

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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REVERIE

by Murray Leinster

It's not easy to say which is my favorite science fiction story and why I like it. There are so many different reasons for liking a yarn! I like "The Little Terror" (a Will Jenkins yarn) because it begins, "There was no crashing roll of thunder when the principles of psychological acosmistic idealism became practicalities in the world inhabited by Nancy." Nobody should get away with an opening like that. I did. The Post printed it. So I cherish it.

Again, there's "De Profundis" (Leinster). I like it because everybody's heard of men seeing seaserpents and telling other men, who didn't believe them. "De Profundis" is a story about a seaserpent seeing a man. And he told other seaserpents. And they didn't believe him.

Those are special cases. A good story of any sort, I think, is a kind of reverie. In a reverie one recalls, leisurely and with appreciation, something one likes to remember. In a story we do exactly the same thing, with a slight assist from the author. I think I most enjoy remembering "Keyhole" (Thrilling Wonder, December, 1951; TOMORROW THE STARS, Heinlein, 1951 and 1953; CHILDREN OF WONDER, Tenn, 1953 and 1954; and MEN ON THE MOON, Wollheim, 1958. I think it's been reprinted since 1958, too).

The story is about a little moon-creature who has been captured, on the moon, so men can learn how to subjugate and enslave his fellows. They have brains, and if only they had technology they would be an advanced race. The man who's ordered to study him gets to like him. He calls him "Butch." The man is wholly loyal to his orders, but he hates what they make him do. And Butch the moon-creature—small and skinny and strutting in the moon's light gravity—Butch likes the man. So presently it seems that what's been learned from Butch will mean the conquest and enslavement of his people, and that they'll ultimately be exterminated because they get in the way of men.

But then, suddenly, the facts come out. Butch had been captured to be studied by men. But he's been sent to be captured so he could study men. And he's telepathic. He's picked the brains of all the men in the moon-base. He's passed on to his fellows all the science and technology they can use. And it's a lot! Sun-mirrors to smelt ores, electronics for this and that, chemistry.... Long before a fighting force could be organized and sent to the moon they'll be able to defend themselves, and war would be unprofitable to humans. And the moon-creatures want to trade. They've learned how much there is to

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SFR STORY RATINGS

Story category	NOVELLAS	NOVELETS ...	SHORT STORIES
Length in words	(19-39,000) ...	(10-18,000) ..	(up to 9,000)
Worth buying magazine for ..	I-IV	A-C	a-b
Worth reading	V-VI	D-E	c-d
Read at your own risk ...	VII-IX	F-H	e-g

NOVELS

(40,000+ words)

Worth buying	1-5
Marginal	6-7
Buy at your own risk .	8-10

The ratings designate how well we liked the story. We do not rate collections or anthologies. Two stories "worth reading" usually make an issue worth buying.

REVERIE

(continued from page one)

trade for—and they've also learned that it's possible to like men, too, even when you know what goes on in their minds, as Butch did.

I had a ten-year-old daughter when I wrote that story. She read it and zestfully told me a story about a man who wanted to study the reactions of a chimpanzee. He led the chimp into a room full of things a chimp should find interesting. He went out and closed the door, and then put his eye to the keyhole to see what the chimp was doing. He found himself looking into an interested brown eye only inches from his own. The chimp was looking through the keyhole, too, to see what the man was about.

I put my daughter's tale as a preface and a coda to my own yarn and called it "Keyhole." I find it pleasant to remember. Maybe it's because I like animals and children and Butch was a likeable little creature who was something of both.

—Murray Leinster

For another well-known author's choice of his favorite science fiction story, see "My Favorite So Far," by Poul Anderson, in SFR #10. Watch for more such articles in future issues.

TALES OF TEN WORLDS, by Arthur C. Clarke. Dell, N.Y. 8467, 1964. 224 pp. 50¢

This collection is definitely worth getting. It consists of a novella (IV), and fourteen short stories (a "c," nine "d's," and four "e's"). The novella is "The Road to the Sea" (originally was "Seeker of the Sphinx"). In Clarke's fine poetic style, it is set on the Earth six thousand years hence. The people are the descendants of those left behind when most of Mankind migrated to the stars millenia before. One short story stands out, because of its effect: "Out of the Cradle, Endlessly Orbiting..." (c). —Dean M. Sandin

DESTINATION: UNIVERSE!, by A.E. van Vogt. Berkley, N.Y. F893, 1964. 160 pp. 50¢

How would you like to take a 500-year-long trip to Alpha Centauri and find that during the time you were en route new techniques were developed and that people had reached there years before you? This problem is dealt with in "Far Centaurus," one of ten short stories in this collection.

The two outstanding selections were "Far Centaurus" (c) and "Dear Pen Pal" (b). The others were one "c," six "d's," and one "e." This is a good collection and is recommended.

—Robert Merryman

MAGAZINE REVIEWS by Dean M. Sandin

Serials are not rated until the review of the final installment.
Non-science fiction is not rated.

For those of you who missed SFR #16, the following news is being repeated. It first appeared in John Carnell's article then:

New Worlds and Science Fantasy will not be discontinued as was planned. They were bought from Nova Publications Ltd. by Roberts & Vinter Ltd. Instead of Carnell editing them, New Worlds will be edited by Michael Moorcock and Science Fantasy by Kyril Bonfiglioli.

Analog, May, 1964. 98 pp. 50¢, 5/-

Although "Undercurrents," by James H. Schmitz, is a serial, it is not a novel, but a novella (unless it has been edited into two quite unequal parts). This month sees the start of this worthwhile sequel to the author's novelet, "Novice" (C); here is more about Telzey Amberdon, a teenage girl and psionic genius.

Rick Raphael's "Once a Cop" is a sequel, too. It follows "Code Three" (IV), a novella from last year. The main characters are the three members of a Thruway Patrol Car. In addition to the exciting police action on the giant international Thruways—built for speeds up to five hundred miles per hour—there is an important legal battle, which may affect the continuation of the vital Thruway Authority, put up by an extremely powerful man who doesn't feel his son should be arrested for traffic violations. (IV)

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Manuka, A.C.T.
Australia

New Worlds, March, 1964. 128 pp.
3/- (42¢)

"Open Prison," by James White, continues to be good in the second of its three installments. Thousands of prisoners in a space-war type world to save their captors' time and money. The captives are split between those wanting to try to escape and those thinking it impossible to do so and instead wanting to better their way of living.

John Baxter's "The Traps of Time" shows what can happen when a man ignores Nature's and Man's rules for time travel.

SHORT STORY - d

Amazing, May, 1964. 130 pp. 50¢
(3/7)

The third and last part of "Sunburst," by Phyllis Gotlieb, makes its appearance here. It deals with a community that years before experienced an explosion in its nuclear reactor and then was sealed off from the outside, hiding the calamity to prevent panic in the rest of the country. Mutated children with psionic abilities were born. These traits show up in psychopathic children who must be imprisoned to protect others. Unclear in many parts and sometimes a bit repulsive because of the bleak society and the unlikeable paranormal children, the novel is only fair. The main character is a thirteen-year-old girl who isn't psionic, but is unusual in that she is totally immune to the psionic powers of those who do have them.

NOVEL - 8

CENTRAL PASSAGE, by Lawrence Schoonover. Dell, N.Y. 1155, 1964. 192 pp. 50¢

This reprint by a mainstream author was a SF Book Club selection in 1962. It is divided into three parts. The first relates a World War Three—called the "Twenty Minute War." The second section describes severe climatic changes caused by the war, which affect the whole world. The third part is about a boy and a girl born during the war. Once through the first few chapters the book is enjoyable, with Part Three being the most interesting.

NOVEL - 6

—Lawrence Beckwith

THE BEST FROM FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION, THIRTEENTH SERIES, ed. by Avram Davidson. Doubleday, N.Y., 1964. 255 pp. \$4.50

Of the SF stories in this thirteen-story anthology, "Hunter, Come Home" (C), is by far the best. McKenna tells of a life-form which lives off sunlight and has a composite intelligence. Henderson's "Deluge" (D), one of her "People stories," is also good. Unfortunately the rest of the selections were not as good as these. —Glenn Keene

FOUR FROM PLANET 5, by Murray Leinster. Gold Medal, Greenwich, Conn. k1397, 1964. 160 pp. 40¢

Once again Leinster employs his customary style of carrying along the story by means of the clearly shown reactions of the characters to events and each other. And as usual he does it well. This reprint concerns four children who crash in a spaceship in Antarctica. The U.S. government captures them and finds them telepathic—but they escape. The two main characters are a couple who take an interest in the four's welfare, having been their discoverers; they try to find the fleeing children before the government can.

NOVEL - 5

—Dean M. Sandin

FEATURE SELECTION

ORPHANS OF THE SKY, by Robert A. Heinlein. Putnam, N.Y., 1964. 187 pp. \$3.50

This is the fifth and final book of the "Future History" series. (For an article on the "Future History" series as a whole, see SFR #6.) This book first appeared as two novellas, titled "Universe" and "Common Sense" in the May and October, 1941, issues of Astounding. It took an amazingly long time for publishers to see the merits of this book—the volume being reviewed is the first complete edition to be published in the U.S.A. (Victor Gollancz Ltd, of London, published a hardcover edition in 1963 for U.K. fans.) The novel is also the May selection of the SF Book Club.

This novel deals with the crew of a starship which has been on its way for centuries. The people have lost all memory of the ship's purpose and keep it functioning through rituals, the origin and scientific nature of which have been lost. The hero tries to learn something about the ship, and the diehard remainder of the crew and "muties" furnish complications.

Although not the first or best on this subject (see Brian Aldiss' 1958 book STARSHIP; as NON-STOP in the U.K. - 3), ORPHANS OF THE SKY has the distinction of being the popularizer of the starship-with-degenerate-crew theme, much as Russell's SINISTER BARRIER was for psionics. This is a good novel, and one that you should not miss.

NOVEL - 4

—The Editor

Some readers may not be aware that Henry Kuttner's FURY (pb as DESTINATION: INFINITY) (3), the story of the undersea Keeps on Venus, has a prequel, "Clash by Night" (III)—ASF, March, 1943; reprinted in THE ASF ANTHOLOGY—both appearances as by Lawrence O'Donnell.