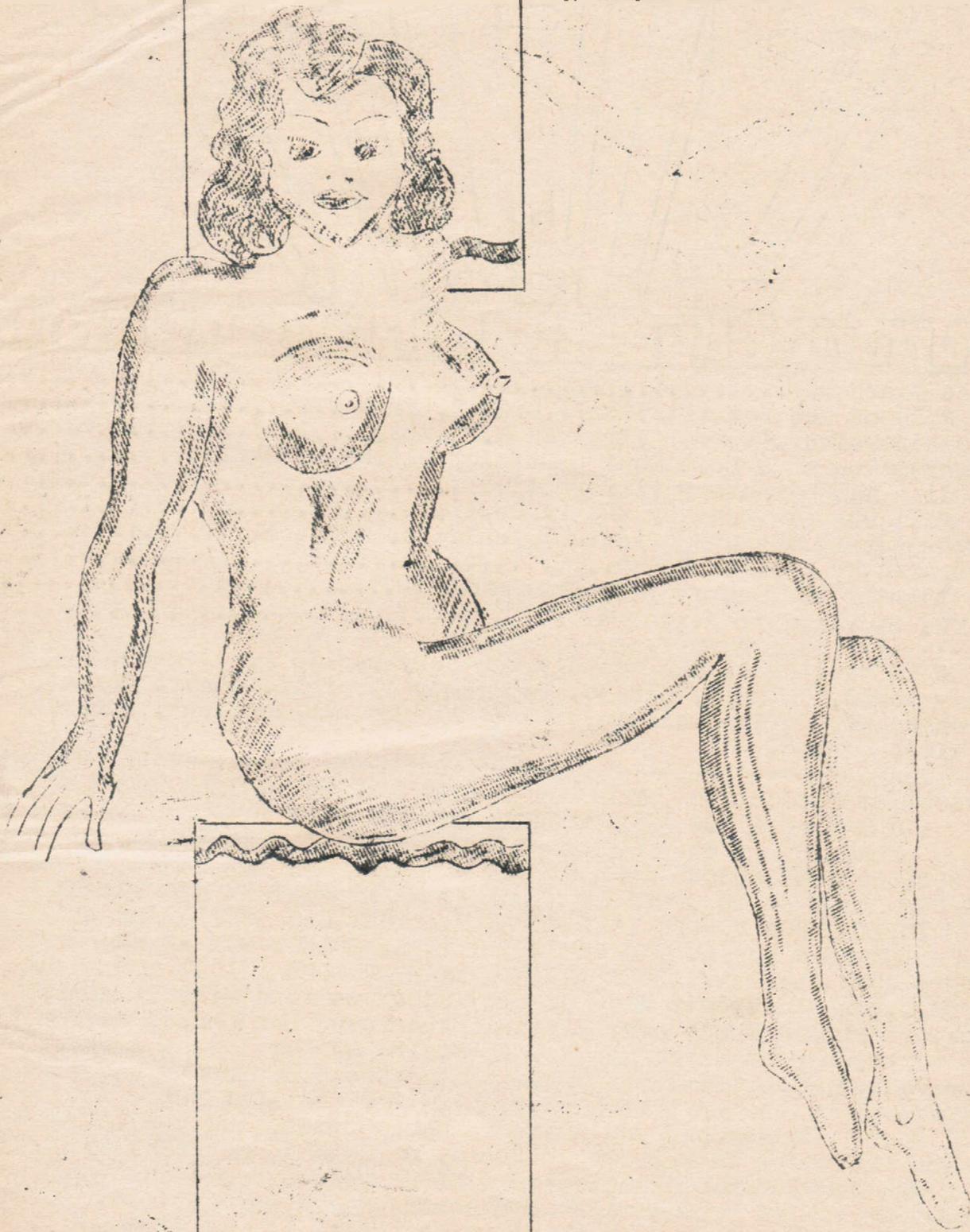


Hunter

O C T O B E R

1 9 4 2

number 121



COVER THIS MONTH: D. ELDER



The FATE of RED BAT

CRIME AND RETRI-
BUTION IN THE SPACE-
WAYS OF THE FUTURE

by NILS H. FROME

RED BAT'S GLOATING ELATION WAS UNALLOYED by any pang of remorse over what he had done as he turned over in his mind the events of the past few hours; the multiple murder, the rich prize in durite objects piled indiscriminately in a corner of the dingy interior of the spaceship, gleaming dully in the feeble helium light, on the proceeds of which he would be able to retire for life if he chose. But murder was no new experience for Red Bat.

If he felt anything at all about what he had done, it was congratulate himself on his cleverness. It had been an ingenious trick to disguise in the uniform of the patrolman he had slain and pose as the guardian sent to these other worldlings by Earth Government and get the old man who was the head of the little asteroid world to show him the durite objects of which he was custodian, of which he had heard in an alpha-smoke filled dive on Phobus.

Durite. In the 21st century it was the most valuable of all substances. Without it spaceships could not fly. A durite-impooverished system cried for it. As little as an ounce or two was sufficient to send a hundred ships from Earth to Pluto and back, but only a few ounces of the precious metal had ever been found- in a meteorite. Scientists had searched the system and scanned the spectrum of the stars in vain for it, for the past twenty years. Within another twenty-five, unless a further supply of the all-important metal could be found, the east interplanetary empire the Earth had built up would become only a glorious memory. Power, wealth, everything would be his for the asking who brought the durite-starved system an ounce or two of the metal, and in a heap in the corner he had objects of durite totalling several pounds at least.

He leered and licked his sensual lips as he thought of that pretty little creature who was the daughter of the old man he had killed, and what he had done to her, how she had screamed and then screamed no more.

If he had devoted the time he had spent reading Venerian Love Tales to Cosmographic Monthly, he might have learned something of the storm of controversy the strange world-bound civilization of Fallos occasioned in scientific circles when an emergency landing on the little asteroid of one of the early space pioneers had inadvertently thrust it into the scientific limelight and itinerary of all interplanetary tourists. There was a mystery of how the simple people of Fallos got to their bare asteroid world, since they seemed to have utterly no scientific knowledge. They lived in the most primitive manner. They seemed to have no history, only a legend about a life long ago on another world which had been destroyed by collision with a gigantic pro-

gentile. Their forebears had escaped by means of a mastery of the art of teleportation which all their race had known then. By this means they came to the asteroid about the time of the last great ice age on the Earth, and there was no sign of human tenancy on Pallos prior to that approximate period. According to the legends, all human life aciently had spread through the universe from the destroyed planet with their powers of teleportation which they had possessed before they ate the fruit of knowledge, and that originally there had been only one race.

If, instead of being so anxious to obtain them, he had examined the graven discs of durite when the old man had shown them to him, he would have seen that they had carven on them in exquisite bas relief weird scenes of another world than the bleak rocky asteroid familiar to space-travellers, a verdant, beautiful world, a world being struck and reduced to fragments by a monstrous rock from space, and others which showed vast swarms of human beings with the same beautiful faces and physiques as these savages, swimming in space beneath the stars, without any medium. But these conjectures of scientists meant nothing to him- he would have scoffed in his hard soul if he had been aware of them.

A fabulous hoard of durite right under the World Government's nose, guarded by a race of child-like people who didn't even have sense enough to have locks on their doors, and no one had ascribed any value ot to them save a lot of old fossils, until a young adventurer had seen them and had the sense to steal one and have it analysed, only to be foolish enough to enlist the services of Red Bat and be killed for his pains, after having told all to him. Ignorant animals, he sneered, they didn't deserve to have the durite.

Yes, he congratulated himself, it had worked out without a hitch. He started thinking what he would do with his priceless hoard of durite. A certain planetary government had long desired to colonize Earth, which was a decided improvement over their cooling outer planet, but the earth was already overcrowded. Earth would not hear of it. But with Red Bat's durite and their superior scientific resources, no civilization of any world could withstand the combination and their ancient dream of colonizing a younger world nearer the sun could be realized. They would be rolling over themselves to make a deal with him for his durite. He vaguely thought of the terms he would make...the fate of the inhabitants of his native world did not concern him in the least...

He happened to glance, with a triumphant smirk, back through the stern port at the swiftly receding world. Then he noticed a motionless speck, like a fly speck, on the pallid disc of the distant asteroid, which he had not noticed before. Pursuing a course parallel to that of the spaceship and gradually overtaking it was what he guessed was a meteor. Nothing dangerous, of course, only a body of meteoritic matter of inconsiderable size, not really travelling fast enough to do much damage even if it should happen to hit the ship, but better to take no chances. The fact of its presence in that particular sector of space between the ship and the asteroid signified nothing not accountable by known laws governing bodies in space. The change in the course of the vessel a degree or two to one side to enable the body to pass him by to keep its urgent appointment with eternity was quickly effected. When he again looked out of the stern port a body darkened the part of the disc of the asteroid, only slightly larger than before.

For a moment it seemed to him that the space rock had deliberately changed its course. Then he shrugged the feeling off with a snarl. He did not know much theory, but he was no sluch where anything to do with practical navigation was concerned and he knew that objects in space are compelled to travel its original path in the absence of any outside force. "I'm getting jumpy, space-whacky. Just another damn meteor!" he muttered. But this time he picked up a telescope and trained it on that mushrooming object. Then he dropped the instrument as sharp superstitious fear stabbed through him agonizedly.

He recoiled back from the port, his face blanching, his eyes starting from their sockets. What had he seen? He asked himself the question anguishedly. Had he seen a meteor out there in space or had he looked upon a thing which by rights should by now be stiffening in a pool of blood back on the asteroid where he had left him to die? had he for an instant stared into impersonally accusing eyes which seemed to search his very soul. He seemed to see them still! Never had he seen eyes so impersonal, so sad and inexpressably weary. In the eerie light which exists in the ether between the worlds, with its violent clashes of light and darkness, where there are no softer tones of shadow, it seemed caricatured in grotesque, inhuman planes like the nightmarish creation of a surrealist artist. In his fancy the thing seemed in that moment to be hurtling toward him at the speed of light.

He fought himself back to sanity, forced himself to rationalize what he had seen, tried to tell himself it was only a hunk of peculiarly shaped meteor-matter which had been plummeting through the cosmos long before he was born and would be hurtling through the ether after he was dead, unless some planet or star took it in tow, or some fellow wanderer of infinity intercepted it. He had underestimated the strain of the last few hours on him, and had allowed his eyes to play tricks with him causing him to see in a rock with superficial resemblance to the head and the shoulders of a foreshortened human body, the likeness of the man he had murdered. A further glance through the rear port at the speck, now much magnified to what it had been when he first had noticed it, galvanized him into action. He ~~got~~ the controls at full speed.

The ship groaned at every seam at the unreasonableness of his unprecedented demands, but responded with a surge of speed. Dials told of velocity such as they never had before as the rocket plowed through the ether with ever increasing momentum. His horror-glazed eyes went to the rear port- and he screamed in an ecstasy of terror. He had given the ship all she could take- and might as well have been motionless. The incubus, as if unaware of any increase in speed on the part of the rocket, was overtaking the ship, slowly but surely closing the distance between them, at the same rate in relation to the ship as before. The spaceship was doing her limit but he could not shake off this monster. There, in the emptiness of the void, travelling at thousands of miles a minute, Red Bat experienced the emotions of the damned. No need now for a magnifying instrument- no longer any doubt about the identity of his nemesis! The shape was now in the shadow of the spaceship---now it had passed beyond view of the port---

Frantically he looked around the cabin, but nowhere was there any place he could hide. Almost fainting with horror, he watched for what he knew must come next- he felt the vibrations of the outer air lock door of the old ship being opened from space, then the inner door of the air-lock chamber swing gratefully open and he was no longer alone in the small confines of the interior of the spaceship- though he never felt more alone in his life. Bringing in with him all the cold of space, the man he had left to die, the father of the girl he had wronged had come into the cabin- no ghost but a real, tangible, inexorable physical force.

Inexorable and impersonal like some cosmic law, a horrible smear of blood matting his white hair, yet with a kind of majestic dignity, deaf to Red Bat's hysterical pleading, and threatening, the old man came on. He seemed to tower over Red Bat- almost touching him. Just as the horror was almost touching him, Red Bat, summoning the last shreds of his sanity, jerked the revolver up from where it lay on the compass pillar beside him and blazed away at the monster- again and again until the cartridges were exhausted.

The first shot sent the horror whirling off balance to the floor. Like an automaton he climbed to his feet and never feel again- but came

DISSERTATION ON A LOST SOUL

by

Cpl. Oliver C. Davis

(LESLIE HUS, BEING A GRACIOUS CHAP, INVITED ME IN FOR A FEW WORDS. THE EXCUSE WAS CONTAINED IN A COUPLE OF LETTERS IN WHICH I TALKED ABOUT RELIGION IN A QUASI-INTELLIGENT AND DISCONCERTING WAY. ((OF COURSE, I'M PROBABLY NOT CORRECT MYSELF, BUT MY SOURCES OF INFORMATION MAY BE.)) I WON'T SAY THAT I BELIEVE ALL THIS MYSELF, ALTHOUGH I QUITE PROBABLY DO. I WON'T EXPECT YOU TO ACCEPT ANY OF IT, BUT I'LL BE DISAPPOINTED IF YOU DON'T.)

My introduction is done. Now, for this matter of religion.

Is it true that the belief in something beyond and superlative to our best powers is imperative to the mental life of any intelligence which has not yet itself achieved a god-like stature? It may not be, I merely ask; but any sentience which is as self-conscious as our own would inevitably worry about its own end result, and the probably true end result of simple and utter extinction after death isn't very encouraging.

There is such a thing as brain power which we'll finally be able to measure in particles of volts, ohms, and amperes, (I suspect my personal ohmage will be far over the voltage!) or at least I choose to believe that there is. If so, purely evolutionary development ought to put it on an independent stage in a few millions of years. We have, that is, the necessary raw material to become immortal within the present existence, but we have a lot more waiting to do before evolution gets around to that.

A good Christian would claim outright that there is no point in waiting, that the same result can be had in death.

It's an impious lie.

Impious that is, in that my personal religion, if I have any, is the human race and its potentialities in the next fifty million (or so) years. We'll obtain at last eternity and as much bliss as we make for ourselves, have probably tremendous powers and a good deal more than dominion over palm and pine. (No, there is not a necessity for being anthropomorphic in relation to our present existence!) Purely mental essentials, movement at the speed of light if not that of thought, escape from physical hungers, especially that of sleep, all go along to make us at least the equal of our current idea of God. Being human, however, if and when we achieve that, we may still have something in our minds tremendously further, tremendously better; just as we now are better than the divinity of two-thousand years ago except in still being mortal. God, like all things, is definitely a limited objective.

But the main question still is, could we advance at all without an idea of God? Commonly, we believe in life after death, and so go about making what we can of the present, trying to be comfortable as we await ecstasy in the hereafter. If there were no hereafter, and we were dead certain of it, would the race as such be capable of survival? Frankly, I think it would, now; but would it fifty-thousand years ago? We've come far enough to see the possible answer; but the Australian aborigine dies out because he cannot face the terrific mental powers of the white man...self-conscious race suicide of a sort. What if man had always been certain from the time of his first clear thought that there was nothing for him better than what he achieved on earth? Would he always be willing to keep on keeping one?

There is one point to the forward look, now that we have already exceeded the initial conceptions of God, but there might not have been

CANADIAN FAN DIRECTORY

(All Canadian fans are invited to help keep this Directory up-to-date. If you know fans who are not listed below send me their names and addresses for inclusion in the next publication of the Canadian Fan Directory. American and English readers are invited to use these addresses for correspondence and for those sample copies of that new magazine you are publishing.)

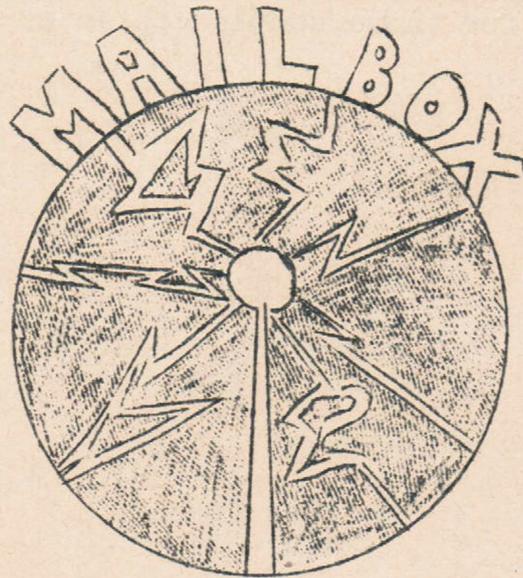
Child, Alan		Vancouver, B. C.
Conium, Ron		Toronto, Ontario
Crouch, Leslie A.	Box 121	Parry Sound, Ontario
Frome, Nils H.	Box 3	Fraser Mills, B.C
Gibson, Gnr. W. R.		
M3020	R.H.Q., 11th. Canadian	CANADIAN ARMY OVER-
	Light Field Regt., RCA	SEAS.
Guislin, John	New Glasgow 2,0	Linacy, N. S.
Janley, Tom	12 Lawrence Cresc.,	Toronto, Ontario
Milkert, John G.		Toronto, Ontario
Howes, C.		Toronto 12, Ont.
Murter, Fred	35 Hudson Street	Town of Mount Royal
		P.C.
Kenally, Viola L.		St.Catharines, Ont
Karb, Sgt. H.V.	100 Eppinscott St	Toronto, Ont
Mason, John H.	75 Greenwood	Toronto, Ontario
Peck, Gordon L.	214 W. 15th, Ave	Vancouver, B.C
Peck, Shirley	214 W. 15th, Ave	Vancouver, B. C.
Wakefield, Harold		Toronto, Ontario
White, Cpl. E. R.	#2 Light Canadian Field	
	Ambulance, RCAMP, CA, AF	Canadian Army
		Overseas.

Prospective swappers please note- all the above are thoroughly familiar with the Crouch system of credit swapping. The majority will welcome writers wishing to trade American material for Canadian. Comments are welcomed on this new department in LIGHT!

("LIGHT FLASHES-from pg. 8)

STUPEDOUS news which almost rates an extra column in this issue all by itself. However I'm going to write an article later on if the chappie in question concurs. The big news was: #3, VAN VOGT IS A CANADIAN AND DWELLS IN A SUBURB OF TORONTO!!!! Howes and I immediately cornered Mason and threatened him with a rolled-up copy of AMAZING STORIES to which the victim shrieked "No! No! Anything but that!" when we showed him a copy of Edmond Hamilton's story. Breaking down, the poor fellow agreed to phone Van Vogt (pronounced VOTE as in VOTE FOR YINGVI!) and see if the three of us- Mason, Howes and I, could visit the chappie while I was down. Sunday Morning Mason phoned up. Yes we could, but he, John, couldn't make it as he was under the weather so Howes and I could toddle along. So about 2 pm Sunday aft we boarded a St. Clair car and got off at Keele and got off again at Weston and took a bus and went on

(VAN VOGT ON PAGE 12)

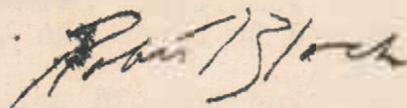


TO LEAD THE MAIL-BOX THIS MONTH, WE PRESENT MISS BARABARA BOVARD, OF LOS ANGELES. The only good thing about the September cover was the face. Period. Light Flashes was good, as usual, and I'm glad you finally got out the story of how LIGHT got its name. That was only part of the story, Babsy. Ted's going to write the real story-ED/ Peck's playlette--no thanks. Reincarnation--very, very good. Feeling, words, and ideas were very good. Miss Combs will appear regularly in our pages from now on-ED/While I'm on the subject of the girl, her drawing on the last page is a pip. I wonder if you could coax her into doing a landscape of weird vegetation? Something tells me she could do that as easily as Wright and Hunt do their weird creatures. She does very nice, very nice, indeed. Hear that, Virginia? You have a fan already. Perhaps Miss Combs will send in something along the line you suggest, Babsy-ED/ Contrariwise- stinks. Gibson's cartoon, okay, I guess. The only thing I have to say about the mailbox is; to Mr. Gibson, Panegyric was not written by Peck. Kindly do not credit that man with something as good as that. I trust the mistake came through accident, but Panegyric is not Mr. Peck's style---anyway, he didn't write it; none of the Pecks did. I'm very much afraid you have your wiress crossed there, Babs. That is definitely the Peck style- note his spelling- he has done much material in the past and this is definitely Gordon Peck. Perhaps Mr. Peck, himself, will refute your statement.-ED/

A. E. VAN VOGT WRITES IN IN RESPONSE TO SOME SAMPLE COPIES OF LIGHT:
My original idea for writing you was to thank you for those copies of LIGHT. With one exception I enjoyed everything in it, particularly your yarn THE DEVIL AND THE POSTMASTER. What the "devil" was in that letter? I wondered to and investigated. It turned out to be his draft call;-Ed/ I liked Mason's HOMECOMING, except for his use of two words, malaise and something else. What was the thing you didn't like in LIGHT? I'm interested. Let's hope future issues of LIGHT, which you will be receiving, will prove as interesting as the ones you have seen-Ed/

ANOTHER MAN FAMOUS TO READERS WRITES IN. HE ALSO RECEIVED A SAMPLE COPY OF LIGHT: Very happy to receive a copy of your edifying, albeit bawdy magazine. It is vaguely reminiscent of SWEETNESS AND LIGHT (ever see it?) an abortion performed on the west coast some years ago by Henry Kuttner, James Mooney, Fred Shroyer, etcetera. Yes - I saw one copy of

SWEETNESS AND LIGHT- the one with Kuttner's EUNUCH'S IN THE PULPS IN
IT. I reprinted this article and it received acclaim as the best re-
print I'd ever given-ED/Other good points about your publication tend
to remind me of the original Goon publication of these parts-- ERUTAL,
The Magazine For People. It boasted not only 4-colored drawings but
photographs, and the roster of contributors included such eminent
names as Bishop Shapiro, Lefty Feep, J. Fenimore Belch, Subconscious
Sigmund, Sylvester W. Skadeitendapun, Osgood Mascene Stercore, Phillipi
Stringelborgh, Caspar the Naked, Hotfoot O. Ouch, Stabber Fitznoodle,
and Ecclesiastic W. Omigod. Its field was wider than fantasy, however,
embracing as it did psychiatry and metaphysics with such titles as
MIND LEGS OF A HAMBURGER, ARE YOU OLD AT NINETY?, and THE SEX ORGANS
AND HOW TO PLAY THEM. Then there was the somewhat famous burlesque of
WATTD TALES, entitled PLUMP TALES, which reproduced more or less accur-
ately the W.F. format.....parodying not only all the authors but the
illustrators and the reader's columns. It made the rounds (including
the inspection of editor Wright) and subsequently perished of indecent
exposure. The Lord only knows where all that stuff is now. Some is in
the hands of my compatriot, Harold Gauer, in Washington. Kuttner must
have other items. Some must be buried in my store-room. But receipt of
your publications revived memories, indeed. Looks like LIGHT is start-
ing to hit the high spots, eh?-ED/I was, however, somewhat frantic when
I opened the magazine and noted Mr. Peck's GENIE WITH THE LIGHT BROWN
HAIR....because it so happens that I have written a yarn for FANTASTIC
ADVENTURES in the Lefty Feep series, titled GENI WITH THE LIGHT BROWN
HAIR. It deals, of course, with Aladdin's lamp, and will not see pub-
lication probably for about six months. In order to avoid any implicat-
ion of plagiarizing the title, I hasten to inform you of the fact. Will
you tell Peck that? Isn't this better? Now enough know it to swaer to
your honesty-ED/ I hope that when LIGHT next emerges from behind its
bushel it doesn't run a yarn called THE GOON FROM RANGOON...another
Feep title already written but not yet run. Great minds run in the
same gutters. You should get out of the gutter, Bob, Come down in the
sewer with me and Lamb! ED/Thanks for the introduction to Canuck-
future. And carry on. When you get this number you'll see LIGHT is
carrying on, thd thanks for the wishes. As you read your copy from
month to month you'll see that far from going under, LIGHT gets livlier
and livelier-ED/



Robert Bloch

HERE'S PIE. E. A. GODFREY WITH ANOTHER "LETTER-POEM": So you made "Light"
out of my letter, now you really should know better, for when you print
that kind of tripe the fans may think you're overripe. But Light's
still going strong, and Les, you ask me if I like it? Yes, it helps to
pass the time away and is thrice welcome any day. Now Sergeant Lamb
best take this hint, you'd be a roast, adorned with mint if round
this camp you stick your snout, so if you're wise you'll just stay out.
A favorite game up here you know is cutting up an NCO. They like to see
what makes them tick, don't worry pal, it's over quick. You really
wouldn't feel much pain, your loss would be the army's gain. So keep
out pal, or you'll be had, as German's were at Stalingrad. Now Les these
last two issues were at least were good, at worst, were fair, your mail
bag hears no censor's snip, you just stand back and let her rip, that's
just the way to do it, too, a mixture like witches brew. Frome's cover
on this latest LIGHT is pretty fair, almost a fright. I pity your poor
cousin Ted, he groans in pain and hides his head, he seldom ever shows

(continued on page 15)

THE HORROR

BY LESLIE

A.
CROUTCH

IN THE HUT

The heat and darkness in the human packed adobe hut was stifling. The old priest shooed the dirty, bare-footed natives out. When the room was empty save for the small group of whites, he spoke.

"I will make a light so you can see," he said, suiting action to the words. The flickering yellow flame of the cracked, chimneyless lamp revealed a room empty of all furniture save for a long table in the middle, holding a blanket covered object. Toward this he led the others.

"We must be careful to replace things as we find them," he said. "Even after years of teaching the works of our Lord, they revert to heathen rites in their hour of duress."

Handing the lamp to a portly little man with a goatee, he turned to the mysterious object. Gently he rolled down the blanket at one end, disclosing the olive features of a young girl who seemed but asleep.

She had been very beautiful and very young. Had been? She still was. Silken lashes nestled against soft cheeks; ripe-red lips partly open; it seemed as though she might awake any instant and inquire as to their intrusion.

"This is she," the priest told them. "She has been like this for four months now. Apparently only sleeping, yet also apparently dead."

The portly man bent over the form, examined the features expertly, gently.

"Hm," he said, straightening. "Not a cataleptic trance. Not like those cases of sleeping sickness I've seen before. Here, what do you think of it, Carruthers?"

Carruthers, a long lean man with the air of an undertaker, moved forward. When he had finished he remarked: "Strange. The flesh is soft, yet cold. Underneath I seemed to sense the beat of a pulse, a moving sensation."

"We have noticed that," remarked the old priest. "At times watchers have distinctly seen the side of her face move, or the neck. Once her father declared he saw one eyelid move slightly. That is why they refuse to have her buried, why they believe she is still alive."

"When did you first notice these movements?" Asked the third man, a bald-headed, eagle-beaked, predatory-looking person.

"Oh, not right at first. It was perhaps two months after she was found like this. The movements were quite slight at first, but have been growing more pronounced weekly."

The portly man leaned over the girl for long minutes. He felt for her pulse. He drew a stethoscope from his pocket and applied it to her breast. Then he placed one thumb on her eyelid, rolled it gently upward. When he released it, it stayed in that position.

"Roll the other up," said the tall man. "Let us see if it appears as living as the first."

It did. Dark, seeming to hold a pleading their depths, they stared straight ahead. The third man stepped forward, drew a penlight, focussed the beam into the sightless orbs.

"Ah!" He exclaimed, straightening himself. "She is in a trance. The pupils distinctly contracted under the light. I suggest we move the girl from this place, take her to an up-to-date hospital. Surely we can

do something to aid her."

Was it their imagination or did the eyes reflect something like gratitude?

Suddenly the old priest cried out: "Look! She moved! I distinctly saw her lips move."

They crowded about excitedly. One felt her cheek and cried out that it was not as cold as before.

"Here," commanded the tall man, handing over a hypo. "Adrenalin. Perhaps it will help."

But it was unneeded, for suddenly the eyes turned, the lips moved. A faint whisper floated forth into the suddenly hushed room. The old priest leaned down. He listened, straightened, puzzlement in his eyes.

"I do not understand," he said. "The shock must have unhinged her mind. She keeps saying: 'take them away, take them away, they hurt, they hurt'."

"Undoubtedly delirious," said the portly man. "But enough of this talk. She lives; we must get her away from here."

They moved about, tucked arms under the form, started to lift when a cry of horror halted them.

"Her eye- her eye!" Cried the priest.

They all looked, then staggered back, dropping her rudely the few inches they had lifted.

Her head was straining up, the features working in terrible agony and fear. One eye had disappeared. Like a rotten fruit it had burst. The liquid ran down her cheek, and from the orifice, greyish, fat, crawling....

And before they could move the other eye split and they could seethen her cheek moved, heaved, the soft flesh burst....

They fled screaming into the night. The old priest dropped to his knees in the dust and prayed. And from the adobe hut rang the horrible cries and pleadings that grew fainter until they died away in the night.....

The End

.....	Before we get started on this
"	month's discussion--and it sur-
" C O N T R A R I W I S E "	passes last month's by a good
"	100%--I want to admit that last
.....	time Contrariwise stank. This is
	to offset the caustic comments I

I know are coming.

Please, I didn't say, quote- "sfm fans call fantasy fans peddlers of superstition, fear, and ignorance and that fantasy fans admonish sfm fans for failing to see things unseen", unquote. I didn't say it. I was merely showing the readers what the general belief is in the United States about the relationship between science-fiction and fantasy. No matter what the general belief might be, that is what reaches my ear. And there is plenty of controversy. Fantasy, of course, has a free, high way of writing. They are not held down by scientific rules, they don't have to watch out for fans that pounce gleefully on the tiniest of scientific errors, they must make their stories plausible. Science-fiction writing represents the highest in preparation, thought, accumulation of the latest scientific knowledge, and the finest of weaving together the fiction and the non-fiction, the characters who are the agents in getting across the idea that the author wishes to express.

I'll agree that some stories in science-fiction are sheer trash. Big, brave hero dashes up in his latest rocket ship, rays down all the big, bad monsters and sneering villains, and saves the big, beautiful heroine.

Fantasy, too, has its preparation behind it. A good, a really good author of fantasy has to build up his own background in the lore of fan-

tasia, fairy-tales, Arabian Nights, Folk-lore, superstition, books of black and white magic, ancient volumes of evil, hate, and fear. He must be able to be familiar with devils, imps, ghosts, werewolves, vampires, genies, and every other form of supernaturalism that has made mankind cower at shadows for eons. What is most important, the author must weave into his story, and most disturbingly, the thread of reality; the coincidences that we ordinarily laugh at, the odd little things that happen constantly, the unusual feelings that arise occasionally in men. A good fantasy author will entertain, but his entertainment is paid for in the thoughts that come to the surface despite efforts to laugh at them. Not horror, just uncertainty, which is far worse.

Personally, I don't see any cause for strife between the two types of fiction. Their purpose is to entertain, yes, and most of them do that very well. Both have their reasons for existing; fantasy, to put into words all the accumulated tales of weird happenings since the dawn of man; science-fiction, to build faith in the future, to make mankind realize his heritage. Both have other uses, which I will relate another time. Their main reason is entertainment, but why do fans read, acti-fans gather and talk? Why is actifandom one of the tightest-knit organizations in the world? Because, knowingly or unknowingly, actifans represent the elite in thought and culture and they have responsibility. More of that some other time.

Contrariwise, the editor gave me one heck of a bawling out for the cheap effort last time.

beb

:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000:::000

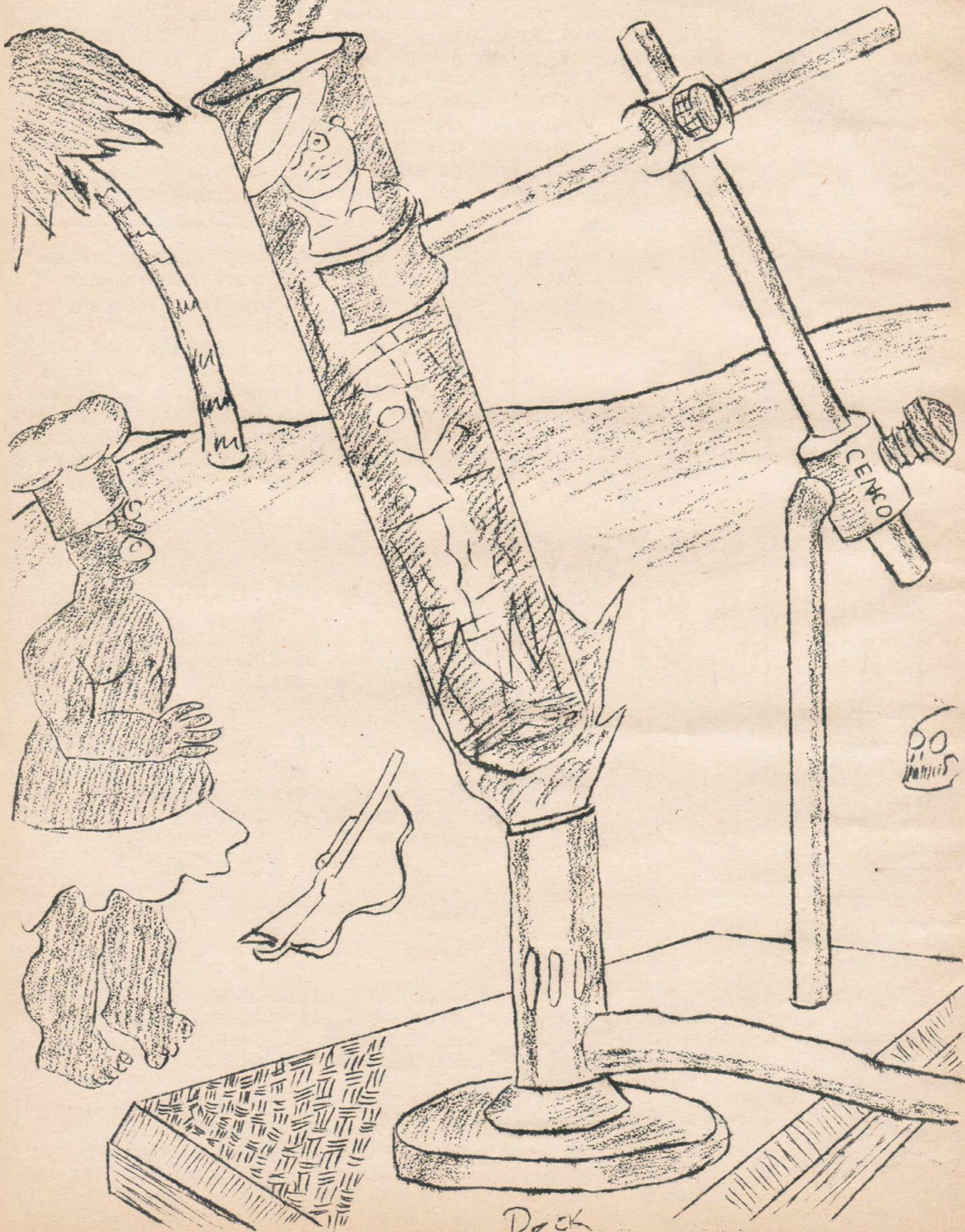
LIGHT FLASHES-cont'd from pg.8

to Thisteltown. "Two narrow bridges, get off at top of hill" said the directions and we did. We started along a narrow, gravelly road and was mentally cussing the boulders big as mountains which brusied our feet when we met a tall guy in slacks and sweater, hat on his head, glasses on his nose from which depended a dainty chain. This fellow was long and tall and gaunt. Now don't think he looked like something out of a Draculean play. He was just tall. About 6'3" or 4", weighing in the neighborhood of 175, which an humorous glint to his eye. He stopped. We stopped. He said something. We said something. We shook hands. This, then was Alfred E. Van Vogt. We were gently guided along the road a piece further and to the left and then to the right to a nice dwelling of half log siding. There we were just as gently ushered into a charming little house where we met the Mrs. Van Vogt, who in time proved to be a most intelligent conversationalist, hostess, and all round worthy mate for a worthy man. Much of the subsequent conversation was personal. But the whole visit of some 6 hours ranged from science-fiction to the weird and supernatural, with murders, skunks k and garbage piles thrown in for good measure. Mrs. Van Vogt brews a nice cup of tea and I must say I warmed my inner man with it more than once. As a sop to you birds who live, sleep and eat science-fiction, I'll say we saw photograph of Campbell and the Mrs and the Youngster; Van Vogt mentioned his future plans; and so forth. But this account, short as it is, is to try and introduce Van Vogt, the man, to you. To try and show you what he is like as much as I am able. I hope I might be able to give you a real article sometime later on about him, if he will agree to sort of collaborate along with it on the details. But Van Vogt the man is about 30, darkish, humorous, well-read, intelligent, with other ideas just as you and I. As witness the skunk and the garbage pile. He said he had an idea about a skunk that was always digging up this garbage heap back of this country home. In this pile was some thing a certain man didn't want found out and he was afraid the skunk would uncover it so he tried to kill said polecat. People got curious about his hate for skunks and investigated and found a dead

his face, how could he stand the black disgrace? The stuff of Peck's in spots was good, Virginia's head's not made of wood, those lines she wrote were up to scratch and show the queer things that will hatch, and that stuff from the little child who tears his hair and goes so wild. About the Vichy Vachy folk and on the language that they spoke- well that's all right for they're in France and must talk fast when they've a chance but they are not our "Canadien", they might be nice, they're not real men. Let's hear not more of this French guff, just write in English, that's the stuff. To make a finish to this page before you're all in a rage, remember we're still out in tents, it's too cold to collect the rents, the frost in nipping hands and feet, ~~the~~ water, shoving's no treat, and our morale, it seems to me, goes down as fast as mercury. Oh well, there's still the note from Vi, who dished up a piece of pie. Thanks a lot, my little friend, so with that, I'll make an end. /Another rebound on Wollheim's French Fantasy Magazine. If this keeps on I'll have to write a piece in LIGHT FLASHES and try and argue it all out to ~~Wollheim's~~ satisfaction. However, Wollheim has just sent another article through on the same question which ~~will~~ help to clear up some points. end.

CANADIAN FANLAW'S OWN LAUNDRY, SHOULD WEISEL THIS TIME SHIRLEY K. PECK BLASPHEMOUS! Geeen thank for planning FLASHES at such a timely time. Maybe Widner will take back a few things he said. Look, bud, don't you ever think of writing about something weird or scientific and not about drinking and health belts and such sordid things? Put out a magazine called SEX if you want to, but please don't put such tripe in LIGHT. /How about HORROR IN THE HUT this number. La Fume Readers all like such "tripe" as sex and health belts.-ED/ How about a real science story for a change, something with a virile, handsome hero called Hercules Manglepapa and aaa beautiful blonde professor's daughter? Throw in lots of rayings and hand-to-hand slaughter and a good scientific theme, huh? /oh, thud and blunder stuff, eh, keed?-ED/ FRED HURTER YELPS WITH PAIN FROM TOWN OF MOUNT ROYAL, QUEBEC: Got LIGHT. Good issue, though cover wasn't up to usual standard. I like your new cut for the contents page. Keep it by all means. /How's this month's, Fred?-ED/ It fits in with the lettering on the cover. /have another here that fits even better-ED/ The shading on the lettering was good. /LIGHT and shade, eh chum?-ED/ You should letter the word "CONTENTS" also, I think. At least make it a bit larger. I don't go for those ~~*****~~ though. A line of xxxx's at the bottom of the page make an attractive border. Never thought of it before. Here's some I have used, tho: -oOo- ~~*****~~ %%%o%%o :o:o:o:o:o: The first one is about the best. Good for the end of a story or something. /cripes. Are you sure you aren't a border-line case, or sumpin? ED/ Your mimeographing is good and clear, and easy to read.....LIGHT FLASHES are as informative & interesting as ever. GENIE WITH THE LIGHT BROWN HAIR was not up to Peck's usual high standard, but good reading all the same. The article by BEB was good. Poetry is good. I accuse you of deliberately braeking off the girl's name as you did on the Contents page. There was room enough to complete it, you evil-minded so & so. /just looked this up and for readers' benefit who are too lazy to do so for them- m selves, find I split Miss Comb's first name up so it read Virgin - ia! 'Twas not intended, Fred-ED/ I liked that song of Link's on the back page. Heh heh. Darn good. Wanna hear my two latest? You don't? Well, here they are. Question: What did a guy say when he saw another man vomiting? Answer: WRETCHed man. /WHAT a pewky subject!-ED/ And while you're getting over the effects of that one, here's the other: "What did the car say to the gasoline pump when it heard of the new gas restrictions." heheheheheheh, aw nuts, turn the page. This is going to kill you, heh heh. "You can't fuel me!" /Comb'll mail yours to a stump and push YOU over backwards for that stinkeroo, Hurter-ED/LIGHT is easily on a par with an American fanmag.

NIG: "BEST
EQUIPMENT, BWANA."



PECK