



VOL 2 NO 2
JUNE 1941





Vol. 2, No. 2
June, 1941

Editor: Paul Froschafer
10¢ a copy Box 6475, Metro Station Three for 25¢
A Starlight Los Angeles, California Publication

C O N T E N T S

STORIES:

The Midnight Visitor	by Duane W. Rimel	4
The Hat	by Donald A. Wollheim	6
Sara Gabrielsen Goes to Paradise	by Henry Andrew Ackermann	8
It Wouldn't Work	by Bob Tucker	14

ARTICLES:

# Fow Future Fantasy Fillyums	by Bob Tucker	7
Shangri-L'affaires #9	by Forrest J Ackerman	16

POEM:

Wahlpurgisnacht	by Grady L. McMurtry	17
-----------------	----------------------	----

DEPARTMENT:

Editorial Illumination		3
------------------------	--	---

Cover by Harry Jenkins, Jr.

EDITORIAL ILLUMINATION

First thought in the mind of every fantasy fan now is the 1941 World Science Fiction Convention to be held in Denver, Colorado, next month. Most of you knew all of the details, but I hope you will bear with me while I explain for the benefit of the others.

The time of the Convention is the Fourth of July weekend, July 4, 5, and 6. Place is Denver's fashionable Shirley-Savoy Hotel. Entertainment includes informal speeches by fantasy notables, open discussion, a costume party, an auction, a banquet, a science fiction play, a fantastic movie, and so on. Celebrities will include Robert A. Heinlein, Raymond A. Palmer, F. Orlin Tremaine, Mortimer (continued on page 15)

THE MIDNIGHT VISITOR

by Duane W. Kimel

Simms was interrupted reading the paper by a rap on the door. He hesitated a moment, uncertain as to whether the noise had been real or imaginary, for midnight visitors were unusual in Balzar forest; and the tapping had been so light a stray rodent might easily have done it. A single lamp in the room cast uncertain light upon Simms' bronzed countenance----enough to reveal that the sound had caused him considerable alarm.

The tapping was repeated with enough force to dispel any doubt as to its reality. Casting the paper aside, Simms rose slowly, lifted the latch on the heavy portal, and peered cautiously out into the night. At first he did not see the tall figure standing beside the door, but gradually his eyes became accustomed to the dark and focused on the caller.

"What do you want?" Simms demanded, throwing the door open so he could have a better view of the stranger.

"A night's lodging, sire." His voice was smooth and cultured. "And I'll see that you are well paid."

"But I have an invalid----"

"Come, come, my man; will two pounds satisfy you?"

"That is enough," said Simms decisively, "but your bed will be a hard one, as I have only two cots."

"What's the matter with the second?" the stranger inquired, stepping inside the shabby hut.

"My brother, Stanley, is very ill in the next room."

The tall man nodded and removed his cloak and hat, revealing expensive clothes and riding habit. He told Simms that he had lost his way along the narrow road, and seeing the cottage light, had approached it in quest of shelter. He said his horse had thrown him and run away.

Turning about in the small room, his eyes fell on the door which opened upon the adjoining chamber. From a crack at the bottom of the rectangle a feeble light gleamed. Noting the direction of his gaze, Simms said:

"My brother must have a lamp all night---he is afraid of the dark, even with the fever. He talks about spiders. . . ."

"I see," the tall one replied, seating himself in a wicker chair. For a long while he was motionless, staring at the bare, shadowy walls as if deep in thought. Simms had taken up his paper again when the man interrupted.

"Something has been bothering me," he said slowly. "What you said about your brother reminded me of it. In the last village I heard wild stories about an accursed house somewhere along this road---know anything about it?"

"Nothing," Simms replied. "We have been here only a short time; there may be one for all I know."

"Then you haven't heard the story?"

"No," Simms answered curtly, nettled at the man's persistence. "I don't bother with legends or superstitions."

"Maybe it will interest you nevertheless," the stranger said, turning up the lamp. "The way I heard it was something like this:

"It seems that in a deep forest hereabouts---I think they call

POIARIS

in Balzar Wood---there used to be a strange house. It had been deserted for many years. It had once been the property of an old man reputed to be a wizard, and when the King took his land away from him for not paying his taxes, he placed a curse on the house. And for two people met their death in the house, it became quite unpopular; and as far as anyone knows, has been abandoned ever since. There is one curious aspect of the story---people who were ignorant of the curse were not harmed; only those who had heard of it were found dead in the house.

"Both of the men who died there were found with unpleasant expressions on their faces; with no apparent cause of death, unless it could have been fright. . . . But the queer thing about it was the simoness of the two tragedies. In each case a spider was hanging from the ceiling directly above the contorted face of the deceased. That's about all. . . ."

Simms laughed coldly and threw his paper on the floor. "Pure nonsense," he grunted, avoiding the stranger's eyes. "You shouldn't listen to such stuff."

"I was only repeating it for what it might be worth. I wouldn't care to run across that cabin in the dark. . . . By the way," he added, somewhat tensely, "what is this forest called, or has it a name?"

Simms coughed and muttered, "Balzar Forest-----"

"My God!" the man cried, rising. Seizing his cloak and hat, he fled out the door before Simms could utter a word. The sound of his running footsteps faded away in the distance.

"The utter fool!" Simms growled. "Running from his own bogies."

He prepared for bed immediately; before retiring he approached Stanley's room to make sure that everything was as it should be. At the last moment he didn't enter the room; no sounds came from within, so he decided that his brother was asleep. The door was slightly ajar, and he wondered if the stranger's wild story had disturbed his brother. Knowing that the oil in the bedroom lamp would last all night, he moved toward his own and blew it out.

Simms awoke the next morning with the uneasy feeling that sometime during the night he had heard an inarticulate scream. Dismissing it as a dream-fragment, he rose and dressed hurriedly, cursing the bad influence the visitor had had on himself. When he opened the door to his brother's room a gasp of horror fell from his lips, and he knew then that the stranger's rambling story had fallen upon other ears. For Stanley was dead; and directly above his terribly distorted face, on a silver strand of web, hung a tiny black spider.

THE END

Don't miss THIS!!

VOM

THE HAT

by Donald A. Wollheim

I have checked this matter pretty thoroughly, even to having microscopic examinations made, and I tell you that I could not be mistaken. But it does not help to think too much about it. It is all very odd.

These refugees, you know. These days all sorts of people are being routed out of Europe. British children and German Jews are really only a small part of it. You've no idea, really, unless you are a New Yorker with your eyes wide open, how many types of people are coming over here these days. Poles, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Danes, Roumanians, Hungarians, oh, all sorts of people. But to get back to my subject.

I was sitting in a cafeteria in lower Manhattan very late one night. It was a smallish cafeteria, not too clean, not too dirty, and not too crowded. In fact there weren't more than three or four people there, mostly having coffee and doughnuts. The time was very late, or very early depending on whether you were just getting up or just going to bed. About two or three in the morning. I had just come from a friend's house who lives down in that crowded section and had dropped in for a bite before going home.

Anyhow, as I was saying, there were only a few people there; two chaps who looked like Italian workmen who, I judged, were probably on their way to the docks, a chap who was probably a truck-driver, and him. He was a nondescript sort of chap sitting over in one corner hunched over a paper. I never got a clear look at his face, after all who was he to me? I only remember what he looks like by afterthought.

I seem to think he had rather poor clothes on, shabby and all that. And I have an impression he was unshaven and his hair ecraggly. Anyway he was sitting there reading a paper in some Slavic language or maybe it was Hungarian or Greek. I wouldn't know.

Now, nothing really happened, you understand. I hope you haven't been expecting anything from this yarn. Because all that did happen was that this guy suddenly put down his paper, looked up at the clock, muttered something under his breath and got up. He walked hastily to the cashier, plunked down a nickel and rushed out.

So what's that to me, you wonder. Nothing except he forgot his hat, a black, rather battered, fuzzy brimmed fedora. I, like the dope that I am, went over, picked it off the rack and went after him, but I couldn't find him. So I came back. The greasy waiter, who was both counterman and cashier, shrugged his shoulders and indicated I should leave the hat back on the rack or do what I pleased with it. I was going to stick it back on the rack when I noticed a number of loose hairs sticking around the fuzzy inner rim of the hat. That's nothing, too, a lot of hats would show loose hairs. Only not like these.

I know hairs. And these hairs were coarse, grey-tapering-into brown. They weren't like any human hairs. They struck me as odd then and they still do.

But I said that there are all sorts of refugees flooding the country these days. What with war in Greece and in the wild country

in Albania. And with trouble in the Carpathians, in Slovakia, in Rumania, in Bulgaria, I imagine just about everybody gets stirred up including a lot of people that the rest of the world just forgot or tried to forget.

Anyway, tests and everything confirm my first opinion. The inside of that hat was all full of wolf hairs, wild European wolf hairs, and no human ones there at all.

THE END
- - -

A FEW FUTURE FANTASY FILLYUMS

by Bob Tucker

Universal Pictures have just concluded their annual convention in Chicago (Unicon?) and as in the usual course of events announced as part of their new season's program pictures you will be seeing after this spring. Of possible interest to you are the following:

"The Wolf Man". No cast is announced for this picture, nor any details beyond a jerk-description as follows: "a new figure of grotesque horror". In probability it will emerge as a typical horror pic as has come from Universal in the past; on the theme of werewolfery.

"The Ghost of Frankenstein". Comes again the tin man, this time apparently in a shroud. The cast is not given here either, but it is doubtful to this source whether that fact is worth worrying about. To us, while every fantastic is another step in the right direction, most of these "things" from Hollywood occupy the same niche in our honored opinion as that "magazine" called Future Fiction. This pic is labeled as a sequel, pure and simple.

"Mermaid in Distress" is jerk-described as a "novelty idea production" but beyond that it gives no hint of what it may be nor who may be in it. Don't get your hearts and hopes up, it can turn out to be a third-rate gob story, y'know.

"The Black Cat" is to star that sneering personage Basil Rathbone, plus Broderick Crawford, Hugh Herbert, and Anne Gwynne. The fact that the cast is given gives rise to the belief that the picture is set and probably scheduled to start rolling any time soon --- maybe now. This is described as "a wacky horror picture." Unknow? Could Unknown be invading Hollywood?

And that, according to our source (a trade paper) is all that has been announced to the trade on that line. However Universal is holding back on some things; for of the 47 features plotted for the coming season only 25 have been announced. Some of those others can well be typical U mellers.

See ya at the filliums.

THE END
- - -

SARA GABRIELSON GOES TO PARADISE

by Harry Andrew Ackermann

Sara Gabrielson was married to Ira Gabrielson. They had together made the clearing for their little farm, and many an evening had lain down weary in their big, wide bed. Like two good plow-horses they had pulled hard and easily side by side, and they could barely imagine the possibility of anything happening to the one of them that did not happen to the other too. It is true that when Ira had been to town he came home drunk and beat his wife; but the next day he was so remorseful that he beat himself.

One day Sara took to her bed, and Ira sat on a chair beside her, and asked over and over again whether she did not feel better. She kept on answering, too, that now, thank God, she felt better; but at last Ira saw that his wife was so ill that it would be better to go for the priest.

That night Sara suddenly saw that it was not Ira who sat by her bedside, but a man clothed in white garments, who had come to fetch her; and she burst into tears and pleaded: "No, no! I would rather stay with Ira!"

"What do you say?" asked her husband, who was sitting watching beside her.

But at last Sara saw the white-clad figure spread his wings, and heard him say: "Now, Sara, you must come with me." And Sara was obliged to go with him, for he took her up in his arms. They went out of the cottage and up into the air, and the Gabrielson buildings grew smaller and smaller; past both the sun and the stars, and much, much farther. Then Sara began once more to whimper and complain, but the stranger dried her tears and said, "Be of good cheer, for now all your troubles are at an end."

"Oh, I was so happy where I was," said Sara. "And Ira, will he be left there all alone, old and worn out as he is?"

"God will take care of him," said the stranger. "Rejoice that soon you will be in Paradise."

Sara tried to rejoice, for she had always intended to manage so that she would go to heaven when she died; but at the same time she could not help wondering whether Ira would remember to mend the sheep's tether.

At last they stopped at a great golden gate, much larger than the gate of the county judge's home, and passed through a garden where a number of children were playing. Among these Sara recognized a neighbor's child that had died of scarlet fever, and she said to herself: "If ever I go back to earth again, I'll tell the mother that the little one's happy where he is." But this made her remember her own little boys down on the earth, who were probably asking after their mother now.

Suddenly they turned up a mountain with terraces and little white houses, exactly like something she had once seen in the movies. And if that wasn't her brother standing outside one of the houses -- he who had been so poor and miserable on earth!

"Why, is that you, Sara?" said her brother with some surprise. "I had not expected to see you here for many a long year," he went on. "This is my house and now I'm not bothered with either taxes or debts. I've plenty of food and fuel, thank goodness, and I've

no need to work myself to the bone to make both ends meet. When you've seen the Almighty, you mustn't forget to come back and visit a while."

Sara was quite touched, but once more she thought: "Poor Ira! he'll be alone on earth, toiling and moiling as before."

At last they reached the top of the mountain, and here stood the Almighty's own house. It was much larger than the great cathedral she had once seen when she was in Washington. The Almighty, in bishop's robes, was just going in, but stood still on seeing her.

Sara began to tremble, for she had heard that the Almighty was very severe, and she knew that she had many a time been different from what she should have been. She stood still with downcast eyes and folded hands. She hoped the Lord would not be too hard on her.

"Ah, good day, Sara!" She heard to her astonishment that it was the Almighty himself who was speaking so gently to her. "Welcome to heaven! Come and shake hands with me as our custom is."

Sara went timidly up to him, and falling on her knees, began to cry, for she thought this was so much too good for a poor sinner like herself.

"Rise, my child," said the Almighty, and he dried her tears and told her that she must be happy now, for all her sorrows would be turned into joy and happiness here in heaven.

At this Sara found courage to say: "You mustn't for all the world think I've had a hard time of it before. It's only bad people who say that Ira beat me, and I can't recollect that he ever took so much as a drop of spirits when he was in town. He was so good and kind to me, and we lived so happily together, that I don't remember that there was ever so much as a bad word between us."

"It's quite right and proper for you to speak so well of your husband," said the Almighty. "But now you must go with the angel there, and look about you in Paradise, and then decide what you want to do, and what you want to be here; for it is the custom here for everyone to be what he or she likes best."

"Oh," thought Sara, "it can't be very much that I'm good for," but the angel who had fetched her now took her with him, and they descended the mountain, but on the other side. They crossed little lakes, that shone rosy in the light of heaven, and on which swam flocks of white swans, singing more beautifully than she had heard anything sing before. The angel told her that these swans had also been people on earth, and that they had all had a talent for singing, but no money to pay for their training; so the Almighty had made them into swans, so that they could sing as beautifully as they liked. Along the banks Sara saw a great many water lilies rocking on the waves, with their open chalices turned toward the sky. The angel told her that these had been women who had been especially poetically inclined, but had never become what they meant to be on earth, and so the Almighty had blessed them in this way. The butterflies that fluttered about them were the Almighty's thoughts that now and then alighted and rested for a time on their people.

The angel then asked Sara whether she would like to be either a swan or a water lily.

"Gracious no!" she said, for she was thinking once more of

Ira; and supposing he came here some day, it was not at all certain he would know her again if she were a water lily.

The angel showed her other lakes on which white and red boats were sailing about with gaily-dressed people on board playing on musical instruments. And she saw a large garden in which young men and women were dancing and gazing at one another with enamored glances. They were couples who had been separated on earth, and came together here; and the girls who had been plain and deformed on earth were the most beautiful of all here, so that they never sat out a single dance.

Sara noticed the enthusiastic shouts of the dancers as the orchestra struck out with some red-hot licks and riffs. Upon her inquiry, the angel told her that the musicians were those who had liked swing music on earth but who had never had a chance to perform it themselves.

The angel then asked Sara whether she would like to pass her time on board one of the sight-seeing boats, or become young and beautiful among those who danced. But Sara did not wish for either. And now too she remembered that the hay harvest would be going on down at the farm, and how would Ira ever be able to get in the hay all alone!

Then Sara saw a great festival, where people sat eating and drinking at a richly spread table. Most of them had roses in their hair and were dressed in silk and velvet, and they leaned over to one another and drank toasts, and laughed so that they could be heard a long way off. The angel said that many of them had been poor on earth, and that a feast such as this had been their greatest wish, and so they were now having what they wanted. Then Sara saw another garden in which slender women were walking with knights in narrow, grassy paths, each couple hidden from the others by trees and bushes, and it was thus they would have it.

The angel showed Sara a large gathering of men and women who were discussing complicated questions, adopting resolutions, and voting one another to the position of chairman; and he said that this was what these people had most desired on earth, and so they were allowed to amuse themselves in this way through all eternity. They looked exceedingly happy too, for their faces shone like little suns.

Sara shook her head, however, saying that this was a thing she had never understood.

Finally the angel showed her a garden in which a number of women were occupied in looking after little children. The angel said that some of these women had lost their children in life, but had found them again here, while others had longed for a child in life but had never had one, generally because they had not married; but here they had the children of which they had dreamed, and nursed them, and put them to sleep, and washed and dressed them, and had never dreamt there could be such happiness even in heaven.

Sara thought, however, that when her own little boys were motherless on earth she could not bring herself to take charge of other people's children here.

When at last the angel brought her back to the Almighty, he was obliged to say that Sara could not make up her mind to anything.

"What!" exclaimed the Almighty. "Is there nothing in the whole kingdom of heaven that you think good enough?"

Sara fell upon her knees and burst into tears. "Oh, it's not

that for everything is too good for me; but -- but --" and she could get no farther.

"Don't be afraid to say what you want, for here everyone receives what he really desires."

The angel worked encouraged Sara, and she said: "If that is the case, then I should like most of all to go back to earth again; for I can't see how Ira is going to manage alone."

All the angels standing around looked in alarm at the Almighty, for they had never yet heard of anyone wishing to give up paradise in order to return to earth. But the Almighty only smiled and said: "Would you like me to have your husband brought here at once?"

"Oh very humble thanks," said Sara, "but when John and Thomas would be left without both father and mother."

"Yes. I've still got something for your boys to do on earth," said the Almighty. "But what is it you want, then?"

"Couldn't I go back to my husband's farm?" asked Sara timidly.

"I suppose I must let you then," said the Almighty. "But your body's already buried, so you'll always be invisible; and there's not much that you'll be able to do either."

"I could go with Ira wherever he goes, and with the boys where they go," said Sara. "If I could do that I should be just as happy as the angels here in Paradise."

"Guess you'll have to do it then," said the Almighty good-naturedly. And he patted her on the head, and told the angel to take her back to earth again.

When they had gone so far down through the clouds that she could see the old homestead again, Sara was quite beside herself with joy. She recognized the cottage and the cowshed and the fence a long way off. Smoke was rising from the chimney, so that they must have been cooking. The angel now took leave of her, as she could easily find her way alone.

When Sara came nearer, she saw that it was early morning, for the meadows were covered with dew, and people were trooping across the fields with scythes and rakes on their shoulders. Ira came out of the cowshed, leading the spotted cow which he was going to tether, and then he carried in the milk. Poor fellow, he'd done the milking himself today, and that was work he was not accustomed to.

Sara perceived that he neither saw nor heard her, but she followed him into the kitchen, seated herself on the hearthstone, and watched him strain milk. It was done carelessly, and not as it should have been done. The strainer, she saw, had not been washed, he spilled much of the milk on the floor when he emptied the pail, and the milk pan was not clean either. Didn't he know, the idiot, what in that way his milk would soon go sour?

She then followed him into the bedroom when he went to wake the boys and help them with their clothes. John, the youngest, asked whether mother had come home, and his father told him he must leave off forever taking questions -- Mother would come as soon as she could. Sara kissed both John and Thomas on the cheek, but neither of them seemed to notice it. Thomas looked several times straight toward where she stood.

From that time an entirely new life began for Sara at the farm. When the boys went to the forest or brush wood, she went with them to guard them from evil. When Ira was taking in the hay

on hot days, she followed him and tried to make his burden lighter. At night she remained beside his bed and the boys' to see that they had no bad dreams. When Ira rose on Sunday mornings, she tried to steal into his thoughts and make him decide to go to church. She went into the cowshed once every day to protect the cows from disease; and in the autumn, when frosty nights came, she went about the fields and persuaded the frost not to touch Ira's corn.

Toward the end of the winter, Ira made up his mind to take a trip into town, and now Sara did not know what to do. Should she go with him, or should she stay at home with the boys? It ended with her staying at home, and while the boys tried to cook their own food and to see to the cows in the cowshed, she went about with them trying to show them how to do it.

When Ira came home he was drunk, and beat the boys just as he had so often beaten her; but the next day he was remorseful as he had always been and because, thank goodness, his conscience was not ruined yet.

One day a strange woman came to the house with a bundle under her arm, made herself at home, and took over the work in the kitchen and the cowshed. A little while after, Sara saw that Ira was thinking of getting married again. "Poor old fellow!" she thought. "Is he really going to throw himself away to another woman?" She had to look on while her dresses and linen were used by the stranger. Later in the spring, preparations for the wedding were made, and one day the neighbors appeared with baskets on their arms, and drank to the happy couple.

The boys went about looking bashfully at one another, for they were thinking of their mother. Sara went with the little wedding party to the church, and sat far back in the choir, and watched Ira being wedded to another woman.

"It's too bad!" thought Sara. "She hasn't even tied his silk neckerchief properly around his neck. It wasn't like that when I did it."

Things were very different for Ira now. He and his new wife frequently fought, and the boys were so ill-treated by their step-mother that they often cried themselves to sleep.

The Almighty had seen all this, however, and one day an angel came flying down to Sara, and asked her if she would go with him to Paradise.

"Oh, no!" said Sara. "I don't think I should have a day's happiness there either, so long as things go with Ira as they're going now." So she stayed on, and was comforted in knowing that Ira thought of her more and more, and talked about her to the boys when the woman was not present.

Years passed, and the boys grew up and took places in the parish. They got on, and one of them married a farmer's daughter, who inherited both farm and land, and the other took a girl with money, and bought a schooner, and began fishing on a large scale.

A day came when Ira lay ill in bed, the same bed in which Sara had closed her eyes, and she sat on the edge of the bed, and passed her hand over his eyes in the hope that he would see her. At last he looked up and gazed at her.

"Oh, is that you, Sara?" he said.

"Yes, thank God, it's me," said Sara. "And I think we shall

soon live together again."

"I expect you're pretty angry with me because I took another woman into the house," said Ira sadly.

"May the Almighty forgive you or I am," said Sara, as she stood by the door.

"The Almighty forgive you, too, for saying," said the woman, who was standing there, the next day, looking for the priest."

An angel came to the door, and opened the door, and an angel, saying to the man and woman, "Welcome."

"The Almighty forgive you, too, for saying," said the woman, who was standing there, the next day, looking for the priest."

An angel took them about and showed them all the splendors that were to be seen; and when at last they went back, the Almighty said: "Well, Ira Gabrielson, what have you decided for yourself and your wife?"

Ira, who now knew that he might be exactly what he most wished to be, answered a little hesitatingly: "If you had a little piece of land that we could begin on, as we did when we were newly married, it would be more than we have deserved."

At this the Almighty laughed, and said to an angel: "Go with them to the great city, give them tools and timber for a cottage, and as much land as they want." And the angel took them to quite another part of Paradise, where Ira saw the finest land he had ever seen; and here the angel asked how much they wanted.

Sara and Ira looked at one another. "Well," said Ira, "on earth we had three cows, but now we can do with two."

The angel then gave them so much land that they would soon be able to feed two cows, and afterwards, he said, they could add as much new land as they liked. At this Sara and Ira looked at one another, and thought they had never been so well off.

And then they began to work, as they had done when they were newly married. Ira dug, and Sara pulled up roots and made the ground even with the fork; and now and again they straightened their backs, wiped the perspiration from their brows, looked at one another, and laughed. As when they had first married, Ira was so industrious that he would not even have an afternoon nap; but Sara, as in their young days, would go out to him in the field, with his afternoon coffee in a little tin can.

When they began to build the cottage, they decided that it should be exactly like their old homestead; that would be nice when their gods came. And when at last they had a roof over their heads, and lay once more in their comfortable wide bed, they both agreed that no one in all Paradise could be so happy as they.

THE END



WEIRDISTS!

ATTEND THE

CONVENTION

IT WOULDN'T WORK

by Bob Tucker

"Aw heck!" a complaining voice from the clearing announced.
"Aw heck! Aw heck!"

A tall oldish woman stepped softly out of the fringe of trees and regarded the hecker with mild puzzled eyes. The newcomer was slim and pale and garbed in a green that merged easily with the trees she had just quitted; almost, but not quite, for her small feet did not carry her far into the open space. She poised for instant flight, and then brought down the heel of her foot.

A twig snapped, purposely, and out in the center of the clearing the other whirled, dropping a blood red object in his sudden fright. "What're you doing there?" he flung at her.

"Watching you---" the queer woman smiled at him "---for hours. and you....?"

He darted a look behind and around her before answering. "Are you alone?" Suspicious eyes searched the foliage.

"Quite." A tiniest motion with her head. "I live . . . near here. Alone. Seldom does anyone come here. That is what aroused my curiosity in you. I haven't had . . . visitors . . . in a long while."

Reassured, and not a little ashamed at his timidity, the visitor stooped to retrieve the bright red object, a small book bound in gleaming buckram. Brushing it free of the summer dust he held it out to her---

LE WERE-WOLF

A Study in Lycanthropy

She smiled ever so slightly as she read the title.

"I know what you're thinking," he interpreted her face. "I'm crazy, or superstitious, or childish. Well, I'm not, really! Rather it's just the opposite that is true. I don't believe in this sort of thing. I study the occult, the dark arts. I am tremendously interested in, ah, vampires -- nymphs -- dryads -- werewolves -- and things. It's a sort of hobby, you know." He faltered.

She smiled an invitation to continue.

"I like to think myself a . . . researcher. A delver into mythology and its allied subjects. This book--" waving it around in the air, the low sun glinting on its shining surface "--this book sets forth a method or recipe (as it terms it) for becoming a werewolf. I was, ah, . . . testing it, so to speak, when you, ah, . . . entered."

"May I. . . ?" she stretched forth a slim and colorless hand.

There followed a short period of silence between the two as the tall woman leafed through the pages of the little volume, scanning a paragraph here and a whole page there, missing nothing withal, until at last she handed it back with a profound little sigh, meaning much.

"Where did you get this?"

"At the public library!" the hobbyist researcher said surprisingly. "I realize that that is the oddest place for a book of this sort to be, but there I found it. Here . . . see . . ." and he

opened the front cover to reveal the library bookplate.

"And the method, the recipe for becoming a werewolf, failed? I heard you saying something . . . when I came out?"

"Heck, yes!" he exclaimed disgustedly. "Look. On page 79. It says... (quote) 'For to become a were-wolf the incanter places in a small clearing in a forest a small bowl containing that water which has been freshly scooped from the footprint of a wolf or large dog, and circling the bowl four times in a counter-clockwise movement repeats aloud the following incantation---'---the amateur broke off reading and looked up apologetically.

"I couldn't find a footprint of wolf or dog containing the fresh water, so I had to substitute a method given on page 83. It says (quote) '... let him then repeat the foregoing incantation in the clearing of a forest in the presence of an oak tree known to possess a hamadryad, and at the same time cast off from his person all objects of gold and silver he may possess.' (unquote) I was, ah, doing that when you appeared. And for about the umpteenth time! Aw heck!"

He slammed the book to the ground and complained to her, "You see, it's a . . . hey! Where are you? Where'd you go...? I didn't say anything . . . aw heck!"

Disgusted and forlorn, deserted, he moped in the clearing in the forest idly kicking at the fallen book. The sun was sinking low. Absently he scratched his itching ear with a hairy clawed paw. "Aw heck! Aw heck!"

THE END

EDITORIAL ILLUMINATION

(continued from Page 3)

Weisinger, Frederik Pohl, Donald A. Wollheim, Robert W. Lowndes, E. E. Smith, Ph.D., Willard E. Hawkins, A. E. Van Vogt, Rose Rocklyne, Ralph Milne Farley, R. R. Winterbotham, Charles R. Tanner, S. D. Gottesman, D. E. Thompson, and many other professionals, as well as almost every fan of importance. Don't fail to attend if you can possibly be there, for it will be an occasion you will never forget. For further information write to Lew Martin, 1258 Race St., Denver, Colorado.

Let me again especially plead for an adequate representation of weirdists, and let me also add that we would all be very happy if some of the west coast weird fiction authors could attend. They would be very welcome indeed, and would have an unparalleled opportunity to meet their readers.

At this time Polaris enters an even more precarious stage in its career. Now that the editor is leaving the classroom for the industrial world, time and inclination to publish such a magazine as this may be lacking. We give this notice, rather than quietly fold up overnight with no warning, in order to see if there is enough fan interest to make it worthwhile to continue the magazine. If we receive enough letters asking for further issues of Polaris, more will be forthcoming. Otherwise the magazine will be dropped, and our FAPA membership maintained with a smaller, more personalized magazine for FAPA members only.

SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES

(News of Social STF Activity. #8 appeared in Voice of Madge #15.)

TERRIFIC COSTUME

Five hundred dollars in material & labor has been expended as an initial outlay for approxly 1/6th of the Masquerade outfit which will be worn at the Denvention by Shangri-LA's High Lama!!! Yep, Joe Fann, U read rite: FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS! This fantastic costume of Walt Daugherty's is really gonna be hep! The editor of this femme has seen a preview of the getup & backup your reporter's prophecy that fandom's optix will bulge like a BEM when Walt walks on the scene in this super-killer of a costume. The way WJD describes it's gonna be, has this newsboy jumping up & down with glee. It'll be thoroly scientificfictional; not only as futuristic as Things to Come but as interplanetary as a Life on Other Worlds backover by Paul! That's all I'm at liberty to reveal to U; but all will be revealed at the Denvention Masquerade, so this's just one more of a myriad of reasons to make the Mylthicon! See Honor Guest Heinlein In a Mystery Costume! Leslyn Heinlein too plans to participate. And Ackerman will be there as a certain famous superman...yeah, me & my dinky little ten dollar mask! --That reminds me: Gotta go out to Harryhausen's tomoro--appointment for 10am--to have a cast made of my mug, around which the new face will be fashioned. Fortunately, the accompanying costume won't be costly --this homo superior wasn't addicted to wearing clothing. Don't get me rong; the part I'll play will be that of a slan masquerading as a human! Morojo may step out of The Moon Pool in the character of an Akka!

"BEANIE-WAKE" AMIDST THE BRUSH & BRAKE

A weenie-bake was enjoyed by 18 imagi-natives in the picnicgrounds of Griffith Pk on the eve of the 5th Thurs in May. Outing assumed aspect of an interstate conventionet, with the presence of Virgil Douglas & Velma Clanton of Ariz, Dave Elder from Penna & the Newyorkers Kornbluth & Cohen --others including the Heinleins, Hornig, Yerke, Freehafer, 4e & Morojo, Daugherty & fiancée, Pogo, Chamberlain & others. Gathering was curiously quiet as fire was blit, weenies roasted, potato chips consumed, lite drinks & coffee drunk; & then--stounding of astoundings!--the thing we never can accomplish at the Club; Conversation turnd to science fiction...& storys & plots & authors & theorys were discusst! This kept up for a couple hrs til someone realized what was hapning & soon after the Angelenos shamefacedly broke up.

SEEKERS OF SHANGRI-LA

And still they come! Followers of 'Shangri-L'Affaires`noz that Way Out West we are anticipating playing host to stfan Chauvenet & party shortly bfor Denvention time; welcoming Phil "Fantasite" Bronson into our midst; & now the word comes thru to be on the lookout for JuliusSchwartz & Edmond Hamilton!

IDLE CONJECTURE DEPT

Wonder if anyone'll come as Yngvi? (To the Denvention, ofcourse, dope! See U at the Shirley-Savoy!!!)

WALPURGISNACHT

by Grady L. McMurry

Upon the crags with ghostlight drenched
 Writhe up the weres with hands outclenched
 As now the chant of those undead
 To Him who rules below is read
 By ghouls who gargoyles at the sky
 Red lipped with crimson, bloody dye;
 Their crimson forms bepainted the rock
 With flickering shadows of the Boch
 To whom they offer down their prayer
 On this Black Sabbath in His lair
 He 'waits the moment of His sign
 To sit upon this stony shrine
 Among the shattered boulders strewn,
 As ever higher mounts the moon.
 The Noon of Night approaches near;
 Satanus Rex: appear, appear!

Then swiftly stalking 'neath the moon
 On wings of wind, as though a boon
 To place before His gathered host,
 He, Overlord of souls now lost
 Is seen across the foothilled plains
 Sweeping toward the mountain chains
 'Til towering far above the peak
 The Breeze moans: This is whom you seek.
 Hushed now as though by Death itself
 Still lies the band upon a shelf
 Of stone that juts above the deep;
 Now cry the bats and witches weep,
 Beseeching Him with words that croak
 Until he lifts His arms and cloak
 To shroud them all in shadows dim
 Hidden from the world by Him.

The Hexentanz begins its whirl,
 Within the cauldron entrails swirl;
 Among those present at their grave
 Are none but those whose souls are slave
 To Satan Rex, the Lord of Hell,
 King-Emperor of all who dwell
 Within where leaps the flaming breath
 Of blackened Sheol's pit of death.
 For here are seen no common shades
 But officer elite of Hades
 Whose cabalistic tongue is spoken
 In this vague half-world on the Brocken,
 As in high state Satanus sits,
 While demon legions of the Pits
 Pay homage to the Hohle Boch
 On this witch-brewed Walpurgisnacht.

FMZ DIGEST

The only fm that digests and reproduces the best literary and art work in the fan field.
 Monthly 5¢, 6 for 25¢
 Large size 8 pages up

SPECULA

"The Best in SFan Fiction"
 Stories, articles and poems by Tandom's outstanding writers.
 Bi-monthly 10¢, 3 for 25¢
 Small size 68 pages

Scorpio

For the weird story fan. Fiction articles and poems re the darker side of the universe.
 Tri-yearly 10¢, 3 for 25¢
 Small size 26 pages

SPECTRA

The only fm to feature novel-length fan stories. Some short items complete the magazine.
 Quarterly 10¢, 3 for 25¢
 Small size 50 pages hectod

SUN TRAILS

Analyses, humor, vituperation, artwork. ASTRA'S human interest magazine for all sfans.
 Semi-annual 5¢, no subs
 Large size 12 pages up

THE FANNUAL

A complete index of all fmz ever issued since 1931. In two volumes, 1931-35 & 1936-40, and annually thereafter. In preparation. Price undecided.

The following ASTRA BOOKS are available, with others in preparation:

"THE BOOK OF DZYAN"
 Complete text, with notes, of this obscure volume. 10¢

"AFTER ARMAGEDDON AND OTHERS"
 Prose-poetry by Fywert Kinge. Six poems and preface. 10¢

All of the above are edited and published by

ARTHUR LOUIS JOQUEL, II

1426 West 38th Street

Los Angeles, California