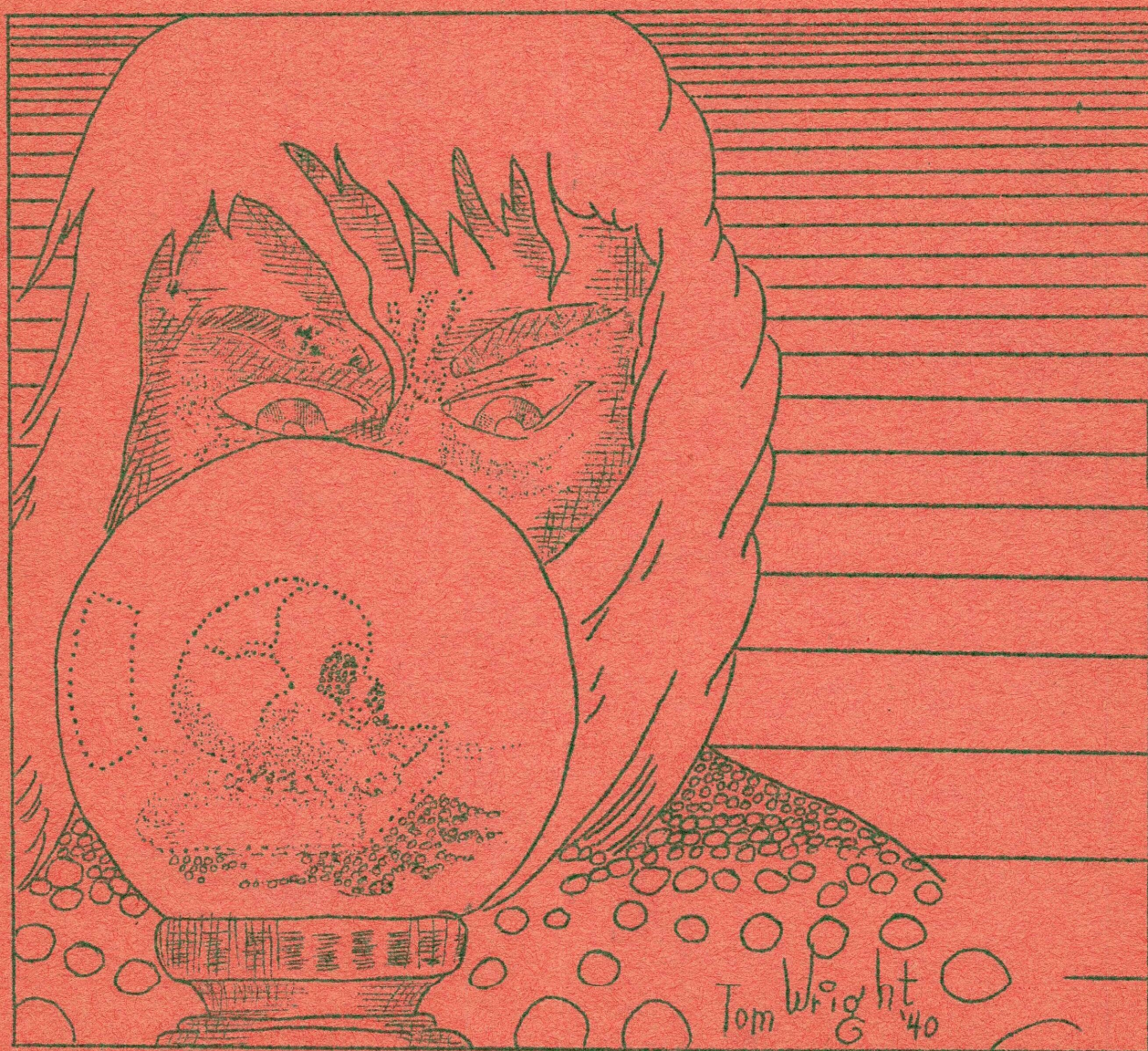
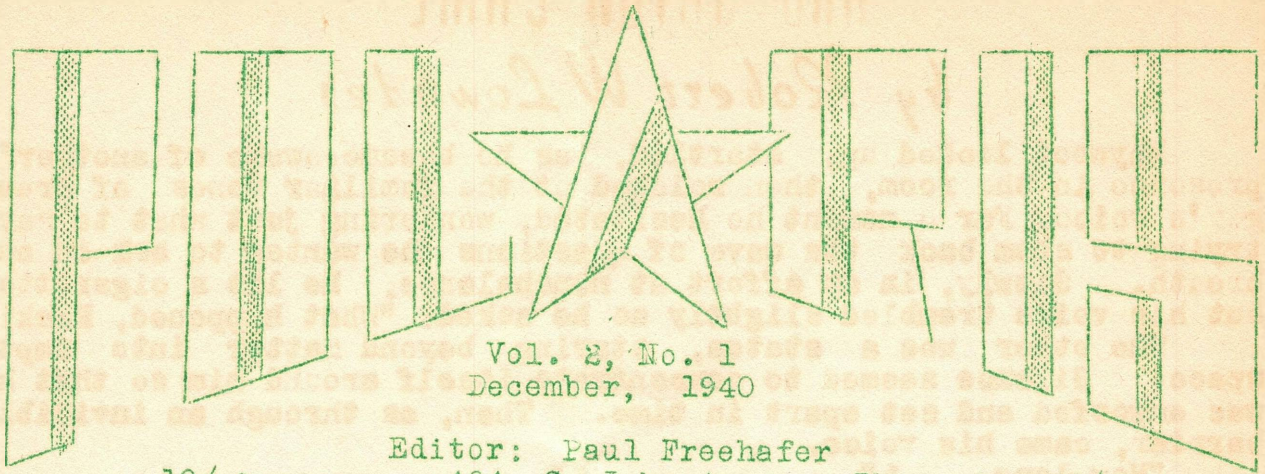


# PHYLAKTOR

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Cover by Tom Wright  
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### EDITORIAL ILLUMINATION

First we must apologize to our readers, especially to the FAPA members, for the extreme lateness of this issue. However we have retained our quarterly system of dating, and intend to get back into schedule again with the next issue, completing it before the March FAPA deadline. To do this it will be necessary for us to obtain the necessary material as quickly as possible. So if any of you have any off-the-trail weird or fantasy fiction, we'd appreciate seeing it.

Some time ago we received a form letter from Weird Tales which was sent to all the fan magazines, urging us to support the Weird Tales Club. It is an organization that hasn't done much yet, but

(Continued on Page 19)

# AND SATAN CAME

by Robert W Lowndes

Haywood looked up, startled, as he became aware of another's presence in the room, then relaxed at the familiar tones of Kreuger's voice. For a moment he hesitated, wondering just what to say, trying to stem back the wave of questions he wanted to ask in one breath. Slowly, in an effort at nonchalance, he lit a cigarette. But his voice trembled slightly as he asked: "What happened, Nick?"

The other was a statue, staring beyond matter into empty space. Silence seemed to concentrate itself around him so that he was enwoofed and set apart in time. Then, as through an invisible barrier, came his voice.

"How long ... ?"

"You left me about three hours ago ..."

Kreuger's laugh ricocheted along the walls of the room. "Hours ... hours! Years! Decades! Eons!"

The other rose hastily, extracted a bottle from the sideboard and poured out a long drink, then, at Kreuger's refusal, downed it himself. "You'd better tell me everything, Nick. Something grim has happened; I can see that. Tell me before it eats you."

Kreuger shuddered, thudded into a stuffed chair. "The legends seem so prosaic now. I expected something out of Lovecraft, perhaps -- although what I really was prepared for was outright failure.

"I wish it had been -- a monster. We were deceived by the abstractness of the descriptions. I suppose everything we had heard and read and imagined was so firmly imbedded in our minds that we couldn't expect anything else. It was so completely different from anything I was prepared to accept as ... Satan.

"The sensations -- I can't describe them. Nearest thing to it is the indefinite sense of expansion you get sometimes when drunk. I felt that I was growing enormously, expanding in every direction -- yet it was more than enlargement. I felt that new dimensions and appendages were being added to me, that my form was being distorted and altered. Didn't dare to look at myself, or look around me, fearing I would see something utterly hideous and know it was -- myself. I did look finally -- had to, you know -- but there was nothing to see. I could only feel it was there.

"Something was drawing me outward, some attraction. I knew I was moving through space, even though no definite perception of motion was to be had. The growth continued, and, even as it went on, things began to filter through. I think the formula opened the flood-gates; the full deluge burst upon me at once, but it had to batter on me for a time until my senses could be stepped up to perceive the new impressions.

"Then, I began to see -- through. The room I was in, the laboratory ... it changed suddenly. But before I could appreciate the new scene, it had shifted again, and then again. Things were happening much too quickly for me to grasp their import or to know what was happening. My sense of time was gone ...

"How long it was before it became clear what I was seeing, I don't know. I saw that room simultaneously as a section of steaming, lifeless planet, newly formed -- as primeval jungle -- as ice-covered wilderness -- as virgin forest -- as cleared land -- as the

room I knew -- as a ruin -- as a pit where an enormous meteor had impacted, and, finally, as empty space. It was at once everything it ever had been and all that it ever would be. A kaleidoscope of forms and no form at all. I tried to will away the sight of all of them, except that form in time with which I was familiar. It returned. But no longer it seemed a solid unit to me; even though I could see the laboratory I knew intimately, feel its boundaries and objects within those boundaries, I knew now that just behind -- ahead -- of these, in time, were other boundaries and things within them that I did not know. As these thoughts came to me, and with them the doubt, the scene -- flickered.

"Before I could adjust myself to sight, hearing expanded. The subdued sound of traffic outside the lab became the axe-strokes of the first men who felled trees in the forest that once covered this city -- the roar of ice sliding over the terrain -- the cries of carnivores that once roamed here before the forest -- the whine and concussion of shells in some future bombardment -- the crying of a lonely wind over the corpse of a forgotten planet. The impressions of sound were independent of those of sight. I could see the ice around me, closing in around me, extending how far upward -- miles? -- and hear the crying of the death-wind ...

"Then -- panic. What would happen when the other senses expanded into time? I tried to run to the door, even though I knew it would not help; it seemed that I was a snake. I glanced down, a scream rising in my throat, but I couldn't scream. It might be a serpentine hiss that came out of my throat. But when I looked down, there were only the familiar human legs I knew.

"Before I reached the door, an immense pit gaped before me. I willed desperately to walk over the floor of the laboratory and somehow the solidity of that floor remained even though all I could see was empty space and somewhere the pin-prick of distant stars.

"I concentrated harder than I've ever done before, and the room came back. With it came the ordinary sounds of the city. But now my ears were alert; every alteration in normal pitch seemed to be the echoes of sounds out of the past or future. A flood of exhaustion passed over me -- I stumbled into the next room and fell on the couch, my last conscious impressions being those of slithering, slithering ...

"It must have been eons that I slept, and, while sleeping, the expansion continued. Eternities passed, and I would waken to see indescribable things, only to fall back again before I could coordinate impressions. There were no dreams.

"When I awoke, I was back in my own room, lying on the couch. For a time, I lay there thinking that the whole experience had been a nightmare or drug-delusion. But something else was beating upon me ... waves of emotion. I felt them, seething about me, bearing down upon me. Fear such as I had never known -- the dread of things such as no man dreaded; the hate of things that no man hated. They fell upon me and left me gasping for breath. And with these fears and hates were mingled yearnings such as no man has ever known; yearnings that seemed to tear the soul out of me. I knew how birds and wild beasts yearn when locked up in cages ...

"Then the flood changed to waves of pure ... evil, that is the only word I can use. Not the simple wickedness that the religiously minded think of when they hear the word. Not merely evil in reference to the bestial desires and acts of man, but indescribable

malignancy on a cosmic scale.

"Somewhere in space and time, there must be a vortex of all the hatred, fear, and sheer will to destroy that has ever existed and ever will exist. It is not all human, for I felt these things as derived from a myriad of life-forms, many non-human or bearing no resemblance to those forms we know. It feeds upon these emotions as it were -- a conscious, yet unliving vampire-vortex extending through eternity ..."

Haywood was silent for a moment. Then he said slowly: "Whether or not this is illusion, Wick, it is magnificent. It may be horrible to you. Perhaps you are mad, but, if so, your madness is far greater than the madness of any living man. We must explore this thing carefully ... we must learn ..."

Kreuger laughed. "Where are you, Haywood, if you ever were at all? I cannot see you. All I can see is ice, ice, ice stretching miles upward so that I cannot find the limit of it, though somewhere must be a sky. All I can see is ice, and all I can hear is the cold wind crying over a desolate world."

"Nick! Come back. Come back to the present. This is reality; the only reality you know. Concentrate, Nick. Concentrate and will out everything else except the world you know."

Kreuger shuddered again; his eyes lost their wild glow. "Did you ever see a soul, Haywood? Neither did I. But I think I've lost mine. I feel dead and empty and meaningless, if anything has meaning. I feel as the wind must feel crying over the loneliness of a lifeless planet where carnivores scream and prey on each other and a man and his mistress are hiding from the police in a drawing room at one time belonging to a man named Haywood."

"The vortex ... growing. It will pass eventually. It cannot last after all life is gone. After all matter has been converted into -- what? Listen, Haywood -- somewhere in time a fool called Satan, and Satan came. Satan, Satan, brother Satan, show me your face, Satan, comfort me, speak to me, crush me beneath your cloven hoof ..."

Haywood seized the other's shoulders; shook him furiously. "Kreuger! Wake up, man! You're here; you're all right. It was only a dream, Nick. Believe me, it was only a dream!"

His eyes rested on the other's. Reason again flickered in them. "Back again. In the year of our lord -- but not for long. There is a hell, Haywood. Not the unimaginative one the early men described, but there is a hell. I think I've found it. You don't have to die to go to hell, Haywood -- I cannot die, now. I shall live throughout all eternity because I am eternity."

He rose stiffly and strode to the door. "A million and a million years have come and died since I came to find you again, you whose name I now cannot recall. Look not to see me again, for I cannot find you. Time and space have taken me unto themselves and I am their beloved stepson. And still I expand. Not much human of me left now. Something draws me -- outward --"

"You who are man, as once was I, think me mad. Look at my eyes, if you can still see me. Look at my eyes if eyes I have as a man. Can't you see eternity staring out at you? I called on Satan and Satan came. I called on Satan and I am damned, damned, damned ..."

THE END

# THE HAUNTED HOTEL

7

*Related by Ted Carnell*

Most readers are conversant with phenomena from "Beyond the Veil" either through personal experience or by frequently reading of ghostly happenings. I am forced to confess that I have met very few people indeed who can actually swear to having seen or heard a "ghost" -- none at all who have heard the reputed chain-clanking or seen a "headless lady" gliding peacefully up the baronial staircase. More common occurrences are rappings, moving objects, messages through mediums, drawing and painting while in a trance, and sundry other "happenings" which go to make up the spiritual contact with this world.

Not so common are the pranks played by poltergeists -- it has been stated that these latter mischievous imps have not been very active for many years. However, we had an extremely interesting case in London early last year, and if I can obtain permission to publish the details, it would make an entertaining story.

To dwell technically upon any of the above would fill many books, has already done so, in fact. Therefore, I propose giving you only one instance, taken from the Case Book of a reputed London Psychical Investigation Society -- the story behind the facts you can take at face value if you wish. Whatever the result of your deductions, and I warrant it will be 100% disbelief, this still remains a true factual narrative. It has been checked by myself from all available evidence placed at my disposal by the actual investigators on the case.

The general run of "haunted houses" are usually to be found with old buildings, where, at some earlier date, violent emotional events have taken place; such as murder, suicide, etc. Who, then, has ever heard of a new building haunted from the day it was built?

A forty mile ride from London southeastward brings the traveller to the white chalk cliffs of Kent -- to rolling Downs and green peaceful valleys nestling within sight of the English Channel. A superb locality for jaded city dwellers to vacation over weekends or longer. What could be more natural, in these days of rapid travel, to build a smart hotel on the cliffs far from any town?

A few years back an enterprising concern bought a cliff-top site some miles along the coast, and commenced erecting a super-modern hotel, inn, road-house, what-you-will, about 200 yards from the sea and adjoining the main highway. Although the building was modern to all outward appearances, the interior was modelled upon early English lines; oak panelling, low beamed ceilings, huge open brick fireplaces, mullioned windows, etc. The main show piece was the beautiful panelled Dining Room, paralleling the sea--the haven of refuge for the business magnate -- the very epitome of peace.

Until dwellers from "Over The Border" thought otherwise.

No sooner had the hotel been officially opened, that it became subject to spirit "rappings" and "walking feet" at all times of the day and night. It is alleged that in these days of so-called scientific advancement, people do not scare so easily -- or should not -- over phenomena such as this instance. Especially as knocks, from a tap to a thunderous hammering, can be experienced at any seance, or even "performed" in your own home with careful concen-

tration. Apart from the first mild alarm, guests began to be intrigued by the "ghost," more so after careful examinations showed that there was no possible interior source for anyone to be playing tricks.

After a while the hotel even drew many more clients who simply went to hear the haunting, especially as nothing further happened to jolt the nerves or undermine the health.

The rappings were always associated with the Dining Room. At no other point in the hotel was there the slightest vestige of a nocturnal visitor. The taps could be heard quite distinctly coming from any of three panelled walls -- the fourth side of the room was entirely glass-windowed, overlooking the sea. This was enjoyable and eery enough -- until the taps developed into heavy blows which seemed to shake the very foundations. Trade dropped off -- guests preferred not to be startled by the sound of iron battering rams in action a few feet away. Even people whose favorite music was usually played by an orchestra of pneumatic drills shied clear of the place.

The psychic investigators moved in, taking with them two good mediums, an infra-red camera and all the accoutrements necessary for exposing fakes. From the first seance they successfully made "contact." The voice that came through belonged to a "Brother Aloysius," who had a surprising story to tell -- they usually have if you've heard many. He was -- or had been -- a monk in the early 12th Century, and lived in the Abbey, which, at that time occupied a site adjacent to where the hotel had now been erected.

During the course of his social activities -- that is, or was, seeing that the converts in the surrounding district remained devout converts, he had become enamoured with a young nun (or Sister) who also dwelt in the Abbey and also sallied forth on 'good-deed' forays. Their love ripened so rapidly that they decided to renounce their vows, and tread life's thorny path without the aid of the Abbey cloisters and emoluments -- which were mighty niggardly in those days.

Upon hearing of their desire (and I use the clean sense of the word), the worthy Abbot was righteously indignant, verging to apoplexy, and refused to sanction such sinful thoughts, ending up by threatening them with all the perditions of the damned if they so much as met each other again.

Time drifted on -- it didn't march in those days -- and in due time a child was born to the lovers. Aloysius rather skipped details here, but inferred that he had smuggled the girl to a woodland hut, where the birth had been attended by a local quack soothsayer. These things usually leak out sometime, and the 12th Century seemed to be no exception. The Abbot arrived upon the scene amidst a cloud of fire, the guilty couple and their offspring were herded to the Abbey, where the kindly Abbot conducted them underground and personally bricked them up behind one of the tunnel walls.

Aloysius denied that there had been anything sinful in his relations with the girl, and counter-attacked the Abbot by accusing that honorable man of being in love with the Sister. All this while the stones were being slowly piled one on the other, and darkness was creeping in on them.

To no avail. They died in agony. Now they had made contact with human beings again, they would very much like to be properly buried in consecrated ground, and there would be no further distur-



bance. He directed the investigators to pull down the great open fireplace in the Dining Room, which occupied a position where once part of the Abbey walls had stood, and underneath they would find a passage . . . .

Several days passed while the investigators investigated the possibilities of the setup being faked. I gather that they were having free board and the run of the wine cellar, so there was no particular hurry to settle the case. When all angles had been tried and no tricks discovered -- Aloysius meanwhile working up the tempo somewhat -- workmen were appropriated and the fireplace demolished.

Underneath they found part of an old stone wall. Deeper they discovered a caved-in tunnel. This was gradually cleared and thoroughly searched, and one portion certainly did appear to have a different aspect to the rest of the tunnelling. The rough-hewn stones were taken apart . . . . and there reposed the three mouldering skeletons of the doomed trio!

After this staggering denouement, old records of the locality were brought to light from the depths of various museums and parish halls, and it was substantially proved that an Abbey had once stood upon that spot.

Ah-ha! You scoff? I have not disclosed place-names for you to verify this story. No, but I have seen all the photographs taken at that place, both infra-red and ordinary, and any member of the London fan crowd who attended the meeting wherein most of the foregoing was discussed, will agree that this is true as far as could be checked. One photo in particular aroused curiosity. It showed the long Dining Room with the investigators grouped round a long refectory table. Behind them, superimposed upon the panelling above the wide fireplace, can be seen a hand holding an urn-like object as if in the act of hammering upon the wall. This particular photo was taken away by one of the historians present, and later the "urn-like object" was identified as an early English chalice used for incense throwing.

Surprising what a couple of taps will reveal, isn't it?

THE END

## *Bird of Flame*

by Harry Warner, Jr.

It made its nest of myrrh and cloves and sage  
 And spices garnered from the ends of earth;  
 With leaves and twigs and grasses all entwined,  
 The nest was made and scented with the herbs  
 And spices old and rare and some not known  
 To men since Time first roused and All began.--  
 So there it built and when its work was done  
 At length, it rested: lay there still and weak;  
 And then the thing it worked for, and prepared  
 Against, was consummated: with a sudden cry  
 It quivered; with a flash of light and flame,  
 A roar, a quaking of the very world,  
 A mighty beat of unseen vibrant wings--  
 Swift, high, through heights the new-born Phoenix soared.

Ghost  
Writer

b  
y

Claire  
Voyant

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Now I am not going to haul out all the old puns in this article about Ghost-to-Ghost hook-ups, hitting a happy Medium, getting into the spirit of the thing, & being on spooking terms with the in-spectre of police on the astral plane. Karma 'gain! That sortathing has been a bit overdone, I feel, & has no place in a first-wraith article.....

Besides, this is serious stuff.

When we of the LASFS recently decided we shoud like to investigate spiritualism & attend a seance with view to contacting Lovecraft, Weinbaum, Howard & other departed celebirtys of the fantascience field, I was appointed Committee of One to make preliminary report. As assistant I selected the Elf Queen, who really did the initial contacting; & the trail lead to one Rev Pitzer, recommended as producer of departed spirits par xInt.

To digress a moment: Once upon a time, I read an Argosyarn--a serial, I believe it was, titled "Death from the Stars" or "The Stars Spell Death" or something of the sort--wherein it seemd the only explanation was a supernatural one. Yet eventually a gigantic fraud was revealed & the whole affair found to be quite materialistic. I think a million dollars was involved in the deal. Now, tho it is exceedingly unlikely any local fake coud afford to take time to check up on me or Morojo for a quarter apiece (admission price to the seance) still I wisht to be as scientific & sure about this thing as I nue how, so bfor meeting our spiritualist I was going to remove my ring (with its initials), my SFL emblem, Esperanto star, have Morojo do likewise, & we were not going to give our names & whom we represented & tell with whom we wisht to get in contact. For, far-fetcht but conceivably, in the interim between our inquiry & the club-attendance, the medium coud check on who Ackerman & Morojo were, what the LASFS was (we tell all in a 5c bklet just publisht & now available from Bx 6475 Met Sta - plug), & what Weinbaum, Lovecraft et al authord...& so string us along.

Well, we didnt meet our medium the firsttime we tryd, so decided simply to attend a meeting & see what we thot. I suggested to the radi-gal that if either of us shoud get the opportunity to contact a dead one, we shoud call upon an Esperantist who

had "passed on". & I added: "If any spook speaks to U in Esperanto, U can ask to speak to me next, 'cause I'll be dead of heart failure!" U may gather from the course of our conversation that when it comes to life-after-death we are skepticalifornians...

So it came to pass, after many peregrinations (I hope that means what I think it does!) that Mrj & myself & our psychic side-kick, Art Joquel, found ourselves in a little underground auditorium under the spell of the occult.

As we entered we were handed little white cards & an envelope & given instructions for adresing our messages so our mail woud be rcvd beyond the veil. I don't noe what we had to be so pariticular about, as after awhile our medium burnd about 3/4's them up in a (donn) brazier. O, well, what I always say is "Ash to ash & dust to dust, In God We Trust --others pay cash"...what do U always say??? But that's neither here nor hereafter.

So the spirits began speaking in our spiritualist's ear (only loud enuf so's he coud hear) & he transmitted messages to those in the audience from mothers & fathers & brothers & sisters & sweethearts who told 'em everything was hunkydorry with them & not to worry about their job or they were going to get that raise - just keep working for it - or very soon, now, a handsome stranger, a proposal of marriage, wedding belles & may the best man Wynn. (Fire, Chief!)

Then a portable radio was passed around & the dead actually spoke to one! This was what convinced me. (Of what, I won't say.) The Rev left the room while his ass't was passing the spirit communicator around to those upon whom it called. If the male voices emanating from the little 2-tuber sounded like variations of the vanished reverend's, well...it coudve been coincidental. Ofcourse, women's voices came thru too. I understand the reverend has a wife.

So far neither Morojo nor I nor Joquel had been treated to a talk with or from anyone on the Other Side. We got no messages on slates, either, tho 2 letters adrest to persons in the audience apeard on the inside of seald slates, & later messages in 6 difrent handritings came thru on one slate held up in the air with a piece of chalk on top it. We were slated to get ours from a crystal; yes, he had something on the ball for us.

But alas! tho my Esperanticorrespondent was there to speak to me (the Rev did not identify my message as being in Esperanto but simply said it was a foreign language, wasnt it?) he coudnt 'cause during the last war Pitzer had been bringing messages thru in German & French & Russian & whatnot & the Govt had put a stop to it. But Art Joquel! He had askt CHAS FORT about the mysterious circumstances surrounding his death. (Art, at the time, had the erroneous impression that fort had disapeard from a lockt room.) And Charlie came! He was indefinite about his disapearance, saying simply that life was little difrent after death; but he went on to encourage Art in his "new work" & said that he was sure to go places. Only one possible interpretation coud be placed upon this: CHARLES FORT GIVES SUPPORT TO ARTHUR JOQUEL'S NEW FANMAG, SPECULA!

Yerke is going next Saturday nite to get a testimonial from Thorne Smith on The Damn Thing, while 2-bits!!! get U a 10-spot Freehafer's next issue will announce: Lovecraft Polls Polaris in First Place!

## THE LAST SCIENTIST

by Duane W Rimel

"Are you sure, my son, that you wish to go ahead with this great undertaking?"

"Yes, father, I am!" Mal Zorn snapped. But a shadow crossed his strong, tanned face. His gray eyes fell before his father's direct gaze.

"What's bothering you, Mal? Out with it. This is no time for quibbling. Look at the years we've worked on this scheme----"

Mal Zorn hesitated, his eyes on the domed ceiling of the metal sphere which would soon become his prison for five thousand years. He would be unaware of the fleeing centuries. He would be asleep; mummified by a process known only to his father, Ferel Zorn. When he awoke . . . .

"I can't quite see the---purpose, father. Granted that I would be the last man on the earth. Why?"

"My God!" Ferel Zorn stormed up and down the brightly polished floor. "You know why. I've told you often enough. You'll have complete isolation; complete freedom to study and work and dream--- hasn't that been your ambition? Haven't you cursed 'civilization' long enough? Soon the earth will have no water. Even now the sun is dimming. A few more thousand years and there will be no more oxygen---or water. The cities on Antlantea that have escaped are disintegrating---dying internally. Their oxygen machines will run out of material before many centuries. The people are going wild; celebrating, drinking; because they know it is the end. . . ."

"I have seen all that, father---but if there were some way to save humanity; if I had a definite purpose besides merely learning----"

"Some day, when you are older, the vision of your purpose will appear to you," Ferel Zorn said significantly.

"I hope that you are right," Mal Zorn said. "Now I am ready. Life in this mad age is dull. Since the war of the sexes, when you were young, the women have not troubled us. I have never seen one alive---and I am glad."

His father's eyes gleamed strangely. "There you have another reason for wanting solitude. When your mother left me to join the women and conquer the world, it ruined my life. Perhaps I would have become a greater man than I am today. But we will forget that. I am old now, or I would go with you, and waken when all others are dead. But my body would never stand it. Already I have lived past my third century mark. You, my son, will see many stupendous things!"

Mal gripped his father's shoulders. "Cut it, dad. Hurry and give me the elixir and put me in the casket. The sooner I am unconscious, the better---except for you. . . ."

From his leather tunic Ferel Zorn took a small bottle. The young man of twenty-five summers sat down in a metal chair, his eyes holding his father's steadily.

"Dad, this is good-by---forever!" His voice trembled. He gripped the older man's strong gnarled hand and winced at the pressure. Tears filled those ancient eyes. A reckless smile curved Mal's lips. He raised the phial and swallowed the blue fluid. His

head seemed to spin into an abyss.

"Good-by, dad. Good-by . . . Five thous-----"

Ferel Zorn tried to speak, but words caught in his throat. He sank to the floor beside his son's chair. For the first time in his long life he wept unashamedly.

Half an hour later he was busy over the form of his unconscious son. He had many things to do before he ceased work and bolted down the door of that great metal sphere. . . .

Mal Zorn sat alone in his vast, hermetically sealed laboratory, gazing through the heavy quartz windows at the bleak desert stretching away to the horizon. That day---the fiftieth since his awakening in the sphere---was his seventy-fifth birthday. And it had been written by his father that he had a strange task to perform before the sun went down. Mal Zorn was reluctant to stir from his deep, cushioned chair. After twenty years of building and remodeling the metal chambers, and thirty years of study, he was weary in body and in soul. He had never known loneliness equal to this. In his youth he had not suspected that knowledge alone could be so futile; so maddening. Why had his father insisted on this life after death---this leap into the future? For what purpose?

Mal Zorn shook his head, as he had done many times before. He rose from the chair, adjusted the oxygen and temperature gauges, and walked to his large library, where the wisdom of the ages was crammed, awaiting his touch. He had studied many of the tomes; would read many more. Would he ever tire? He had, perhaps, over two hundred years ahead of him. He sighed and strode to the metal desk. He hadn't known about the letter until after the awakening. It must, he reflected, contain something very important. Perhaps the final cause his father had hinted of. . . .

He opened the familiar drawer that no other hands had touched, and found the long envelope, yellow with age. A lump rose in his throat as he thought of this father, dead now so many centuries---a mere whiff of dust blown far out on the desert beneath the great dimming orb of the sun.

He slit the envelope and withdrew a single sheet of paper. On it, in Ferel Zorn's handwriting, were the words:

"My beloved son:

"Granted that you are still alive and established in the laboratory we planned for you, I have this one last message to deliver. You may have wondered about that sealed metal tube which I left inside the sphere. I hope you have preserved it as I indicated. I wanted you to be very wise and very mature before you met the inevitable ---for after fifty years of study and work I know you must be very lonely. So, on this day, I want you to open that cylinder. You are wise now, and will know what to do.

"Your loving father,  
"Ferel Zorn."

Mal Zorn's hands trembled as he read the note again, folded it carefully and returned it to the envelope. How familiar was that precise longhand! He smiled a far-off smile.

The sealed tube! Of course he remembered it. Many times he'd been tempted to pry the thing open---but that note fastened to it had stayed his hand.

He walked swiftly to his laboratory and opened a certain wide

door. Inside it, leaning against the metal wall, stood a tall cylinder, fully six feet long by three feet in diameter. He lowered it to the floor, carefully. His fingers touched the huge screws which would unseal the lids, one on each end. He began loosening the bolts little by little, one by one. A man of learning, he did not permit his imagination to conjure any wild fancies---but his hands shook as he unfastened the last screws and heard the air swish into that vacuum.

He lifted off both caps before he looked inside. Then he gasped in amazement. There on a padded cot lay a mummified woman! She was dark and small and beautiful, her hair lustrous, as if she had slept but a few hours. He marveled again at his father's secret of perfect life-suspension---for even he, Mal Zorn, did not possess that knowledge.

Suddenly the girl's eyelids fluttered open---as his own must have done on the day of awakening. (He recalled that his own casket had been opened by an automatic timing device built by his father.) The girl's brown eyes mirrored bewilderment and wonder. She looked up, saw Mal Zorn, and smiled.

Mal had never seen a woman smile---save in long-forgotten cinemas---and he felt curiously embarrassed. That he should experience such an animal emotion made him angry. Primitive sensations did not mingle with absolute erudition. He shrugged and pulled the long cot from the cylinder. The girl, clad in the scanty trunks and halter of the period he had left in his youth, raised her slender arms and stretched daintily. She yawned and laughed.

"Who are you, stranger? And where---what is this place?"

Mal Zorn's mouth fell open. Great God! Hadn't his father told this girl, this child, what would happen to her--what had happened?

"I am Mal Zorn," he said. "The last man on earth---and you seem to be the last woman. Who are you? My father sent me into the future five thousand years--but why he sent you I cannot understand."

"You needn't get huffy," she said, frowning; and Mal Zorn revolted at her simple words and enunciation. Had she no education whatever?

"I made a bargain with your father. He saved my mother from a terrible disease. My mother and I did not take sides in the war of the sexes. We lived all our lives far out on the desert of Aiken, near the city of Xor. There was a secret crevice that gave out oxygen. There was a small oasis; some water. Then one day your father found us. Mother was close to death. Ferel Zorn saved her. I said I would do anything to repay him. Anything. Years later, after mother was gone, he returned to the oasis and brought me secretly to his laboratory. He said I would sleep a long, long time and meet his own son in another age. I guess I have----"

Mal Zorn granted. "I believe you, but I cannot see the reason for your coming.

She smiled, and glanced about the room. She ran to a window of the laboratory, stared out over the desert. "What a pretty scene!" she cried impulsively.

"I suppose it is," Mal Zorn replied, "the first time you see it. I have seen it too many times."

"Don't be so forlorn," she said gaily. "By the way, I'm starving. Do you have any food---here?"

Mal Zorn nodded stiffly and walked out of the room. Her

puzzled eyes followed his tall, angular figure.

For days Mal Zorn wrestled with the problem. What to do? He did not like women, especially this one. She was too impetuous, too young, and above all, uneducated. What else was of real worth save knowledge?

At last Mal Zorn hit upon a plan. Obviously the girl needed companionship. She was the type, he supposed, that demanded attention, and he, Mal Zorn, had no time for inane frippery. His plan was a simple one. He would create a synthetic companion---a man to keep her company---a man, perhaps, whom she could love. . . .

Love. Mal Zorn scowled at his books and wished that his father hadn't been so irrational. Had he dreamed that his own son would fall into this girl's arms---even if they were offered---when he, Verel Zorn, had cursed all of the opposite sex, including his own wife? Was she 'the inevitable?'

So Mal Zorn went ahead, locked her out of his laboratory for several days. Producing synthetic life was not difficult for a man of his accomplishments and learning. He had, at one time, planned to mould a companion for himself, but for some reason or another he had never done it. Now he had an objective.

Mal decided to construct a man somewhat smaller than himself. She was small. That would be best. He would name his creation John. Would she like him? It would be worth a trial. What was her name? It occurred to him then that he'd never inquired. Or had he? Not that it mattered. . . .

Came the day when his test-tube man was completed. He had instructed the girl---whose name he discovered was Verel Swon---to enter the laboratory at noon. Five minutes before that time he had unlocked the door. Meanwhile he was busy preparing his new man for the meeting.

John, who had been fashioned with average intelligence, had dark blue eyes, brown hair, and a stout, muscular body. He was handsome. Mal Zorn gave him some clothes, which were rather large but adequate.

"Now, John," Mal said slowly. "I have brought you into being for a companion. You shall live as long as you are faithful and friendly to your companion. No, I am not the one. Her name is Verel Swon. She is nice to look at---and I hope you will like her."

"I am grateful, Mal Zorn," John said. His eyes roved toward the door. In them gleamed a strange light that puzzled his master. "I will try to please you---and her."

Mal nodded. The laboratory door opened. Verel's dark eyes fastened on the two men by the window. She gasped.

"Where did you come from?"

"I have been hiding him---for a surprise," Mal Zorn said, introducing them. They exchanged covert glances. The girl seemed excited.

"I trust that you will make good companions," Mal Zorn continued. "You have the freedom of the entire place, as long as you do not disturb me. Now I must go. I have work to do. Verel, you know where everything is. See that John has food and a couch."

Mal Zorn left the room. Already the two children had used much of his valuable time. Later he would build separate rooms for them. He walked to his library.

That afternoon Mal Zorn had difficulty keeping his mind on his

studies. Often he found his gaze wandering out of the window, across the bleak desert where no living thing moved. Before sunset he became impatient and left the library. He would see how Verel and John were getting along. He hadn't heard them, because the walls were absolutely sound-proof.

He walked into the laboratory. It was empty. He saw a tall cupboard door ajar, but heeded it not. He passed on to the living quarters. The children were probably preparing a meal. He searched the kitchen and the parlor and bedrooms; all of the neat metal rooms. He found no one. This was strange indeed.

Mal Zorn's pace quickened. He ran to the library---ransacked it; then sped up the steep stairway to the observatory. The oxygen jets had been turned off for two days, and he had difficulty breathing. No time now for adjustment. He searched the observatory. No one there. Then he remembered the opened cupboard. That's where he kept the oxygen helmets---for outside use only. Had they----?

Focusing his powerful telescope, Mal quickly scanned the darkening horizon. At last he saw them---far out on the pale desert, moving westward. He turned on all the observatory lights. Perhaps they would see them. The fools. Didn't they know that after sundown the temperature dropped far below zero? They were at least three miles away. In a few moments the great pallid sun would set ---then the cold of the poles would envelop everything.

Mal Zorn sighed. Perhaps this was best. He knew that he had imbued John with a certain degree of intelligence---surely enough to see the folly of such a step. He moved to a telescope more powerful than the first. Even now the dimming light made their figures indistinct. Then he glimpsed the pair as they topped a low dune, stood silhouetted against the dying sun. By the great father! They wore only thin indoor garments and oxygen helmets. . . . They would freeze within a few moments. The utter fools. Watching closely, Mal Zorn observed reluctance in Verel's movements. Then he noticed, with a start, that she was walking ahead of John, while in his right hand was an atom gun. Where in hell was he taking her?

Mal Zorn frowned. What could he do? Impossible to rescue them now---they had gone too far. He flashed the observatory lights on and off rapidly, and cursed because he had no powerful searchlights. By the time he could travel three miles they would be frozen brittle. And at night---- Even his towering erudition could not save them. He did not care so much. Now he would be alone---as he had wished. No more disturbances; no more interruptions. Alone. . . .

Suddenly he leaped to his feet and ran down the observatory steps. His father had entrusted Verel Swon to his care. He must try something. He raced to the laboratory, snatched the one remaining oxygen helmet. He donned all the heavy clothing he could find, which wasn't much. He'd never been outside those metal walls after sundown. Why had they ventured there? He should have locked the door. He began to realize how unstable were human ideas, plans and emotions.

He pocketed an atom gun, a flashlight and a compass. Damn this inconvenience. His profound scholarship seemed to fail him. Removing his light sandals, he got into stout, fur-lined boots. He turned on every light in the place---perhaps John would see them and take heed. There would be no moon. . . .



He strode to the sealed double doors; entered the compartment between them. He heard the hiss of escaping oxygen, and he unlatched the second door. The cold struck his vitals as a knife, despite his heavy clothing he trembled and shivered, and only a great determination carried his feet across the powdery sand toward that distant rise where he had last seen John and Verel.

Mal Zorn realized suddenly that he could cause John's death any instant by destroying the model in his laboratory. "But that would not save the girl. He walked swiftly across the flat desert. The cold stars gleamed at him---seemed to mock him. Mal Zorn laughed. They could not mock him. He was Mal Zorn the Great---the last and wisest man on earth. The last scientist.

He tramped onward, the awful cold chilling the frail body so unused to such hardships. He glanced at his compass, then at the heavens, and last at the lights in his observatory. He changed his course a trifle and plodded on. How long he traveled he did not know exactly, but it seemed to his frost-benumbed brain--encased in the rubber-metal helmet---that he had walked for ages. And still he saw them not. The damn fools. The utter damn fools. Had they no sense at all? They were ignorant---ignorant. . . .

At last Mal Zorn saw the dune where the fugitives had stood. With hands that could no longer feel he took out his flashlight and threw a white beam on the cold sand. Yes, there were the footprints. Beyond and below the dune he followed them, where, to his astonishment, they turned and pointed back toward the observatory! What madness was this? He saw a wide disturbance in the sand, and further on the narrow sandalled footprints became broad, furry tracks. He followed them---they were aimed straight at the metal walls of his palace, now a mere bright spot in the distance.

Suddenly the lights in the observatory blinked out! Utter darkness swallowed the place where they had been. The cold bit deeper and deeper into Mal Zorn's thin blood; it touched his brain, and he burst out laughing. This was good---damned good. Tricked by his own creation. They couldn't do that to him---the great Mal Zorn, the last man on the earth.

He realized suddenly why he had found so few warm garments about the place. They had taken them---nearly all of them. Curse John; curse Verel. . . .

Mal Zorn stumbled to the icy sand. His head felt light, weightless. Vast, pyramiding thoughts flashed backward and forward across enormous gulfs of time and infinity. He shouted hoarsely as he tried to rise. He rolled on his back and faced the cold stars. They were laughing at him now, damn them. . . . Time seemed to float backward---forward---to leap up and swallow him. He saw beneath him a great yawning pit of darkness.

Mal Zorn, the earth's last scientist, was dead.

"He fell for the trick---almost too easily," John said, sipping his coffee in the metal kitchen. "I hated to do it. He had a wonderful mind---"

"I knew it was cruel," Verel said. "An awful pity---but now it is done. I'm glad he created you. . . ." Her eyes watched him, fondly. "It would have been terrible living near him---all my life. He knew so many strange and terrible things---he was very brilliant in his own way."

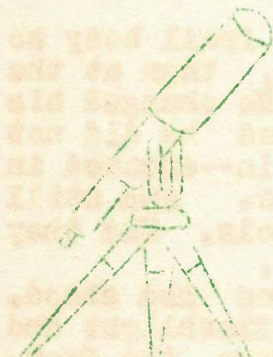
"Yes, it's too bad," John said slowly, solemnly. "Now maybe

we can start life---again. A new life. Civilization. Humanity doesn't deserve to die---like this. I don't know just how we'll do it, but we can try. Mal Zorn never intended to. All he wanted was knowledge and more knowledge---but for what purpose? It's awful to see a great mind in that condition. I knew the minute I set eyes on him that he was as mad as a hatter."

Verel nodded wistfully. She was thinking of the many tomorrows---of a new life and a new understanding. . . .

THE END

## OBSERVATIONS by the Fans



Duane Rimel writes: POLARIS is getting better and better. Number three is well balanced, and has a good variety. I liked Lowndes' story the best, as usual; the idea is surely original and striking. I was pleased to see the increase in size, and hope that you can, in the future, make it even larger.

Vincent Manning, one of the editors of that wonder of the fan-world, Pluto, comments: #3 Polaris was swell. Liked about everything in it. Art Widner's cover was OK, Ray B's "Luana the Living" splendid, Lowndes "The Other" also good, and 4SJ's "Imagi-Movies" OK, as usual. Barlow's "Swearing of an Oath"--perfect! & your editorial is interesting. The all fiction special is good; but I like the general fan mag set-up better. An all-fiction mag, such as this #4 Polaris, has a place in the fan world, but Polaris appeals more as a general mag, as it was instigated.

Bob Studley gets lyrical: The third and fourth issues of Polaris were perfect---at last I've found some good fan stories. The best story in both issues was "The Tree on the Hill" by Duane W. Rimel---I honestly believe that could have sold to Weird Tales. All of the other stories and features were fine.

Brief comments from: "Doc" Lowndes: Polaris #s 3 and 4 quite excellent; cover on both particularly fine. Samoskowitz: I've greatly enjoyed the four numbers of "Polaris" that have appeared to date. They are not only superior in quality, but in format as well.

Unless more readers send in numerical ratings on the stories, we will have to abandon the idea. Not enough votes came in this time to provide good averages. However, the votes received came out as follows: For June, 1940, first came Duane Rimel's poem, "The Worm," with 8.2; next Lowndes' "The Other" with 8.0; then 4e's column at 7.6, "The Truant" with 7.2, "Luana the Living" with 6.8, Tucker's article with 6.1, and "The Swearing of an Oath" with 5.6. The cover by Widner was rated 8.0, the contents page and editorial 7.0 each, the letters column 7.5, and the ads received one vote of 10.0. For the September issue Rimel again took first place, his "The Tree on the Hill" receiving 8.2; "Ygdrasil" came second with 7.4; then Miske's "The Single Strain" with 7.2; "The Questioner" with 7.0, "The Artizan's Reward" with 6.6, and "Dream" with 6.4. The cover received 5.8, the editorial 7.0, and the ads 7.5.

## EDITORIAL ILLUMINATION

(Continued from Page 3)

we feel that it could be made into something worth-while if it were given the necessary backing by the real fans. How about it?

Elmer Perdue asks that we publish the following notice for the FAPA members: "I am in receipt of a communication from E. A. Martin, of 2 Broad Street, Manchester, Connecticut, in which he mentions the Edward H. Coles, 53 Freeman Street, Wollaston, Massachusetts, as having published a magazine thru the NAPA--the Olympian No. 35, 'In Memoriam: Howard Phillips Lovecraft.' It was a 38-page printed booklet, which those that have seen consider quite fine. I have corresponded with others about it, and dropped a request to the Coles, but it would appear that they don't have an extra fifty copies on hand. However, they are willing to send a copy to those of our members who will request it of them. Now, if it wouldn't be too late, would you kindly insert an item in *Polaris* to that effect? I'm sorry I can't announce it myself; and perhaps your own item would appear too late to do any good; but it would be appreciated."

May we recommend three new fan magazines as being of particular interest to those who care for *Polaris*? First is *Nepenthe*, a magazine of fan poetry issued by Earl Singleton at the M.I.T. Grad House, Cambridge, Mass. Then there is an unusual new magazine, *Fantasia*, from Lou Goldstone, 269 Sixteenth Ave., San Francisco. Last but not least is Art Joquel's *Specula*, from 1426 West 38th St., Los Angeles. All are ten cents each.

Ye Ed attended the Chicago World Science Fiction Convention and had a marvelous time there, but was disappointed in not finding more weird fans there. Why don't we get together at the 1941 Convention in Denver and make a showing for the weird side of fantasy? Write to me or to Lew Martin, 1258 Race St., Denver, Colorado, for details.

## SUPPORT THE DENVENTION

### *The Soldier*

by Damon Knight

He lay in stinking holes, half-filled with slime;  
Gouged out by cruel blows from shrinking Earth;  
And clutched to him the soil, that gave him birth,  
In terror and despair. And for a time,  
I watched, and wondered, puzzled, for what crime  
He must lie so and spend whatever worth  
Was in him, in a fearful death. No mirth  
Was written in his face, nor thought sublime;  
But only agony, and mindless fear,  
That took control of him, lest he should die.  
And then, with metal fingers, Death came near,  
And he lay staring at the darkened sky.  
And then-- my world began to disappear  
In bands of shrieking flame -- for it was I!

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Los Angeles Presents:

"Shangri-LA", edited by the Director of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, at 641 West 41st Street.

"The Rocket", same publisher.

"Voice of the Imagi-nation", Forrest J Ackerman & Morojo, Bx 6475 Met Sta.

"Novacious", 4e & Morojo, as above.

"Specula", Arthur Louis Joquel, II, 1426 W. 38th St.

"Spectra", as above.

"The Damn Thing", T. Bruce Yerke, 1223 N. Gordon

"Sweetness and Light", R.J.Hodgkins, 1903 W 84 Pl

"Stfette," Pogo, Bx 6475 Met Sta

"Futura Fantasia", Ray Bradbury, 3054½ W 12 St.

These unusual publications are uniformly priced at 10¢ apiece with the exceptions of "Novacious" at 5¢ and "The Rocket", at 15¢.

There is also the 12-year "Imag-Index" at 50¢ from

2532 Burnside and the 1940 edition at 15¢.

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