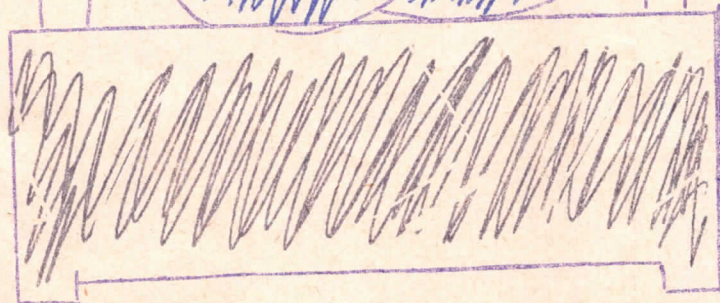




ZINTILLA

# 16



Adams

SO YOU SAY YOU'RE A MARTIAN. SO I SAY, PROVE IT.

HOO HAA.....the editorial

Well, this went together fastly. With a decent size type face, it seems like it is a much less painful process. We kept our promise and made this the same size as last. Sweet relief. I hope you all, like the type face. It is faintly reminiscent of printing. Oh, for something besides this purple goo....

But you all thought there wouldn't be another issue or scilly for months and months, didn't you? Well, there wasn't, was there? Hoo haa.

Our book review column isn't present this issue. I got a letter from the good doctor the other day asking if I'd ever printed his first one, or wanted a second. Now, Doc, I'm positive I send you a letter, and you were definitely sent a copy of the last issue. Compliative, come forward.

Theda Pobst was swell. She sent in GIVE ME SPACE, which is printed towards the back of the mag, and numerous small poems. Some may be used as fillers. Thanks for the support, Theda.

The Whimsical Amateur Publishing Association is coming right along. Anyone wanting to inquire about membership only has to send me a request, and they'll receive all literature I have on it. Everyone seems so enthusiastic over it. Just us little Whimseys, I guess. Tra..la..la... toodle.....treeii.....oh, we're all crazy. I just seem to have a little more fun at it than the rest of you.

I hear that Bob Silverberg has gone pro...a juvenile to be published in a few months. He must have taken the advice given by Mack Reynolds in Spaceship, and reprinted in this issue. Luck to you, Bob, but keep Sship up.

seeya all, soon, I hope,

Larry

SCINTILLA is published by ROBOT PRESS, edited by Larry Anderson, 2716 Smoky Lane, Billings, Montana. Copies are a dime each, three for two bits. All contributions will be appreciated and paid for by one copy, or two, I'm generous..of the issue in which they appear. Bimonthly publication, or thereabouts. Don't be afraid.....we're not human.



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JOANNE (JOAN?) COOPER

Joan sat in the high school study hall, staring at her literature book and wondering what to do about supper. The big freezer was empty and she'd finished the last bottle of jhoree that morning. The thought of that lovely crimson liquid quickened her pulse and lifted her head in a way that brought approving glances from several boys around her. Joan blushed.

"Well," she thought, "why not? I want some dinner--Gramps said I could use my own judgement. And this is Friday." She smoothed her full aqua skirt and was glad she wore the sleeveless scoop-necked sundress which showed so much of her straight tan back. Opening her purse, she took out a small mirror and a comb and smoothed and fluffed her short golden hair. The interested eyes of the boy sitting opposite the seat behind her met her purple eyes in the glass and she blushed again at the mirrored thought.

For a moment her resolution weakened, but thought of the empty freezer at home and her grandfather's parting assurances that she was old enough to take care of everything herself bolstered her courage.

Turning around, she glanced reproachfully at the boy through soft, long brown lashes. He whistled softly and she looked back at her literature book before the study hall teacher should see them.

She gave an impatient little flounce, wishing the bell would ring. It did. Carefully dropping a small, unimportant notebook, she joined the rush out of the room and went down the hall to her locker. Dumping in her books and grabbing a short jacket, she slammed it and walked off just as the boy from study hall came toward her.

Outside, she hesitated for a minute before walking toward the park in back of the school. It was crossed by a path used by many students as a short cut. Joan usually enjoyed the walk, but today she kept wondering if the green care of the boy from study hall would be at the other end of the path.

It was. For a moment she felt like running away, like walking proudly past him, like ignoring him...she walked ahead, limping slightly.

Further on, she stopped and gave a convincing pantomime of removing a pebble from a small yellow shoe. Out of the corner of one eye, Joan saw that she had an interested audience of not one, but two.

Joan wouldn't stop now. Changing her direction slightly, she walked away from the front of the car. The study hall boy leaned out. "Hey, Joan! I have something of yours."

Turning, she looked at him wide-eyed. "How did you know my name?"

He grinned and waved the notebook she had dropped. "You left this in study hall. Besides," he winked at his companion, a boy in her English class, "I have ways of knowing. Want a ride home?"

She stood with her hands behind her, swinging her purse. "But I don't know your name."

"Bullcan introduce us." He smiled thoughtfully.

The other boy got out lumberingly. "Sure. Uh--Joan, this is Bart Hanson. Bart, this is Joan O'Hara O'Neill... she's Irish."

"No," said Bart. "Well, Miss Joan O'Hara O'Neill, will ye no' be afther acceptin' me offer o'a ride?"

She laughed with silver bells and curtseyed. "Thank ye, koind soirs, that oi weel. But," she added, "I'm not that Irish." She climbed into the front seat between the two boys. "I live at 1732 Laurel Drive."

"You're new in school, aren't you?" asked Bart. "Where'd you go before?"

"I went to Three Pines--that's a girl's school in Minnesota--- Most of my life, until Grandmother died. Then Gramps brought me out here and put me in a public school--he didn't approve of private schools; he said that I was old enough to take care of myself and learn to cope with life." She gave a wistful little sigh. "It's lots of fun, except he's always out of town on business trips and it's so lonely when he's gone."

The boys looked at each other over her head and Joan had a momentary qualm. Then she felt what they were thinking and her eyes widened in shocked anger. Bart asked, "Is your grandfather out of town now?"

Joan breathed deeply and smiled to herself. This wasn't so hard.

"Yes, he won't be back until tomorrow night. Mrs. Kersey--she lives next door--says he shouldn't be gone so long. She's always coming over to make sure I'm behaving all right, as though I weren't grown up at all. Why, Monday Trish Conover came in after school--Gramps had just left-- and Mrs. Kersey phoned as soon as we got in the house and, scholdded me for fifteen minutes for bringing anyone--even a girl--in when Gramps was away. 'It's all right to walk home with someone, my dear,' she mimicked in a dry, precise voice, "or even to ride home with someone you know quite well, but never ever ask anyone in when your grandfather is not here.' As if I were a baby or mentally defective." So Tuesday and Wednesday--we were doing the partnership project in Oregon History--Trish came up the alley and Mrs. Kersey didn't see her at all. The old bat."

Bart grinned. "Well, Joan, since nobody's home, why not have dinner with us? We could go for a ride afterward and maybe to a drive-in movie. Would you like that?"

"Yes," she said doubtfully. "but if I don't go home, Mrs. Kersey will ask questions. And I should change my clothes." She looked up at them. "But it sounds like fun."

"I know what, Joan," Bart smiled. "We'll drop you off at this corner and park several blocks away, so no nosey neighbors will see us. Then we'll come up the alley--what's your place like?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Ten minutes later, as Joan in her white petticoat and slip, was sitting on the bedroom floor writing in her diary, she heard the back door open and the boys come in. They were talking as they went down the hall and the words "Little Innocent" and "maybe pick up some beer or something" floated up the hall.

She heard them open the door and go in and heard the muffled click as the door automatically locked. Her finger hovered over a small button set into her dressing table; then she bit her lip and pressed it, cutting off the boys' exclamations.

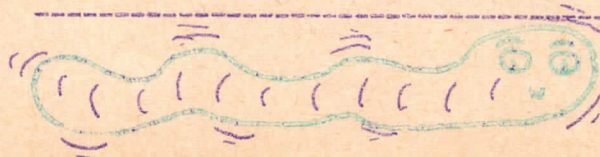
There was a rumble of machinery far beneath the house and two short stifled screams. Joan smiled and returned to her diary.

Five minutes later, the distant machinery stopped. Putting down her diary, Joan walked up the hall to the second-from-the last door on the left. Pressing a switch which unlocked the door, she went into the small, square room. She turned a dial set behind a panel to OFF and turned to a shelf, which was filled with neatly wrapped packages and some waxed-cardboard bottles. Kevin touched another button and wheeled legs appeared under the shelf, which became detached from the wall. She wheeled it down the hall to the kitchen and, putting a ruffled apron on over her petticoats, put the parcels neatly in the large freezer. Standing back, she looked at it with satisfaction.

A very ancient glass bottle, with Jhoree barely visible on it in gold letters, stood by the sink. She opened the last was container and poured the contents into the bottle, which she set in the refrigerator. The liquid left in the container, she put in a small glass. Throwing the empty bottle in the garbage disposal, she took the glass back to her room.

She sat on the floor in a swirl of dainty white petticoats with the sun highlighting her golden hair and the crimson-filled glass which she sipped contentedly now and then. Licking one inkstained finger thoughtfully, she wrote in the diary: "Getting dinner wasn't hard after all." For a moment, she thought regretfully of the missed date, but remembrance of their intended actions made her laugh. Surely there were nicer boys in school; she could date them until it was time to go Home. Chewing her pen, she looked at the last line in her book and added, "A girl must eat, no matter what happens."

Joan took a last long sip of jhoree, enjoying its thin richness. Then she went to the kitchen to start dinner. Gramps would be proud of her.



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MACK REYNOLDS

reprinted from Spaceship

I've come to the conclusion that if I've achieved any popularity at all among the fans in the year and a half that I've been doing SF stories, it is largely because in me the average fan sees a kindred spirit. He sees a guy that after avidly reading stf for years finally buckled down and tried to write it and eventually started selling.

My first stories were just a tiny wee bit better than those you find in the better fanzines, and evidently my luck in breaking into the pro field is evidence to a good many fan writers that he too has a pretty good chance.

At any rate, during the past year I've got a good many letters from fans, a large percentage of them asking for advice on writing and marketing their stuff. I've got a good many manuscripts, also, with requests to offer criticism. Unless I'm particularly pressed with my own work at the time, I do what I can with these, almost always make the same suggestions, since the manuscripts almost invariably have the same shortcomings, and send them back with as much encouragement as I can.

So with the idea of saving wear and tear on my Civil War model typer, and paper and postage, I'm going to sum up the advice I most usually give to the fan writer who is trying to make his first sale. And, who knows, I've never yet met a fan who isn't trying to go pro.

First of all, I'd suggest you not try to aim too high. Unless you're a genius I doubt if you're going to sell your first story to COLLIERS or the SATEVEPOST. In fact, I doubt if you're going to sell it to ASTOUNDING, GALAXY, or the MAG of FCSF. If you are a genius, you might as well stop reading this now, because I doubt if there is going to be much in this little article that will interest you. I'm writing this for just plain ordinary guys---like me.

No, I'd suggest the markets that don't require the excellence the above magazines do. I'd suggest you slant your story toward PLANET (which took my first story), OTHER WORLDS, IMAGINATION, or the Ziff-Davis publications. The rates aren't as good, but you have a much better chance, and the editors of these publications are more than averagely sympathetic.

And I do mean slant, by the way. I find that the usual tyro makes a policy of writing a story, sending it to the best paying market first—when it bounces, to the next best paying, and so on down the line. There are some good arguments in favor of a writer's just sitting down and doing the best story he can and then worrying about the market later, but I suggest strongly that if you're anxious to make your FIRST sale with all the ego-boo and satisfaction that goes with it, you deliberately write a story for one of the above mentioned mags.

Slanting isn't hard. Pick your magazine and study the last half-dozen issues of it carefully. Dope out just what it is that the editor likes best, and write him a story as nearly like the stories he's been running as you can.

Take one of the well worn themes, time travel, the first visit to the moon, or the first visit of extra-terrestrials to Earth, the threat of destruction to the human race because of its scientific developments—that sort of thing. Try to get a new story idea, a new gimmick, some new bit of business on one of these old themes, and write it up as best you can.

MAKE THE FIRST ONES SHORT. Time after time fan writers will send me novelette manuscripts. Frankly, I think it very unlikely that your first sale will be a longy; you have a much better chance of selling something three thousand words or less in length.

The established pro writers write the longer lengths and very seldom waste story ideas on short shorts. Why should they? The experienced writer can take a short short idea, add a sub-plot or so, and expand it into a novelette. With word rates what they are, few pros want to waste their ideas on short stories.



That's what gives the tyro his best chance. All editors need shorts and short shorts to balance out their magazines. If the established pros don't write them, then they must turn to the tyros for these shorts. By the way, don't expect to make any money on your first sales. Rates in the lesser mags are very low. As a matter of fact, I just got a check for a story the other day, which came to exactly \$12.60.

Now this suggestion is going to be the hardest of all to take. I despair of convincing all you writers-to-be of the importance of it:

DON'T SEND YOUR EARLY EFFORTS TO THE PROZINES AT ALL!! You should write story after story, and story after story, before you ever inflict any of them on an editor. It's very poor policy to get an editor in the frame of mind where he holds his nose every time he sees something with your name on it. Don't send him anything until you're pretty sure he's going to like it.

Take these first stories you write and stash them away in a dark corner. Six months later take them out and reread them. If you still like them, do a rewrite job and polish them up to the best of your ability. Then stash them away for another six months.

A good many fans know at least one or two pros. If you can, ask one to read it over, before you send it out, the manuscript that you think has a chance. He'll undoubtedly have some pointers to make that might make the difference in whether or not it sells. I don't mean that you should expect a pro writer to go over everything you do and spend his time giving you a free course in writing. But most writers I've met are pretty nice as far as giving a newcomer a lift. Wait until you think your stuff is good enough to sell, and then ring in your pro friend to give you an opinion.

A word about agents:

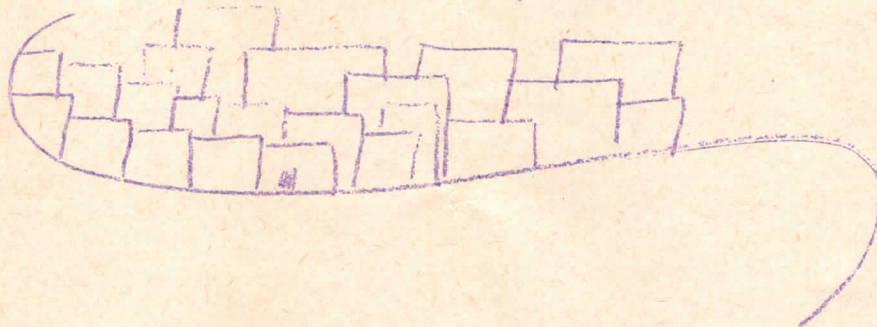
Forget about them. A good agent doesn't want to be bothered with you until you've made your first sales; and a poor one is only interested in getting reading fees from you. Send your first stories directly to the magazine. After you've made a few sales, then ask one of your pro friends, or one of the editors you've sold to, to recommend an agent.

As a writer without an agent, you'll get your manuscripts read by the editors. They're always looking for new writers. For one thing they can get stories at lower rates from agentless newcomers. The first two stories I sold to Sam Merwin brought me a penny a word. Shortly afterward I acquired an agent, Harry Altshuler (very good, by the way--particularly in the stf field) and my Standard Magazines rate immediately went up to a cent and a quarter.

Let me see, is there anything else I should pass on to a would-be professional?

Yes, there is. I've found that there are three requirements for being a writer. A tweed coat, a pipe, and a wife that works.

--Mack Reynolds



## GIVE ME SPACE

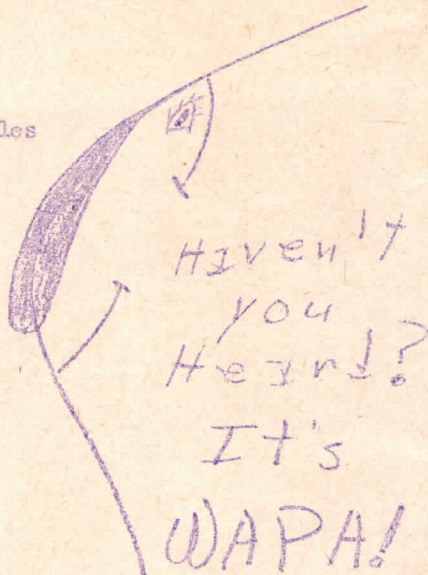
Out there in space, you're in disgrace  
If you don't carry extras,  
Matter of fact, you won't attract  
Unless you're ambi-sextrous,  
And even ambi's not enough...  
FIVE sexes are the real McStuff.

They sproute new parts with such abandon  
The EARTHMAN hasn't a leg to stand on  
And as for having just one HEAD,  
A BODY might as well be dead,  
The SPACEMAN LOVER when he sins he  
Certainly must outkinsey Kinsey.

—  
— Theda L. Pobst

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