
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(the magazine, that is...)

Hold on, I'm going to do this on the new Remington a salesman left here.

GREYLAND :: sf outline by Dave Van Arnam

"Jerran." A young man in his early twenties hears his name and wakes from a deep but unrestful sleep.

"Jerran, what's the matter? You talked in your sleep of such strange things..."

Jerran looks up. A strange girl is standing over him. She is dressed strangely, though he cannot put his finger on what is strange about it, or about her. But he knows something is wrong.

Instantly alarmed, he looks about him. He is in a strange room -- a low roofless room with a cloudless grey sky above. That too is wrong -- terribly wrong. He knows no planet with a grey sky.

Planet? He searches his memory. He knows no planet at all. "Jerran," the woman says again. "Speak to me. What's wrong?"

His name -- Jerran? He accepts this, but he does not know whether to believe it or not. The name means nothing to him.

He is resting on a hammock-like bed, suspended between two posts in the floor of the roofless room. It makes no sense to him. He looks at the girl. She is rather attractive, though her face is contracted with worry -- for him? The thought is pleasant, though the reason for her worry is uncertain to him. "Who are you?" he asks at last, deciding that to be the most interesting as well as the most useful question to begin with.

"Why, Tirzel, of course." She pauses, looking at his blank expression. "Your mate. For these past six months."

Suddenly she is kneeling beside him, shaking him frantically, hysterically, frightenedly. "You don't remember! You've forgotten! Something terrible has happened -- what is wrong?"

Jerran gets up, goes to the open entranceway of the roofless room, looks outside.a grey world -- skies, grass, land -- but with a peaceful look. "Where am I?" he asks. "What is this world called?"

"Why, Greyland, where else? That is the world. Beyond the hill, there, is the town of Three Streams."

Null-Q Press
Undecided Publication #272

Jerran winces in mock pain, and says ruefully, "Whoever discovered this planet didn't have much imagination..."

"Discovered? This planet? I don't understand."

Jerran thinks a moment. "Neither do I. You know of no other inhabited planets?"

"Why, no. I always supposed that there might be other worlds with people on them, I don't know why. But Greyland is...well, it's Greyland. It's home. It's here. We live here, peacefully, happily."

"You know only this world -- and I seem to know of others. Very strange ... You know me, and -- " here Tirzel blushes prettily " -- I don't seem to know you. Yet I don't have any other memories either. Double amnesia. Dom it, what's happened!"

He concentrates on working out possibilities, and decides that, obviously, somehow, someone has done something to him. Most likely -- since, according to Tirzel, Jerran only appeared in Three Streams about seven months ago -- he was put down here, his memory wiped clean of whatever had happened before, and a stock of faked memories put in the place of the real. And -- somehow the faked memories have disappeared along with the real, leaving him in a strange room with a strange girl, near a strange town on a strange world -- and what can he do about it?

Were the faked memories supposed to leave him, or was that an accident his enemy -- for so he must call whoever did this to him -- had not counted on? Or perhaps it simply didn't matter, after six months or so, whether he remembered or not?

In that case, there'd be nothing he could do. Jerran feels a moment of real despair then.

But wait -- his real memories haven't come back, except for the occasional insight he has had, such as that the man who first discovered this planet had a lousy imagination for names. That was a thought that no one here would have had -- it proves that he is from...Outside...and it indicates that he really hasn't begun to remember anything truly important. So ... it is important to his Enemy that Jerran not remember about ...Outside, or with the vanishing of the faked memories the real ones could just as well have been allowed to return -- if such a thing is possible, for once gone it might well be impossible ever to get them back. Jerran knows despair again.

Still...if he is not supposed to remember, that must mean that if he did remember, he could do something about what has been done to him.

He must take action...

==== AND I must end action, fill out this stencil, run it off, and get to the Fanoclasts meeting. This is a wretched stencilcutting typer, I believe. As for the above story, I've got a 16p draft outline ready to roll, and if it weren't for the fact that it's got what Ace seems to regard as Immoral Sexac in it (wanderers who mate freely from town to town to keep the gene pool in good shape), I'd send it right off there to take the place of STAR BARBARIAN, which was just rejected by Terry... after I wrote it to appeal to Don... *sigh* Hoping you are the sane.

-- dgj