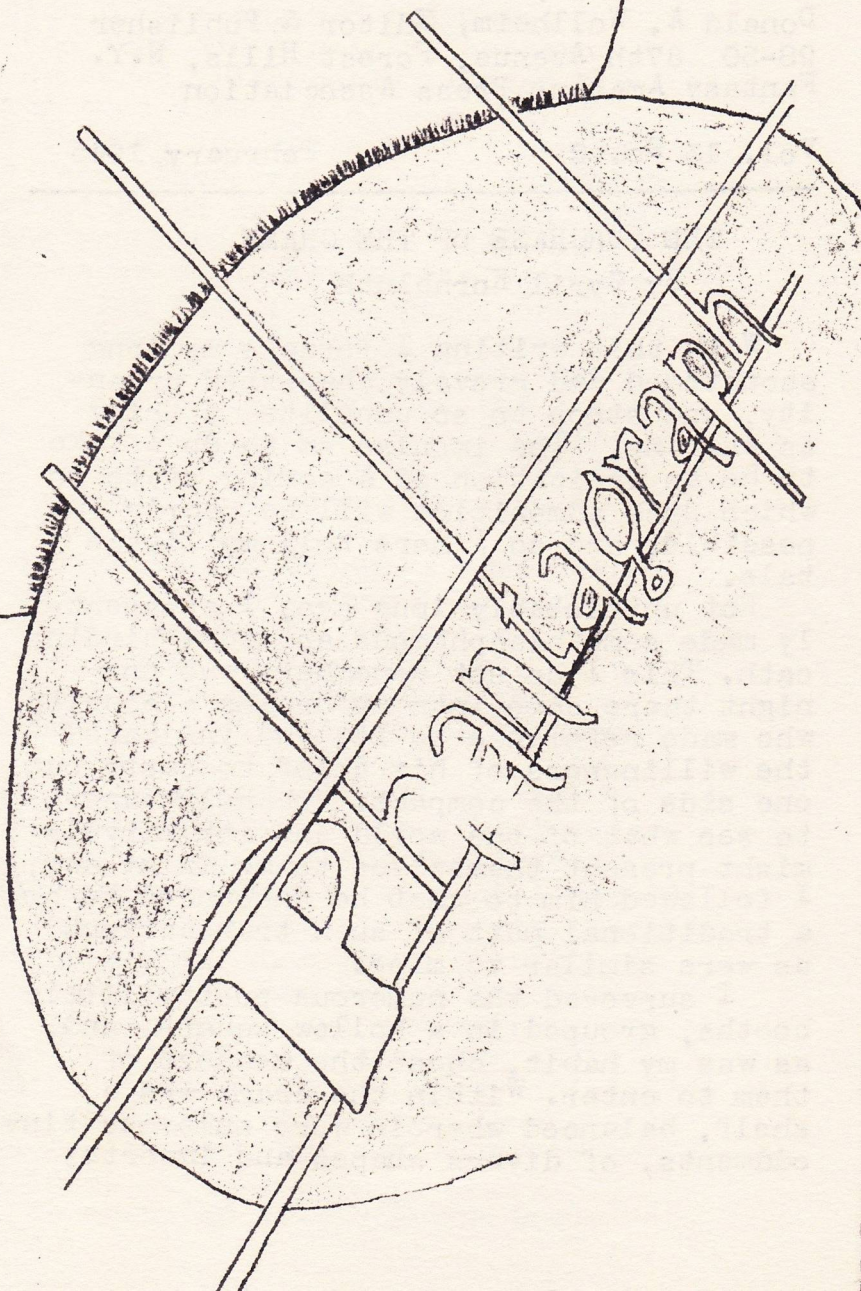


the



eleventh year of publication

THE PHANTAGRAPH

the oldest fantasy fanzine

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THE PURCHASE OF THE CRAME

By Cyril Kornbluth

With this writing I forsake my long accustomed and gravely cherished urbanity, and stoop to so unpolite a thing as warning. The impulse so to do I take to be an indication of a coming state in which such admonition will be nearly impossible, and so I here tell my little tale.

Not unthinkably long ago, I apparently made some blasphemous and semi-binding oath. This I do not remember, but one night there came into my dreams a courier who made reference to it, and indicated the willingness of his chief to carry out one side of the compact. Urbanely eager to see what of the world and its marvels might present themselves to me in my day, I followed him to what he announced to be a traditional mart of such transactions as were similar to mine.

I surveyed the numerous pretty little booths, grouped in a hollow square, and, as was my habit, chose the meanest of them to enter. Within the crame was a shelf, balanced wherein were numerous tiny oddments, of divers shapes and imports;

-----the phantagraph-----

and a table bearing paper, pen, and ink. The latter were fully intelligible to me, wherefore I busied myself with an inspection of the arrayed trinkets.

Not too long did I wait before the keeper appeared. Discreetly, I eyed his feet, and they were not cloven, but I thought it most advisable that I regard not his face. There were words, and there was a writing and sealing of papers, and I, having promised to pay in full, was free to choose my desire of the oddments and that which they represented. Resolved not to be bested in bargain, I chose wisely, and, I thought, well, but when I had selected more than half of the images and announced that I had done, I sensed that the keeper of the booth was smiling broadly and with a wisdom offensively beyond mine.

The documents and trinkets were burned and melted together over a balneum mariae of no remarkable properties, and I was free to go, knowing that the party of the first part would be more than glad to fulfill his obligations concerning me.

I awoke in bed and thought of that which had occupied the night. The images had, at least, been carefully selected, I proudly assured myself, so that I should get the full of the bargain's worth. There had been an arrow, that meant strength on the hunt, and there had been a beast that combined the tortoise and the parrot, and there had been a mighty fist, and there had been a jousting lance, and a magician's cap, and, among the others, a figure eloquent for itself, but not politely to be described.

(To be concluded in the March issue)

4-----the phantagraph-----

THE PROGRAM

ACT ONE, Madrid-Barcelona, Time, the present

ACT TWO, Paris in springtime, during the
siege

ACT THREE, London, Bank Holiday, after
a n air raid

ACT FOUR, a short time later in the
U.S.A.

EAT ZEPHYR CHOCOLATES

(do not run for the exit in case of fire
the Rome-Berlin Theater has no exits)

SUZANNE BRASSIERES FOR PERFECT
FORM

CAST, IN THE ORDER OF DISAPPEARANCE

infants

women and children

soldiers, sailors, miscellaneous
crowds

With 2,000 wounded and 1,000 dead

10,000 wounded and 5,000 dead

100,000 wounded and 50,000 dead

10,000,000 wounded and 5,000,000 dead

(Scenes by Neville Chamberlain

costumes, courtesy of Daladier

Spanish Embargo by the U.S. Congress

music and lighting by Pius XI)

SMOKE EL DEMOCRACIES

TRY THE NEW GOLGOTHA FOR COCKTAILS

AFTER THE SHOW.

--Kenneth Fearing, 1938 (!)

("Dead Reckoning" Random House)